PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2003–04

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19 July 2004

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 19 July 2004

DEFENCE

Future Aircraft Carrier

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): I am pleased to announce that we have decided to extend the future aircraft carrier (CVF) programme assessment phase. This extension will enable us to carry out further risk reduction work and increase the maturity of the design prior to making our main investment decision on demonstration and manufacture (D&M). In line with smart acquisition principles, by spending the right amount of time and money in the assessment phase we will gain a better understanding of the technical and supply-side risks before we make any major commitments. We had planned to complete this risk reduction work within the original demonstration phase. The underlying programme has not been adjusted, but rather the point at which we make the main investment decision has shifted.

We anticipate moving into the D&M phase during 2005, following the main gate decision. At this point we intend to finalise performance, time and cost parameters of the carriers. These will continue to be refined during the remainder of the assessment phase. Our target in service dates (ISO) for the CVF remain 2012 and 2015. When built the two vessels will be the largest and most powerful warships ever constructed in the United Kingdom.

We have also agreed the alliancing principles with industry for the CVF programme which confirms the commitment of all parties to the programme and to an alliance based on commercial best practice. The alliancing principles will provide the most effective way of managing risk and reward and will bring together all parties with a vested financial interest, thus ensuring that we deliver CVF collaboratively. We will now discuss and agree the detailed alliancing arrangements with industry, including the roles and responsibilities of alliance members.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

UK Civil Plutonium and Uranium

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Nigel Griffiths): The Department will be placing the figures for the United Kingdom's stocks of civil plutonium and uranium as at 31 December 2003 in the Library of the House. In accordance with our commitment under the "Guidelines for the Management of Plutonium", we will also be sending the figures to the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who will circulate them to Member States in due course. The figures will be available on the Department's and the IAEA's websites.

The figures show that stocks of unirradiated plutonium in the UK totalled 96.3 tonnes at the end of 2003. Changes from the corresponding figures for 2002 are a consequence of continuing reprocessing operations (e.g. as reflected in the increased quantity of "unirradiated separated plutonium in product stores at reprocessing plants"). Other smaller changes are the result of material being allocated to UK fuel. The decrease in unirradiated separated plutonium held elsewhere is due to both Thorp and magnox reprocessing plants being close to empty during December 2003 whereas they were operating over that period in the proceeding year. The decrease in the civil depleted, natural and low enriched uranium figures reflects the change in requirements for these materials at the fuel fabrication plants and reactors.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Creative Industries Forum on Intellectual Property

The Minister for the Arts (Estelle Morris): I am pleased to inform the House that the Government are setting up a creative industries forum on intellectual property. This will be a cross-governmental body, with ministerial representation, and jointly chaired by me and my noble Friend the Minister for Science and Innovation (Lord Sainsbury), who is making a similar statement to the House of Lords. I am pleased to say that there will also be strong representation from the private sector, both from the creative industries themselves and from other key industry stakeholders such as Internet service providers and hardware manufacturers. Consumers will also be represented.

The forum will create a dialogue on intellectual property issues, such as business models, education and awareness raising, strategies for maximising the opportunities for the creative industries in a digital environment, while also addressing the challenges such as file sharing and piracy.

The launch and first meeting of the forum is taking place on 19 July at the London College of Communication, Elephant and Castle. Industry has warmly welcomed the initiative.

It is anticipated that the forum will work through meetings that will set tasks and objectives to be taken forward. There is intended to be a focus on outputs and deliverables, and I am confident that this will represent a significant development in an area crucial to the UK's future competitiveness.

Terms of reference and membership of the forum will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses shortly.

SOLICITOR GENERAL

Serious Fraud Office

The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman): The annual report of the Serious Fraud Office has today been published and laid before Parliament. Copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Strategic Plan for Criminal Justice

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): Today the Government will publish Command Paper 6288, entitled "Cutting Crime—Delivering Justice: Strategic Plan for Criminal Justice 2004–08". Copies of the paper have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

The strategic plan for criminal justice sets out the Government's vision for the criminal justice system (CJS) and how we aim to achieve it, combining forces across the Home Office, the Department for Constitutional Affairs and the Law Officers' Departments.

The plan focuses on how we will provide a better service to victims and witnesses of crime, increase the number of offences brought to justice, tackle offenders who fail to comply with court dates, fines and sentences and improve the way criminal justice agencies work together. This is closely linked to our overall approach to preventing crime and reducing reoffending, which is set out in a parallel document, the Home Office strategic plan. I will announce the details of that plan to the House in an oral statement later today.

The Government are committed to ongoing reform of the criminal justice system. The CJS strategic plan explains how much has already been achieved. Huge steps have been made to establish joint working across the CJS—largely through the success of the 42 Local Criminal Justice Boards across England and Wales and the strong leadership of the National Criminal Justice Board. We know these changes are working because we are seeing improvements on the ground. Overall, crime is down by 25 per cent. since 1997. 7 per cent. more offences have been brought to justice in the last two years. The number of crown court trials that fail to go ahead on the day scheduled has fallen by 25 per cent. The number of assets recovered in the last three years has doubled. Public confidence in criminal justice was falling sharply: we have turned this around.

We have achieved a great deal, but there are still some real issues to tackle. The CJS Strategic plan outlines our key objectives for reform, structured around a vision of the delivery of criminal justice in 2008. To achieve this vision, we need to improve the way agencies work together to support and protect victims and witnesses; we need to further increase the number of offenders brought to justice; we need to tackle offenders who fail to comply with court dates, fines and sentences; and we need to continue progress towards fully joined-up working, including providing the CJS with the information technology it needs to work effectively.

The goal of these reforms is to deliver a service that responds better to the needs of the communities it is there to serve.

Improved service for victims and witnesses is at the heart of this. By the end of next year, in all cases where someone is charged with an offence, the victims and witnesses will be offered support by a witness care unit, to make it more likely that they attend court and give evidence. Over the period, Crown court buildings will have separate waiting facilities for prosecution and defence victims and witnesses. The victims fund, which will pay for better support services for victims, will also be boosted by a surcharge on all criminals who are convicted.

The public also need to know that the offenders will be brought to book and respect for the law will be maintained. The CJS strategic plan sets out how the prosecution will take responsibility for charging, co-operating earlier with the police to identify the correct charge for the offence. It also describes innovative measures to crack down on those who fail to turn up at court or comply with fines and community penalties. Those who breach bail can now expect action to be taken straightaway, and to be punished for this whatever the decision on the original case. We are working hard to make sure that every offender who defaults on their fine is pursued and made to pay it. With our measures on asset recovery it will be the criminal who pays not the community. Our approach includes: increased powers for frontline enforcement staff including search and entry, and new measures and sanctions from the Courts Act 2003 to help recoup fines, including attachment of earnings and deduction of state benefits, and car clamping. And by rolling out direct access to the police national computer (PNC) for all magistrates courts by autumn 2004, we will enable police officers to identify whether an offender is on the run from court or defaulting on a fine or community sentence.

We will also pilot the community justice centre concept in North Liverpool, bringing new approaches to tackle the low level crime and antisocial behaviour which can make communal life miserable; and to reach offenders and their problems before they progress to serious crime. Court sentences will combine punishment with support to help offenders kick their crime habit. The community will be involved in helping to steer people away from crime.

To achieve all these goals we need to work in close partnership across the justice system. The development of the National Criminal Justice Board and Local Criminal Justice Boards has made great strides in delivering a more seamless service and better outcomes. To build on this, we are announcing today that, in future, joint working across the CJS will be further strengthened by the establishment of the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on a cross departmental basis. This implements the recommendations of a recent review of CJS capacity published in a parallel document "Criminal Justice Reform: Working Together". This means that the teams driving progress on shared CJS targets will in future report on an equal basis to the Home Office, Department for Constitutional Affairs and Law Officers' Departments. Establishing the Office for Criminal Justice Reform as a shared resource serving all three Departments builds on the firm foundations of what we have achieved, and is a powerful symbol of our resolve to work together effectively to deliver better services for the public.

Reducing Re-Offending

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): I have today placed in the Library of the House copies of the "Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan". This fulfils the Government's commitment to reducing re-offending through greater strategic direction and collaborative

working. The plan aims to address the concerns raised in a number of important reports on the theme of rehabilitation, including the social exclusion unit report on "reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners" and the joint thematic report "Through the prison gate" by Her Majesty's chief inspector of prison and Her Majesty's chief inspector of probation.

Over 60 national action points have been agreed across Government within the key areas to support the rehabilitation of offenders. For each agreed action point, the plan suggests complementary activity for those working at local and regional level to consider. A complementary approach is being developed in Wales led by the correctional services and the Welsh Assembly Government.

The plan has been set within our radical proposals for improving the management of offenders through the creation of a National Offender Management Service (NOMS). The new service is a key building block in achieving integrated service delivery, with end-to-end case management and co-ordinated interventions focused on individual offenders.

The delivery of the Plan will be overseen by a cross-Government board of senior officials, chaired by the chief executive of NOMS, including representatives from key government departments responsible for complementary services such as health, education and training, employment and housing.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is today publishing for public consultation the proposed changes to the draft revised regional planning guidance for the east midlands (RPG8). They follow the public examination into draft revised RPG8 held in November-December 2003.

RPG8 was issued by the Secretary of State on 24 January 2002 to provide a broad development strategy for the east midlands up to 2021. This also represents the spatial element of the east midlands integrated regional strategy (IRS) and provides the framework for meeting the region's development needs in a way that promotes a more sustainable pattern of development.

The current revision makes the guidance more concise, more regionally specific, more focused on delivery and with cross references to national policy rather than repetition. However, the revision is not a complete review and several key parts are not revised, including housing provision figures which are retained from the existing RPG8. These will be reviewed at the next full review of RPG8 when it is re-cast as a regional spatial strategy under the principles set out in the new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.

New elements in the draft revision include:

New policies to promote sustainable economic growth consistent with the region's economic strategy produced by the East Midlands Development Agency;

A new regional transport strategy which has been informed by a number of major studies in the region;

Higher targets for improving biodiversity, promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy, and recycling waste

A new approach to dealing with flood risk

Proposals for more detailed sub-regional strategies in parts of the region, including areas of Northamptonshire covered by the Milton Keynes and south midlands study.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister supports the broad thrust of the draft revision and has accepted most of the recommendations of the independent panel, many of which have been made to improve clarity and to eliminate as far as possible any ambiguity in the wording of policies. Among the recommendations that my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has accepted is the deletion of a geographically based policy indicating general areas where wind energy proposals might be acceptable and the substitution of a criteria-based policy in line with current Government guidelines as expressed in PPS22.

However, my right hon. Friend has not accepted the panel's recommendation to delete a policy requiring a review of the Nottingham-Derby green belt to be undertaken. The panel's view was that the policy was superfluous as PPG2 provides adequate guidance for any review. However, since the original Nottingham-Derby green belt was drawn up in the 1980s there has been no overall strategic review of the green belt, and with the development of planning policy, particularly related to the principles of sustainable development, together with the increasing development pressures in the Nottingham-Derby area, the Deputy Prime Minister considers that there is a need for a strategic review of the green belt carried out by all the affected planning authorities in a single exercise, overseen by the regional assembly as regional planning body. The policy and supporting paragraphs are therefore retained and amended accordingly.

The issue raising most discussion at the public examination related to a policy that proposed a target of a 50 per cent. cut in the predicted growth in traffic without reference to the Government's priority of reducing congestion in urban areas and at key pinch points in the regional road network. The panel rejected this argument and recommended that the policy be retained. The proposed changes, which are endorsed by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport, omit the original target for traffic growth reduction but retain the principle of reducing traffic growth as one of a series of measures encouraging behavioural change, which also includes the principle of reducing congestion.

The panel has also suggested that further indicators be included to measure the effectiveness of policies. These require further discussion with regional stakeholders and views on these will be sought during public consultation. This also applies to the inclusion of a new map, which will illustrate the region's environmental and cultural assets.

I have today written to the east midlands regional assembly with the proposed changes indicating areas where views are particularly sought. There will now be a 12-week period for public consultation on the proposed changes which will end on 8 October 2004.

Copies of the relevant documents are available in the Libraries of the House and have been provided for all the region's MPs, MEPs and local authorities. Documents are also available on the Government office for the east midlands website http://www.go-em.gov.uk/.

Regional Planning Guidance for Yorkshire and the Humber

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister will publish this week for public consultation proposed changes to the draft revised regional planning guidance for Yorkshire and the Humber (RPG12). They follow the public examination into the selective review of RPG12 held in February 2004.

The panel that held the public examination endorsed the approach taken by the Yorkshire and Humber assembly in the selective review and recommended only modest changes to clarify and refine the document. More radical changes to RPG should await preparation of a regional spatial strategy (RSS), which the assembly is currently working on to prepare a draft by April 2005.

The proposed changes being published this week reflect this approach. They are largely as recommended by the panel and are modest in nature. They also take account of suggestions made in the public consultation last autumn, the sustainability appraisal carried out on draft revised RPG, and to take account of national policy. The main issues addressed in the selective review of RPG and covered by the proposed changes are as follows:

Preparation of regional spatial strategy

The proposed changes clearly set out the timetable and issues to be addressed in the preparation of a new RSS. RSS will build on this selective review of RPG and carry forward a lot of the core strategy. But it will need to look again at a number of important policy areas, such as housing, economic development, waste management and transport priorities. The changes make it clear that this will need to be in the context of the northern way growth strategy.

Renewable energy

The panel concluded that draft revised RPG contains appropriate regional and sub regional targets for renewable energy generation to contribute to the national target that renewable energy should provide 10 per cent. of UK electricity supply by 2010 and consistent with the aspiration to reach 20 per cent. nationally by 2020. The proposed changes therefore carry these forward.

Climate change

The panel recommend a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the region by at least 20 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010 and by at least 25 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2015. These are consistent with the regional economic strategy, make a positive contribution to national targets and are carried forward in the proposed changes.

Development and flood risk

The panel commend work done by YHA, the Environment Agency and local authorities to address flooding issues and consider that revised draft RPG provides an integrated and sustainable regional framework. The proposed changes simply seek to further clarify the policy.

Waste management

The panel endorse the approach taken in draft revised RPG to the management of municipal waste, including sub-regional targets for recycling/composting and guidance on new facilities that may be required. The proposed changes make a number of detailed changes to clarify the policies and targets. Importantly, they also emphasise the need for urgent, further work for RSS to drive forward the waste management strategy and ensure the delivery of significant numbers of new facilities to allow landfill directive targets to be met.

Public transport accessibility

The panel considers that draft revised RPG includes a sophisticated and innovative public transport accessibility policy which should help achieve spatial planning and transport objectives in an integrated way. The proposed changes clarify how the policy will be implemented.

Strategic transport demand management

The proposed changes carry forward the panel's recommendation that RPG should set out action that local authorities can take immediately on car parking strategies, a range of actions that can be taken in the short to medium term, and a commitment to take forward area-wide charging in the region if and when there is a national framework in place to support it.

Transport investment priorities

The panel considers the list of priorities set out in draft revised RPG to be generally appropriate. They recommend some detailed changes to the way the priorities are presented and to add some management measures (rather than infrastructure improvements). The proposed changes take forward most of these recommendations and ensure that RPG reflects national commitments and Government guidance on the inclusion of regional priorities.

I will write to the chair of the Yorkshire and Humber assembly this week informing him of publication of the proposed changes. Copies of the proposed changes will be put on the government office for Yorkshire and the Humber website and sent to the region's local authorities and all other interested parties. There will be a 10-week period of consultation which will end on Friday 24 September 2004.

Planning Appeal Procedures

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): On 15 January, *Official Report*, columns 43–44WS, I announced our intention, following a review, to consult on proposals to amend the planning appeals procedures rules and regulations to allow third parties a further opportunity to comment on the main parties' appeal statements at the nine-week stage of an appeal. This would bring the opportunities for third parties to

comment in line with the opportunities that local planning authorities and appellants have to make representations.

We received an overwhelmingly positive response to the proposals. We therefore intend to amend the relevant planning appeals procedures to allow third parties an additional opportunity to make representations on appeals at the nine-week stage as well as the six-week stage. The consultation document, however, made clear that the proposed change to the arrangements would only come into affect once the planning casework system (PCS) was operational. The PCS will facilitate electronic appeals and thus the availability of all appeal documents for inspection on-line/electronically. I now expect this to be in place by March 2005 and we will amend the appeals procedures at that point.

Regional Planning Guidance for the South-East

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is today publishing the alterations to chapter 12 of the regional planning guidance for the south-east: the Ashford growth area. This follows the public examination into the draft alterations in December 2003, the panel report in February 2004 and the consultation on the Secretary of State's proposed changes that closed on 17th June 2004.

The alterations represent a revision to the regional planning guidance for the south-east (RPG9), as published in March 2001. On commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act the alterations will be part of a statutory regional special strategy (RSS).

The alterations aim to achieve sustainable growth in Ashford, which was identified as a growth area in RPG9. They set out the scale and form of development at Ashford to 2016, and form a special framework for the preparation of local planning documents and other relevant policy documents.

The consultation period for the proposed changes to the draft alterations ended on the 17 June with 40 responses from individuals or organisations. These mainly related to issues which had already been raised at the public examination and therefore only minor changes to the proposed alterations have been made.

Planning Inspectorate

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I have today laid before the House a copy of the planning inspectorate's annual report and accounts for 2003–04.

The report gives an overview of the performance of the inspectorate and highlights the ways in which it is contributing to the Government's planning reform agenda. It demonstrates the importance of a credible, accessible planning tribunal service which is open, transparent and impartial.

Copies of the report have been made available in the Libraries of the House.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Pesticides Safety Directorate

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality (Alun Michael): The 2003–04 annual report and accounts for the pesticides safety directorate were laid before Parliament today.

Copies are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Illegal Meat Imports

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): As required under the Animal Health Act 1981 the Government will publish today a review of controls on the import of animal products for the financial year 2003–04. We welcome the opportunity to report on progress made in the past year.

Seizures of illegally imported animal products have doubled in the past year. This has been delivered by continuing to follow the three key principles of:

evidence based policy;

investment in enforcement; and

securing better public engagement and awareness.

Over the course of the year customs has built up its enforcement activity in relation to products of animal origin. There has been a sustained effort inland, at the borders, and overseas, to increase the travelling public's awareness of the restrictions relating to importing products of animal origin. The Food Standards Agency has also worked with local and port health authorities to achieve a step change in the enforcement of controls on imported food inland.

Also published today is an assessment of the risks of foot and mouth disease and certain pig diseases entering the country through illegally imported meat. This has been refined since last year when it only considered foot and mouth disease. The results of this are available at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/illegali/pdf/risk-assessment04.pdf

The Government will continue to develop their approach to managing the risk posed by illegal imports. Working with all agencies involved, we will continue to build on enforcement activity and work to raise awareness of the rules.

Copies of the review will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and on the DEFRA illegal imports website:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/illegali/pdf/annual-review04.pdf

The risk assessment is available on the DEFRA illegal imports website:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/illegali/pdf/risk-assessment04.pdf

Hard copies are available on request.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 20 July 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HIV/AIDS Strategy

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I have placed in the Libraries of both Houses copies of "Taking Action: The UK's Strategy for tackling HIV and AIDS in the Developing World" which I published today.

This paper is being published by the Department for International Development (DFID) but the following Government Departments worked with DFID to help produce it: the Department of Health, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, HM Treasury, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Patent Office, the Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Defence, the Home Office, the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

AIDS is one of the greatest threats to eradicating poverty and achieving the millennium development goals. Over the last 25 years the number of people affected by HIV has risen dramatically, from the first AIDS cases identified in the 1980s to the 38 million who are living with HIV and AIDS today. Over 20 million people have died. Sub-Saharan Africa has suffered the severest impact: over 25 million people are currently living with HIV and AIDS and 12 million children have been orphaned by AIDS. By 2010 the number of orphans who will have lost parents to AIDS may rise to 18 million. In Asia and eastern Europe, there is a serious risk of a generalised epidemic unless action is taken now. In all regions, women and young people are particularly vulnerable.

The UK Government are committed to fighting AIDS and reversing the spread of HIV. The challenges facing the world were set out in the "UK's Call for Action on HIV/AIDS" published on world AIDS day last year. "Taking Action: The UK's Strategy for Tackling HIV and AIDS in the Developing World" sets out how the UK will respond to the challenges by promoting a comprehensive response to tackle prevention, treatment and care as well as addressing the social impact of AIDS; prioritising the needs of women, young people, including orphans and other children; focusing on human rights, stigma and discrimination; and ensuring that action on AIDS is sustainable in the long term as well as responsive to immediate needs.

As announced in the spending review, the UK Government will commit at least £1.5 billion over the next three years to tackle AIDS in the developing world. Of this, at least £150 million will be dedicated to helping orphans and other children made vulnerable by AIDS, especially in Africa. We will also be doubling our contribution to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and malaria with an additional £77 million over the next three years. This is in addition to extra money for UNAIDS and UNFPA announced in my statement of 6 July.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): A progress report on transmissible spongiform encephalopathies in Great Britain was placed in the Library of the House today.

The report explains primarily how we have managed BSE during 2003. The encouraging reduction in BSE in cattle continues. This shows that the controls that have been put in place are continuing to have an important effect.

The report explains the background to our application to the European Commission to be classified as a Moderate BSE risk, which will help to re-open exports markets for UK beef; it also outlines the progress of the TSE surveillance programme. It provides an overview of TSE research and sets out progress on the national scrapie plan, as well as our continuing efforts to ensure compliance with the rules on specified risk material and animal feed.

The report is being published on DEFRA's website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/bse/index.html.

TREASURY

Tonnage Tax (Post-Implementation Review)

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): The tonnage tax was introduced in 2000 as part of a package of measures to revive the UK shipping industry. In July 2002, I announced that the Inland Revenue and the Department for Transport would commence a review of the way the regime is operating, and invited public contributions. A number of representations have been received. Individuals and groups wishing to make further representations are invited to do so by 30 September 2004. Details about how representations can be made are available on the Inland Revenue's website.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Forensic Science Annual Report

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): I have today published the Forensic Science Northern Ireland annual report and accounts 2003–04. The annual report sets out performance of the agency against key targets. Copies of the report have today been laid before the House.

Independent Monitoring Commission (Second Report)

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): On 20 April 2004 I formally requested the Independent Monitoring Commission to prepare a

security normalisation report under article 5(2) of the international agreement between the British and Irish Governments.

Article 5(2) enables the British Government to commission the IMC to prepare a report on security normalisation activity undertaken over a specified period. I asked the IMC to report on all normalisation activities which have taken place since December 1999 up to the present time. The activities are set out in article 5(1)(a)(i) to (v) of the international agreement. The IMC report also takes account of views on the effects of normalisation on the ground and the programme of reform to deliver a community based policing environment in Northern Ireland. It is distinct from the monitoring of the programme of normalisation included in the joint declaration which is yet to be commenced.

I am most grateful to the commission for its thorough report. The report is helpful in identifying the extent of steps that have been taken to reduce the security profile in Northern Ireland. The report also recognises that further steps are being taken, but that these must be measured against the prevailing assessment of the security threat.

I have placed copies of the second report of the Independent Monitoring Commission in the Libraries of both Houses.

Youth Justice Agency (Annual Report and Accounts)

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): I have placed copies of the Youth Justice Agency's annual report and accounts for 2003–04 in the Libraries of both Houses.

This is the agency's first annual report since its inception on 1 April 2003. It achieved eight of its nine key performance targets and all 20 of its development objectives.

Prison Service (Annual Report and Accounts)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Ian Pearson): I have placed copies of the Northern Ireland Prison Service's annual report and accounts for 2003–04 in the Libraries of both Houses.

The annual report details that the service met seven of its 12 key targets in full and partially met an eighth. Of the comprehensive programme of 24 development objectives set for the service, 12 were achieved, four were partially achieved and substantial progress was made towards meeting the remaining eight.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Ordnance Survey (Framework Document)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): I am pleased to announce today that a new framework document for Ordnance Survey has been published and is also available in the Libraries of both Houses.

On 23 July 2002 the Government announced that following a quinquennial review, Ordnance Survey, a non-ministerial Government Department, should retain its status as a Trading Fund and executive agency. It was also agreed that further work should be undertaken on three issues: freedoms and flexibilities that should be made available to Ordnance Survey; the provision and location of policy advice to government on geographic information; and issues surrounding Ordnance Survey's relationship with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The new framework document defines the role and responsibilities of, and delegations accorded to, Ordnance Survey. Ordnance Survey's delegations and freedoms are no different from all other trading funds. They have the ability to borrow funds, from the national loans fund, and have recruitment and retention flexibilities available that are consistent with those generally available to agencies acting at arms length from central Government, and operating within a commercial environment. A Treasury Minute was laid before the House setting a new financial target for Ordnance Survey on 15 January 2004.

The Government have considered options for the provision of policy advice on geographic information. They have concluded that it is appropriate that the director general and chief executive of Ordnance Survey should remain as official advisor to Ministers on all aspects of survey, mapping and geographic information, and continue to provide advice to meet specific requests. The Government also separately recognise that there is scope for the creation of a geographic information panel to consider medium and long term strategic and policy issues. A panel would also provide a channel, to complement advice to Ministers provided by the director general, on the wider, more effective and systematic use of geographic information. The panel will be chaired for the first year by the director general and chief executive of Ordnance Survey with the intention of rotating the chair on an annual or biennial basis. Panel members will review the chairmanship annually and put recommendations to Ministers. The terms of reference and membership of the panel will be announced shortly.

Ordnance Survey's relationship, as a non-ministerial government department and an executive agency, with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is set out in the Framework Document. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister acts in the capacity of protecting the Government's shareholding in Ordnance Survey, and as a customer for Ordnance Survey's data. It is important that at both ministerial and official levels, there is proper separation of responsibility between those who deal with the Government's investment in Ordnance Survey, and those taking decisions to purchase Ordnance Survey data. The Minister for Ordnance Survey will therefore play no part in any decisions or discussions relating to such commercially based transactions, primarily through the pan-government agreement for the supply of Ordnance Survey mapping data to Government. Arrangements will also be maintained to ensure that officials within this office are not in a position where they might be considered to hold conflicting responsibilities.

The Government consider that Ordnance Survey has a critically important role to play in ensuring that the UK economy fully benefits from the availability of quality, up-to-date and definitive geographic

information databases. Full and effective use of geographic information can generate significant benefits, opportunities and efficiencies for all those who have a requirement within their businesses and operations to use information that can be geographically referenced.

The new framework document will enable Ordnance Survey to continue to develop and enhance their underpinning database, and ensure that products derived from the database are delivered in a manner that meets both customer and national requirements.

Park Homes (Consultation Paper on Implied Terms)

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister will publish for public consultation on 30 July, a paper on park home implied terms and a written statement.

The Housing Bill includes several clauses that improve the rights of park home owners. These include two powers allowing the appropriate national authority (Secretary of State for England, and the National Assembly for Wales in relation to Wales) to make secondary legislation relating to the implied terms and the written statement.

Provision has been made for the first exercise of the power to specify new implied terms, and to amend and delete existing ones, to have retrospective effect. It is therefore vital that we address all the important issues in the first exercise of the power. An affirmative resolution approving the order from both Houses of Parliament will be necessary.

In the consultation paper we have proposed 22 changes to the implied terms on which we have already consulted informally. We propose, for example, amendments on, among other things, further tightening of the resale process, increased transparency in the payment system and more residents' rights through the quiet enjoyment of the pitch.

The Housing Bill contains a re-enactment of the power of the appropriate national authority to prescribe requirements with which written statements must comply. The consultation paper proposes several changes to the requirements taking account of the proposed implied terms.

Copies of the paper are being sent to a wide range of interested parties including local authorities, trade and resident associations, and others with an interest in this issue. The closing date for responses is 22 October.

Copies of the paper will also be placed in the Libraries of the House, and will be available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at www.odpm.gov.uk.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Employment Tribunal Service (Performance Targets)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Gerry Sutcliffe): The employment tribunals service has published its annual report and accounts for 2003–04 today. Copies have been laid before Parliament and will be placed on the ETS website at http://www.ets.gov.uk.

I have set the employment tribunals service the following targets for 2004–05:

Quality

75 per cent. of single employment tribunal cases to a first hearing within 26 weeks of receipt.

Minimum to be achieved by all offices in relation to above target: 65 per cent.

85 per cent. of employment tribunal decisions issued within four weeks of the final hearing.

85 per cent. of employment tribunal users satisfied with the service offered by ETS.

75 per cent of appeals to EAT to a first hearing within 26 weeks of receipt.

Efficiency

Three per cent. real terms reduction in employment tribunal administrative unit costs.

In addition to these key targets:

Finance

Pay 100 per cent. of invoices within 30 days of receipt of goods or services or a valid invoice, whichever is the later.

Questions delegated to the Chief Executive

Reply within 10 working days to all letters from Members of Parliament delegated for the Chief Executive's reply.

Audit Regulation (Annual Reports of the Recognised Supervisory Bodies)

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): I have received the annual reports for the year 2003 from the five recognised supervisory bodies for company auditors: a combined report from the Institutes of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and one each from the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants and the Association of Authorised Public Accountants. Copies of the reports have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Schedule 11 of the Companies Act 1989 sets out the requirements which a body must meet to be eligible for recognised supervisory body status. These include requirements to have adequate arrangements for monitoring and enforcing compliance with its rules relating to membership and eligibility (e.g. holding an appropriate qualification, being a fit and proper person, working to technical and ethical standards, maintaining competence), discipline and investigation of complaints. In these reports, the recognised bodies inform the Government about their activities in relation to these arrangements.

In January 2003, I announced a number of changes to the regulatory regime of the accountancy and audit professions, including the establishment of a new independent inspection unit, located within the Financial Reporting Council, and a professional oversight board for accountancy (POBA), to take over, from this Department, my functions under Part II of the Companies Act 1989 in respect of the recognised supervisory bodies. I am pleased to report that these bodies are now established and in operation. The delegation of these powers is dependent on provisions in the Companies (Audit, Investigation and Community

Enterprise) Bill currently before the House and so for the time being my Department continues to have responsibility or oversight of the recognised supervisory bodies.

Coal Authority (Annual Report and Accounts)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Nigel Griffiths): I have today laid a copy of the Coal Authority report and accounts for 2003–04 before Parliament.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Multi-agency Initial Assessment Team Trial

The Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety (Ms Hazel Blears): As part of the continuing work to improve the capability to deal with major incidents, the Home Office, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department of Health are sponsoring a trial of a multi-agency initial assessment team (MAIAT) in the London area.

Comprising officers from the London Fire Brigade, the Metropolitan Police, City of London Police and the London Ambulance Service, MAIAT will provide an initial assessment of potential chemical, biological, radiological or other major incidents.

The aim of the trial is to see whether a dedicated team could add to the emergency response by providing an early, effective and integrated assessment of the nature and risk of a CBRN incident. The trial will focus on central London.

The trial will be for one year during which the overall value of the team and the specific tasks it undertakes will be monitored, and lessons would be learned as the team develops. A full evaluation will be done towards the end of 2005, and lessons learned will be shared with emergency services elsewhere in the country.

This initiative has been developed with the emergency services in London and builds on their strong working relationship. It aims to add to, not replace, the capability we already have for responding to major incidents.

National Offender Management Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): On 6 January 2004, the Home Secretary announced the Government's response to Patrick Carter's review of the correctional services and confirmed our intention to establish a national offender management service. This statement outlines the way I intend to introduce the new single service.

The Carter review highlighted the fact that no single organisation has responsibility for managing offenders. The review proposed that the existing organisations should be absorbed within a new service focused on the end-to-end management of offenders throughout their sentence.

Since January, I have conducted two consultation exercises and have received nearly 400 written responses. After careful consideration, I have decided that the option of moving immediately to create new regional boards is unlikely to deliver better management of offenders and better services—my two main objectives. Instead, I intend at this stage to concentrate on introducing the concept and practice of end-to-end offender management. There has been widespread support for this approach and it is key to achieving our overall aim of reducing re-offending. I will introduce greater competition within correctional services by using the powers of the Secretary of State but at this stage I have concluded that this can best be achieved through the existing 42 probation boards. This will allow us to maintain important local links with other criminal justice agencies and the experience gained will allow us to take forward future structural change in a more informed way.

The regional offender managers will have direct responsibility for budget allocation. They will support the existing local boards in moving to an offender management model, manage board performance, develop contestability, and pilot commissioning in their area. They will play an important part in achieving more effective service delivery through greater competition, using providers of prison and community interventions from across the public, private and voluntary sectors and determining where to split purchaser and provider. This approach will give us the opportunity to expose the core of offender management, and not just interventions, to competition.

The 42 local probation boards will refocus their role around a new statutory responsibility for managing offenders. They are already able to purchase and commission services. The consultation responses show they are eager to respond to the Carter review and to embed the concept of offender management. I want to enlist this interest and enthusiasm although I am also determined that the boards embark on a radical programme of change, not least to extend their commissioning function.

While the regional offender managers will lead performance and innovation at regional level, individual offender management will continue to be organised locally below the existing area level. I recognise the importance of the links and relationships that underpin effective joint working. The work probation areas currently undertaken in child protection, on the local criminal justice boards, in the criminal and disorder reduction partnerships and in the youth offending teams will continue.

In parallel to the ongoing development of NOMS and the core concepts of offender management and contestability I intend to proceed with vigour in implementing the other initiatives recommended in the Carter review that are critical to achieving our goal of reducing re-offending, and which have at their heart the proper punishment and rehabilitation of offenders that will lead to a safer society for all.

CAC Annual Report (Immigration and Nationality Directorate)

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): I am pleased to announce the publication of the independent Complaints Audit Committee (CAC) annual report on the Immigration

and Nationality Directorate of the Home Office, for the year 2003–04. Copies are available in the Library of the House and on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's website.

This is the CAC's 10th report. Their role is to monitor the effectiveness of IND's procedures for investigating complaints about the conduct and efficiency of staff in IND. Their findings are valuable to the organisation.

The CAC has commended and recognised the continued improvement in the processes involved with complaints handling by IND, as well as the continued support of the IND's senior management team.

As with previous reports this annual report highlights a number of areas where IND could improve its customer service, supported by a number of recommendations. IND will use these recommendations to help inform their wider change and reform programme.

Refugee Integration Strategy/Refugee Funding Decisions

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): I am today publishing, and placing in the Libraries of both Houses, a draft for consultation of our new national refugee integration strategy, "Integration Matters". The purpose of the strategy, which applies to England and will replace that set out in 2000 in "Full and Equal Citizens", is to help refugees build new lives in the United Kingdom and integrate to the full: the actions it proposes will enable refugees to achieve their full potential, to contribute to the communities in which they live, and to access the public services they need. It sets out how we will use our investment in refugee services, particularly through the European refugee fund and the challenge fund, to promote these ends. The draft strategy proposes for the first time a set of indicators which, in conjunction with a major study of the experiences of new migrants, will enable us to monitor its effectiveness and make changes where necessary. In this task we will rely on the expertise of the National Refugee Integration Forum, whose role in drawing up the draft strategy has been invaluable.

In accordance with best practice, we are allowing three months for comment, and we would welcome the widest possible range of contributions: from the public, voluntary, and private sectors, and of course from refugees themselves. Further online copies of the strategy can be obtained from Priscilla.Pegg@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk to whom any comments should be sent. We are publishing simultaneously with the draft strategy the results of a skills audit of refugees, which has also been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and forms part of the evidence base underlying the strategy, demonstrating both the wide range of skills brought to the United Kingdom by refugees and the extent of the help which many of them need in order to contribute fully to British society.

I am also announcing today the grants we are making for 2004–05 from the European refugee fund and the refugee challenge fund. Both funds exist to channel much-needed resources to innovative projects designed to deliver services tailored to the specific needs of refugees. We have been able this year to fund 38 projects for a total of £2.5 million under the European refugee fund, and 79 projects for a total of £3 million under the challenge fund. A list of the successful projects has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector (Fifth Annual Meeting)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am today placing in the Library of the House copies of the report of the fifth annual meeting, held on 5 May 2004, to review the compact on relations between Government and the voluntary and community sector.

The meeting reviewed the significant achievements made across Government and the voluntary and community sector to implement and develop the compact. The compact is the blueprint for improving partnership working between Government, at all levels, and the sector.

The challenge now is to make sure the compact is used as a practical tool to improve public services and citizens' everyday lives.

The compact action plan in the report of the fifth annual meeting sets out our priorities for driving the relationship between Government and the sector forward this year.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC Charter Review: "What You Said About the BBC"

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): On 11 December 2003, I announced the first phase of BBC Charter review with the launch of a major public consultation. The consultation was supported by a programme of survey research, visits to different parts of the country to hear the views of people in the media industry and the public first hand, and a series of events for children and young people to hear what they had to say.

By the time the consultation closed on 31 March 2004 we had received over 5,000 written responses and there had been over 25,000 unique visitors to the charter review website. We published the responses on the internet as the consultation proceeded. The research fieldwork we commissioned was completed in June this year.

Today, I am publishing the results of this consultation and research. The report we are publishing "What You Said About the BBC" summarises the main points that were put to us. It does not capture every single one of the many hundreds of issues raised, which is why I am also publishing in full the reports of research and consultation on which "What You Said About the BBC" is based. These documents, together with the consultation responses I have already published, should be seen as a complementary package and taken together give a comprehensive picture of the views received.

"What You Said About the BBC" contains both praise and criticism. Most people indicated that they value the BBC and hold it in high esteem, but a significant minority disagreed. To those who like the BBC it was generally seen as the best broadcaster for news, documentaries and features about personal

interests. But even to many supporters it is seen as being by no means perfect. Although satisfaction levels are high, most people want to see changes. However, there is a clear view that the BBC should continue to remain independent of Government, parliamentary and commercial pressures.

People believe the BBC should keep up with developments in new technology and should be a leading partner in new markets-this will be particularly relevant as we make the journey towards full switchover from analogue to digital broadcasting.

Contributors clearly felt that there was room for improvement in the way the BBC is governed and regulated, although there is more debate to be had about exactly what changes are needed.

On the question of how we should pay for the BBC, the licence fee was widely considered to be the best—or rather the "least worst"—method for the time being, although other options were put forward and questions were raised about how the licence fee is set, collected and distributed.

The findings contained in this report will feed directly into the review of the BBC's charter. As I have said on numerous occasions, the only certain outcome of charter review will be a strong BBC, independent of Government.

I have placed copies of "What You Said About the BBC" and the supporting research in the Libraries of both Houses. Further copies are available from the charter review website: http://www.bbccharterreview.org.uk.

DEFENCE

Watchkeeper (Selection of Preferred Bidder)

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): I am pleased to announce the new chapter to the strategic defence review setting out the potential for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) significantly to improve operational effectiveness. UAVs will be a key contributor to network enabled capability and their ability to provide persistent surveillance of the battlefield or theatre of operations, without putting lives at risk has been demonstrated recently by US operations in Afghanistan and coalition operations in Iraq.

The central element of the UK's current plans for acquiring UAVs is the Watchkeeper programme, which will provide UK commanders with accurate, timely and high quality imagery. Watchkeeper will be an advanced system integrating air vehicles, sensor payloads and ground control facilities. It will be joined to the wider command and control network through communication systems such as Bowman, allowing information to be passed quickly, providing commanders with an improved understanding of the battle space and shortening sensor to shooter times.

The competition for entry into the final stage of the Watchkeeper programme has been run between two industrial teams led by Northrop Grumman and Thales Defence Ltd. Both submitted bids reflecting an understanding of the programme requirements, the technical complexities, the project management requirements and UK industrial participation. Following detailed consideration of the proposals, on the basis of value for money and demonstration of the best potential to deliver the required capability, the selection of the team led by Thales Defence Ltd will be announced as the preferred bidder for the Watchkeeper demonstration and manufacturing phase by the Secretary of State for Defence at the Farnborough international airshow today. Further negotiations will be required before the project is ready to pass its main investment decision. It is planned to start these negotiations immediately. Depending on the outcome of that work, we aim to make the main gate decision on Watchkeeper later this year. The intention remains to bring Watchkeeper into service as soon as possible with capability beginning around the end of 2006.

HEALTH

NHS Estates and Facilities Management Development Agency (Annual Report)

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr. John Hutton): We have received the NHS Estates and Facilities Management Development Agency annual report and accounts 2003–04 and copies have today been laid in accordance with the requirements of section 5 of the Exchequer and Audit Departments Act 1921.

The report describes the agency's performance against key tasks and targets and incorporates its accounts for that year.

Copies of annual report and accounts 2003–04 have been placed in the Library.

TRANSPORT

Air Quality (Heathrow)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Tony McNulty): The Department is today making information available on its website concerning the programme of work promised in the "Future of Air Transport" White Paper to examine how to make best use of Heathrow's existing two runways, and how a third runway could be added after a new runway at Stansted, while complying with strict conditions on air quality, noise and improved public transport access. Copies of the information available today have also been placed in the Libraries of the House.

The most challenging issue confronting expansion at Heathrow is compliance with forthcoming EU air quality limits. In addressing this issue, we have set up three air quality panels—involving independent experts supported by officials—to help us review the data and methodology used in analysis underpinning the White Paper and to advise on any further research and data that may be required over the next 12–18 months. In addition, work is underway with key stakeholders to explore the issues surrounding mixed mode operations and the options for improved surface access.

We are aiming to reach conclusions on the prospects for further development at Heathrow in time to contribute to the White Paper progress report promised

for 2006. Any proposals that were not consulted on in the run up to the White Paper, such as the introduction of mixed mode, will require full public consultation.

Early work will be focused on evidence gathering and analysis. We are committed to keeping people involved in this process and informed of any significant developments. In addition to the information and documents that we are making available on the Department's website, we will also hold periodic meetings with stakeholders and interested parties. The information on the web site—available at www.dft.gov.uk/aviation/projectheathrow—provides a summary of the project and its work and gives details of the air quality panels. We will keep this information under review as the project progresses, adding material as appropriate and responding to the feedback we receive.

Crossrail

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Alistair Darling): On 14 July last year I announced I had received business case proposals for the east-west London Crossrail project from Cross London Rail Links (CLRL) and that I was establishing an expert team to assess them. On 9 September I announced that Adrian Montague had been appointed to lead the review.

The Crossrail team had the following terms of reference:

(i) To establish the full cost of Cross London Rail Link's July 2003 Crossrail business case proposals, and to assess:

(ii) (a) whether they are likely to deliver to time, scope and budget;

(b) whether the business case proposals will offer value for money;

(c) the extent of Government funding that can be justified;

(d) the proportion of the funding required from non-Government sources.

(iii) To identify any means of delivering a Crossrail project which offer better performance than the business case proposals against tests at (ii) (a)–(d) above.

(iv) To report to the Secretary of State as soon as practicable.

I have studied the Montague findings closely. They broadly confirm the CLRL proposals, but indicate scope for important improvements. I am publishing the report today.

I have confirmed on many occasions the Government's support for the principle of building a new east-west Crossrail link. Indeed, as the Prime Minister says in his foreword to my transport strategy document today, Crossrail is a project that we want to see delivered.

In light of the Montague report, and the Government's analysis of what needs to be done to give effect to the suggested improvements, I am now confident that Crossrail should proceed, although a major funding challenge remains and I shall return to that later. I intend that appropriate powers for the construction of Crossrail should be sought by means of a hybrid Bill to be introduced in Parliament at the earliest opportunity.

The Montague report finds that, while some individual cost and revenue elements may be queried, CLRL's overall indicative cost for the scheme they propose, some £10 billion at 2002 prices, is broadly correct. It would appear to deliver acceptable value for money and provide an effective vehicle to support the Government's regeneration objectives and the creation of sustainable communities both in the Thames gateway and elsewhere, though there is scope for debate about the level of wider benefits that might be realised.

While the review concluded that there were no pivotal problems with CLRL's proposals, there were nonetheless areas of doubt. In particular, the review questioned whether CLRL's scheme could be operated at the planned high train throughput levels, given the multiple interfaces between Crossrail and the national railway network. The review also questioned the capacity of the construction industry to tackle such a large project in one go, and the suitability of CLRL's current governance structure to delivering the project.

In aggregate, these concerns create significant uncertainty. Some doubts reflect the nature of a scheme at this stage of its development, and could be expected to be resolved as the design matured, but others—not least those above—are more enduring. As a result, the review could not confirm the deliverability of the CLRL business case proposals as they stood. Montague made suggestions for further work and improvements. I have set in hand the further work needed to ensure that these areas of concern are satisfactorily addressed.

As provided for by its terms of reference, the review considered alternative ways of delivering a Crossrail project. Specifically, it explored a number of options based on a Paddington-Liverpool Street tunnel that runs broadly along the line of the currently safeguarded central route. All of these represented less extensive schemes than that initially proposed by CLRL and would enable a Crossrail project to be delivered at lower cost. They would also overcome some of the potential interface, capacity and deliverability problems identified above. In particular, although reliability questions arising from multiple interfaces should be substantially alleviated once Network Rail's plans for improved performance on the national railway show results, reducing the number of interfaces between Crossrail and the wider rail network would clearly bring advantages.

On the basis of the review's work, it is clear that the case for a limb to Richmond/Kingston is relatively weakly developed, and that an extension on the western side to Maidenhead might provide a better solution. This would be a key change, and would align directly with key review concerns about the scale, and deliverability of the project and number of interfaces it has with the national railway. I am today inviting CLRL to bring forward as soon as practicable confirmed route proposals for which powers should be sought in the hybrid Bill.

CLRL have already asked me to update the safeguarding directions for the central section of its proposed route, replacing the existing ones from 1990 and 1991, which are somewhat out of date. Updating the safeguarding directions would not only protect the

route, but also allow affected property-owners access to compensation via the statutory blight provisions. Accordingly, I will now issue safeguarding directions forthwith for the central section of CLRL's plans. Subject to due process, including the necessary consultation with local authorities, I would expect to safeguard the rest of the route, including access for the Thames gateway.

The review also explored ways of funding and financing Crossrail, including by means of alternative funding mechanisms and a novel stakeholder equity concept, which would involve using a fares supplement to provide passengers with a real stake in the future of Crossrail and to offer protection against project cost overruns. While this is a highly innovative idea that is worthy of further consideration, the potential to use fares as a buffer against cost overruns is limited. It would need to be considered in the context both of the existing fare level and pressures on fares more generally.

The Montague report makes clear the scale of funding challenge that Crossrail represents. As I explained in my statement last year, those who benefit from Crossrail should contribute substantially to its delivery. The Montague report confirms the likely availability of funds through alternative funding mechanisms but notes that these are not nearly enough to close the very large funding gap. Further work therefore needs to be done to develop a funding solution that is equitable to all parties, and which can successfully deliver a London project of such importance. My Department and HM Treasury will take this forward, working with the Mayor and the London business and finance community. This will include consulting on appropriate alternative funding mechanisms before next Summer, so that those who benefit from Crossrail are in a position to contribute as fully as possible to meeting the costs.

A key element of a robust project funding plan would be an effective mechanism to ensure that those bearing the risks of the project have proper control of it. In due course, control of a London-based scheme such as Crossrail should lie with London interests directly. However, as the review's report also makes clear, CLRL's current ownership structure is unlikely to provide an effective basis for the robust project governance that will be required initially for the management of the hybrid Bill, and then for the construction of the Crossrail itself.

Accordingly, I propose to reform Crossrail as a joint venture company between my Department and Transport for London, at least for the purposes of seeking and obtaining the necessary powers. The Secretary of State will appoint, with the agreement of the Mayor, an independent chairman of CLRL, who will have a casting vote on the board of the company. This will ensure that CLRL's Board has the clear decision-taking capability that the current deadlocked structure lacks. TfL will be involved in all aspects of the progress of the Bill and Crossrail could subsequently be transferred for TfL implementation.

The Crossrail concept has been around in one form or another for many years and commands considerable support from business and the travelling public alike. It has the promise to improve significantly travel into and across the centre of the capital and also to deliver wider benefits, in particular to the east of London. The Government's decision to proceed with this project after decades of prevarication represents a significant milestone in the history of London as we seek to build a transport system fit for the twenty-first century.

CABINET OFFICE

Government Car and Despatch Agency (Annual Report)

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Douglas Alexander): I have today laid the Government Car and Despatch Agency annual report and accounts 2003–04 before Parliament, copies of which are available in the Library.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Hong Kong

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): The latest report on the implementation of the Sino-British joint declaration on Hong Kong was published today and copies have been placed in the Library of the House. A copy of the report is also available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website www.fco.gov.uk. The report covers the period from 1 January to 30 June 2004 and includes a foreword by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary.

I commend the Report to the House.

Constitutional Treaty for the European Union (Provisional Text)

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): I have laid before the House Command Paper 6289, containing the text agreed by the European Council on 17–18 June 2004 for a Constitutional Treaty for the European Union (CIG 86/04). Copies have been placed in the Library of the House and the Vote Office.

This is an interim text of the treaty, which still has to go through a process of technical amendment by jurist-linguists this summer. The Dutch presidency then plan for the final text to be signed by Heads of State and Government on 29 October.

Command Paper 6289 includes the declarations of the council that will accompany the treaty, and the protocols that are new or directly relevant to the UK (the remainder can be seen in the on-line version of the treaty, at http://www.fco.gov.uk. We will present the final text in full to Parliament this autumn, also as a Command Paper, prior to introducing legislation to give it effect in UK law—subject to its approval in a referendum.

WORK AND PENSIONS

International Labour Conference 2003 (Convention 185)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): The 91st session of the International Labour Conference 2003 adopted a new Convention 185—Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention. We have today laid before Parliament a

White Paper entitled "International Labour Conference, Proposed action on a Convention adopted at the 91st Session of the International Labour Conference 2003", (Cm 6290), copies of which have been placed in the Library.

Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome

The Minister for Work (Jane Kennedy): The Industrial Injuries Advisory Council (IIAC) has completed its review of hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) and its report has been laid before Parliament (Cm 6098). The Government thank the council for the care and diligence taken in producing the report, and has decided to implement the report's recommendation to widen the terms of prescription of prescribed disease A11.

The revised prescription will take account of sensorineural symptoms, which are not included in the current prescription for prescribed disease A11.

The Department for Work and Pensions is currently working on detailed plans for putting this report into practice, which will include communicating with those representing people who may be affected.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 21 July 2004

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Energy Performance of Buildings Directive

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Phil Hope): I have today published two consultation documents. The first of these covers our proposals for amending the building regulations energy efficiency provisions (part L) and implementing the energy performance of buildings directive (EPBD). The second describes our proposals for amending the guidance in approved document F that supports part F—ventilation of the building regulations. Both consultation documents contain draft regulatory impact assessments.

Driving up the energy efficiency of our buildings is critical to our success in achieving the carbon emission reduction targets in the Energy White Paper and our energy efficiency action plan and will also contribute to our goals for developing more sustainable communities.

Raising performance standards and introducing requirements for efficiency in the use of boilers and air conditioning systems will not only make a difference in the drive to tackle climate change, they will also help to create warmer, healthier homes and more comfortable and productive workplaces.

The proposals for building energy performance certification requirements will enable prospective purchasers and tenants to be more aware of energy performance whenever buildings are constructed, sold or rented out.

Energy used in buildings is responsible for roughly half the UK's carbon dioxide emissions. Wasting energy costs money whereas measures such as loft insulation, boiler replacements and more effective controls often pay for themselves within a few years.

One of the cornerstones of saving energy is to make building structures more airtight to minimise heating or cooling energy losses due to air leaking through gaps in the structure. This is addressed in the amendments to part L. However, it is also essential to ensure there is sufficient controlled ventilation to maintain good indoor air quality to protect the health of the building occupants. This is one of the roles of part F, and is why approved document F has been revised in conjunction with part L.

The guidance on ventilation systems has been expanded to cover more options, and also changed from a prescriptive to a performance-based approach that should encourage innovation.

A new section in the proposed guidance deals with the design of smoking rooms in workplaces. The new edition of the approved document will also take into account the commitments made in the public health White Paper to be published later this year.

The consultation documents will be sent to several hundred organisations that have an interest in the energy efficiency of buildings and/or ventilation. Paper copies have also been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and the text can be downloaded from the ODPM website.

The consultation period for both sets of proposals closes on Friday 22 October 2004. Following this my officials will work with the Building Regulations Advisory Committee to consider how the proposals might need to be modified to take account of the opinions expressed in the consultations, and (for part F) the commitments that may be made in the public health White Paper. I am aiming, however, to lay the legislation needed to implement the directive and amend the building regulations and approved documents by July next year, and to achieve our goal of bringing them into effect by the end of December 2005.

Local Government Finance Settlement 2005–06

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): Together with representatives of local government and other Government Departments, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has reviewed the prospect for incorporating 2001 census data in the formula calculations used to distribute formula grant to local authorities. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has concluded that we should postpone the introduction of 2001 census data in the calculation of the local government finance settlement until the formula freeze is lifted, in 2006–07 at the earliest.

The 2001 White Paper "Strong Local Leadership—Quality Public Services", (CM5237), announced that the funding formula would be frozen for at least 2004–05 and 2005–06. Our aim is to provide local government with predictable and stable funding, so that they can plan their finances and their service provision from year to year.

It is clear that using 2001 census data to calculate the local government finance settlement will require formula changes, and will cause some large changes to the distribution of formula spending shares.

In deciding not to update the census data used in the funding formulae in 2005–06, we have balanced our aim of using the most up to date data to calculate local government grants against our commitment to the formula freeze and to stability and predictability in local government funding.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will work with local government to produce options to include the 2001 census data in the funding formula once the present formula freeze is lifted.

Revaluation, Transitional Rates Relief and Small Business Rates Relief

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): This statement provides initial information about the impact of the business rates

revaluation that will take effect from 1 April 2005, gives details of the proposed transitional relief scheme and sets out the Government's proposals for the small business rate relief scheme which also takes effect from 1 April 2005.

Table 1 below shows the overall effect of revaluation as a percentage change in rateable values and on rate bills.

Table 1: Overall effect of Revaluation for England and by Region including Central List—2005

Economic Region	*Average % change in RV from the 2000 rating lists to the 2005 rating lists*	*Average % change in liability as a result of revaluation before reliefs are applied*
East	20.5	1.1
East Midlands	15.9	−2.8
London	17.1	−0.8
North East	15.0	−3.4
North West	14.9	−3.5
South East	20.2	0.7
South West	19.9	0.4
West Midlands	13.6	−4.5
Yorkshire and Humberside	13.1	−5.3
Central list	32.9	10.5
Total	17.9	—

Notes:
1. The regional figures are based on the data in local lists of properties for each relevant billing authority. The Central List includes various utilities and networks that are not specific to a billing authority area. Central List properties pay their rates direct to the Secretary of State and the revenue is added to the NNDR revenue pool.
2. The third column simply deals with the effect of revaluation. In addition to this the final liability will be uprated to take account of the annual inflation increase.

Table 2 shows the movement in rateable values as a result of the 2005 revaluation by economic region and key property types—offices, shops, warehouses and factories.

Table 2: Movement in Rateable Values—By Region and Property Types

	Main Property Types							
	Offices		*Shops*		*Warehouses*		*Factories*	
Region	*RV Change*	*Liability Average*	*RV Change*	*Liability Average*	*RV Change*	*Liability Average*	*RV Change*	*Liability Average*
East	16%	−2.6%	27%	7.3%	23%	3.3%	19%	0.4%
East Midlands	18%	−1.4%	23%	3.6%	15%	−3.2%	12%	−6.0%
London	11%	−5.4%	26%	7.1%	23%	2.8%	22%	3.0%
North East	24%	2.2%	24%	4.8%	13%	−4.8%	13%	−5.6%
North West	18%	−0.5%	22%	3.0%	11%	−6.4%	10%	−7.3%
South East	8%	−9.0%	29%	8.4%	29%	8.8%	23%	3.4%
South West	21%	1.6%	27%	6.3%	16%	−2.3%	14%	−4.8%
West Midlands	15%	−3.8%	20%	0.7%	11%	−6.6%	6%	−11%
Yorkshire and Humberside	14%	−3.9%	26%	6.0%	12%	−5.7%	9%	−8.3%
England	13%	−4.7%	25%	5.7%	18%	−0.5%	14%	−4.2%

Notes:
1. "RV change" reflect the average percentage increase in rateable value from the 2000 rating lists to the 2005 rating lists.
2. "Liability average" is the average change in liability as a result of revaluation before reliefs are applied.

Although the tables show an overall national increase in rateable values, this does not mean an increase in the overall tax take, or that rate bills will necessarily rise by the same amount. The purpose of revaluations is to distribute tax in a more equitable way by updating the valuation of property, thereby making the tax base more current and relevant. The tables therefore also show the likely effect of revaluation on rates bills.

This information provides important indicators of national trends. However, it is not necessarily a good predictor of changes in an individual's rates bill since these will be affected by more local differences and by factors that are specific to the individual property. Nevertheless, in England as a whole, nearly 60 per cent. of properties will see a fall in their rateable values and therefore a fall in their rate liability.

The Valuation Office Agency is finalising the preparation of the draft rating lists that will be published on 1 October. These are being published three months earlier than usual and will contain more comprehensive information than ever before. This will enable ratepayers to plan ahead with much greater certainty and should also reduce the number of appeals.

The Local Government Act 2003 provides that the 2005 revaluation must be accompanied by a transition scheme to lessen the effects of sudden and significant rises in rates bills. The legislation provides that the scheme must be self-financing, so that the costs do not fall on other taxpayers. For revaluation 2005, we are proposing a four-year self-financing transitional scheme. The costs of phasing in increases will be met by phasing down the reductions in liability for others.

The scheme seeks to provide an appropriate balance between protecting those who experience larger increases in rates bills and allowing those who enjoy a fall in bills to experience the full benefit as quickly as possible. As a result we propose the caps for properties experiencing increases will be 12.5 per cent., 17.5 per cent., 20 per cent. and 25 per cent. for the four years and for small properties 5 per cent., 7.5 per cent., 10 per cent. and 20 per cent.

For large properties experiencing reductions in rate bills, these would be capped at the rates of 7 per cent., 10 per cent., 17.5 per cent. and 20 per cent. For small properties, the rates proposed are 17.5 per cent., 25 per cent, 45 per cent. and 50 per cent. These downward caps

are significantly more generous than in any previous transitional scheme and mean that those liable to decreases in their rates bills will benefit more quickly than under earlier schemes. Also, the effect of the separate capping levels means that small businesses will only be required to make a very small contribution to the scheme.

Further details of the transitional scheme will be included in a consultation paper to be published shortly. The consultation will continue until October, by which time businesses will know their proposed rateable value from the valuation office agency draft rating lists. This will enable ratepayers to consider the effect of the proposed scheme alongside their proposed new rateable values before responding to the consultation.

I am also announcing our proposals for the new small business rate relief scheme. Government recognise that the current system of business rates places a disproportionate burden on small businesses. The small business rate relief scheme will address that.

Plans for a small business rate relief scheme were first announced in 2001 in the White Paper "Strong Local Leadership—Quality Public Services". The White Paper proposed that rate relief should be available at 50 per cent. for properties with a rateable value up to £3,000 with relief declining in percentage terms on a sliding scale until at £8,000 there would be no entitlement to relief. However, we undertook to review these thresholds before the scheme was implemented. The scheme that we will be consulting on next month is significantly more generous than the one originally envisaged, and proposes that the thresholds should be set at £5,000 and £10,000. We are also introducing a buffer zone so that business properties with rateable values between £10,000 and £15,000 will not have to contribute towards the relief.

The scheme will be funded through a supplement on the rates bills of larger businesses, in line with the requirement in the Local Government Act 2003, although we have made a commitment that this should not add more than 2.5 per cent. to bills. The proposed scheme would increase the overall supplement to no more than 0.67p. This equates to a 1.6 per cent. increase in rates bills.

We estimate that more than 400,000 small businesses stand to benefit from the proposed scheme.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Parental Separation: Children's Needs and Parents' Responsibilities

The Minister for Children (Margaret Hodge): This statement is being made on a joint basis, together with my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Minister for Women and Equality.

I am pleased to report that consultation document "Parental Separation: Children's Needs and Parents' Responsibilities" (Cm 6273) is today being presented to Parliament.

Parental separation affects many children and their families. When handled well the adverse impact on their children can be minimised. When things go badly the effects can be very damaging for children, both in the short and longer terms. These risks can be reduced if parents can resolve parenting issues in an amicable fashion. Because of social changes, more children experience parental relationship breakdown than a generation ago: 150,000 to 200,000 parental couples separate each year. In addition, fathers are, in general, more actively involved in caring for and helping to raise their children.

Currently, only 10 per cent. of separating couples with children have had their contact arrangements ordered by the courts, though the number of court applications for contact is rising each year, with the courts in England and Wales making 67,000 contact orders last year. The majority of applications are made by fathers, reflecting the fact that most children live with their mothers following separation.

I am clear that there is scope for considerable improvement in the way in which the family justice system, together with its associated services, deal with contact disputes. This view is widely shared among judges, legal practitioners and voluntary organisations. Some fathers' groups assert that the courts and the law are biased against them. I do not accept this view. However, what I do accept is that major changes are needed, in order to ensure that court and other interventions into family life become much more effective in helping to secure effective resolutions which are in the interests of the child. I strongly believe that in most cases it is very much in the interests of the child to have an on-going relationship with both parents. By improving the system, the Government can make their proper contribution to enabling more non-resident parents to enjoy meaningful ongoing relationships with their children.

Following the most careful consideration across Government, we have determined that it would not be helpful, in any practical sense, to revise the principles that currently underpin the central piece of legislation—the Children Act 1989, in particular, the paramountcy principle, which makes the child's welfare the court's first consideration. This primary legislation, as interpreted and defined by the case law, already makes clear that both parents are equal and that both should continue to have a meaningful relationship with their children after parental separation, so long as it is safe. We fully accept that we need to make changes to the current system, and to support parents in settling their disputes, by providing more effective help for them to do so.

This consultation document puts forward proposals which are intended to help those undergoing parental separation to resolve their disputes more effectively so that children's needs are better met. They are based on the recognition that the primary responsibility for caring for children rests with parents rather than with the state. Their aims are threefold. Firstly, they aim to minimise conflict and support good outcomes, both for children and their parents, preferably without recourse to the courts. Secondly, they aim to improve parental access to those services which can enable them to reach agreements. Thirdly, they aim to improve legal processes and service delivery for those who do go to court. While most of our proposals are focused on the

10 per cent. of parents who turn to the courts, a number of them are intended to be relevant to all parents who separate.

In developing these proposals, we have listened carefully to what parents and children have said. The consumer Strategy work of the Department for Constitutional Affairs involved drawing together evidence from research and conducting workshops and focus groups with parents. The key message from the parents was that they wanted help and support to navigate the emotional and practical issues they faced during the breakdown of their relationship.

We have also consulted widely with the key stakeholders, including parents' groups, academics, voluntary organisations and service providers, including the judiciary, legal professionals and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS). It is this approach that will ensure rapid improvements at local level. Alongside the publication of this consultation document, the president of the Family Division and the chief executives of the court service and of CAFCASS are today writing to all judges, court service staff and CAFCASS officers to begin the process of change.

The consultation period, which begins today, will run until 1 November 2004. Comments and discussions about the proposals will be welcome. The Government plan to implement many of these proposals quickly and robustly and to pursue the legislation that is needed as soon as possible.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

"I Will Write" Replies

The Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Peter Hain): The Speaker has raised with me his concern, and that of other Members, about the number of "I will write" replies to parliamentary questions, and the inaccessibility of the subsequent responses. The matter was also raised by the Public Administration Committee in its report on "Ministerial Accountability and Parliamentary Questions" [Third Report, HC355, paragraph 29].

Following discussion with ministerial colleagues, and in consultation with Mr. Speaker and the House authorities, I have agreed the following arrangements, which will take effect from September.

> Government Departments will continue to make every effort to provide a substantive answer to every parliamentary question within the customary timescale.
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> Departments will give "I will write" answers only rarely, when there is particular reason for delay.
>
> At the end of each session, Departments will make every effort to answer questions substantively before prorogation; but, if this is not possible, Ministers will—instead of issuing an "I will write" reply, as in the past—answer the question with the following form of words: "It has not proved possible to respond to the [Right] hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation". It will then be open to the Member concerned to re-table the question in the new session if he or she wishes.
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> On those occasions where an "I will write" answer is necessary, a copy of the subsequent substantive response will be sent to Hansard and to the Library, and will be printed with the written answers in the next edition of Hansard.
>
> If the subsequent response is longer than Hansard would normally publish, notification will be printed that the response is available in the Library of the House. The response will be available to Members in the Library and to the public on application to the House of Commons information office.
>
> If Ministers wish to provide, in response to a question, personal or confidential information that would not be appropriate for publication, this will be made clear in the answer. The "I will write" formula will not be used and copies will not be sent to Hansard or the Library.

I believe that these new arrangements will substantially reduce the number of "I will write" replies, and make the subsequent responses much more accessible both to other Members and to the public.

Public Bills: Exchanges Between the Houses

The Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Peter Hain): During the final stages of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill in May, a procedural difficulty arose in the House of Lords. Contrary to the intention of this House, it appeared to the House of Lords that a message from the Commons amounted to a "double insistence" in respect of one Lords amendment. In such circumstances, a Bill is normally lost. However, as this was clearly not the wish of either House, the House of Lords agreed to vary the normal practice in that House, to allow the Bill to continue in play.

The Leader of the House of Lords invited the Clerks of both Houses and parliamentary counsel to consider jointly the lessons learnt from this episode and how best to avoid such a situation in the future. In particular, they were asked to look at the practice of considering amendments in the other House in groups or packages and the procedural consequences which can follow.

Following consideration by a working group of Clerks and parliamentary counsel, the Clerks of both Houses have agreed the following statement of position:

> "Before a bill can become an Act of Parliament, the two Houses have to agree on the text. The procedure for reaching agreement appears simple in concept, but can become extremely complicated in practice because of the political context. It may involve, for example, one House having to back away from an entrenched position.
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> Following Third Reading and passing of the bill in the second House, a list of amendments made by that House is compiled and sent back to the first House for their consideration. If the first House agrees to all of the amendments made in the second House, the bill is ready for Royal Assent. If it does not, it returns the bill to the second House, with reasons for disagreeing to the amendments, and/or with further amendments. The second House then considers the reasons and amendments offered by the first House. The exchanges between the two Houses continue until:
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> (a) agreement is reached, or
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> (b) the Session is brought to an end, without agreement having been reached, or
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> (c) 'double insistence' is reached, which normally results in the bill being lost.
>
> The term double insistence is used to describe a situation where one House insists on an amendment to which the other has disagreed, and the other House insists on its disagreement. If this point is reached, and neither House has offered alternatives, the bill is lost. This doctrine is set out in Erskine May 23 edition, page 639, which, however, goes on to say 'there is no binding rule of order which governs these proceedings in either House, and, if there is a desire to save

the bill, some variation in the proceedings may be devised in order to effect this object.'

In the case of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill, two amendments (Lords amendments 1 and 3) were still under discussion in the final exchanges between the two Houses. In the Commons, the two amendments were treated as forming a package, and a single amendment (1C) was considered by the Commons to be an amendment in lieu of both Lords amendments. But the reason given for disagreeing to Lords amendment 3 made no mention of the link between amendment 1 and amendment 3. Accordingly, the Lords Clerks advised that double insistence had been reached on amendment 3, and they advised the Government that it would be necessary to move a motion to vary the normal practice of the House, and thus allow further consideration of the bill. A motion was agreed to on 11 May.

We have been asked to consider the lessons which can be learnt from these exchanges.

By way of background, we note that the speed and complexity of exchanges between the two Houses has increased markedly in recent years. This is due partly to political circumstances, and partly to technical advances in text handling, which have made possible extremely rapid turn-around of bills. Increased speed inevitably carries the risk of misunderstanding or error, and reduces the time available for consideration of the possible consequences of each House's decisions.

Particularly in the Commons, the practice has developed of packaging and grouping amendments during these final stages.[1] Packaging and grouping are useful ways of signalling perceived connections between amendments. But these are techniques for organising debate within each House; neither House can be expected either to discover, or to feel bound to follow, arrangements made by the other for the consideration of amendments. Messages between the two Houses, and reasons for disagreement, are ways of communicating perceived connections between amendments, but these in turn depend upon the terms of the motions in each House. We consider that the wording of motions could be improved, in order to make clearer the links between the different elements of a 'package' of amendments. We also think that the wording should be improved, in order to make the action of one House clearer to the other and, where necessary, to identify any package.

As an example, in a case where one House insists on disagreement to more than one amendment and offers an alternative only to one, intending that single alternative to encourage the other House to reconsider all the relevant amendments, the most certain way of avoiding the need in future for a motion disapplying the double insistence rule will be to ensure that a single motion to disagree is laid before the House along the lines of 'that this House insists on its disagreement to amendments 1, 2 and 3 but proposes the following amendment in lieu of amendment 1'. The other House will then be able to identify the group of amendments as a package.

We are in agreement that in such a case the resultant message to the other House would not amount to a double insistence, whether or not the House receiving it chose to 'unpackage' the amendments for the purposes of debate.

From a practical point of view, we consider that the packaging of amendments has advantages, and that there could be benefits from bringing the practices of the two Houses more closely together in this respect. With this in mind, the Clerk of the Parliaments will invite the Lords Procedure Committee to consider changes to the practice of the House, to allow more flexibility in dealing with Commons amendments which have been packaged.

Although, in many cases, it is likely that the two Houses will be prepared to consider as a whole a package of amendments which has been received from the other House, there will be other cases when either House may wish to consider the elements of a package separately for political reasons. It is not the purpose of procedure to provide political solutions, but rather to facilitate the consideration of options. Each House remains the master of its own procedures, and where there is disagreement about packaging, it will be possible, as at present, for the other House to consider amendments separately to the extent desired."

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act 2000

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has signed a written agreement with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to allow them to perform the functions of an approved prosecutor under Section 1 (3) (e) of the Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act 2000. This Act supplements the Protection of Animals Act 1911, by allowing a magistrates court to make an order relating to the temporary care or for the disposal, sale or slaughter of animals kept for commercial purposes that are the subject of a prosecution brought under the 1911 Act by a prosecutor. The agreement with the RSPCA will take effect from 1 September 2004 and will apply to England only. Copies of the model agreement have been deposited in the Libraries. The model agreement and associated guidance notes can also be found on Defra's website at: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/farmed/on-farm/.htm.

Future of Nirex

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): In my statement of 16 July 2003, I announced that Government was looking at the best way of making Nirex "independent of industry and under greater Government control". I would now like to make a further statement, concerning the means of moving forward with this, that I have agreed with my Right Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

The Government, through DEFRA and DTI, intend to establish a new company limited by guarantee (CLG) to hold the shares in Nirex, and oversee its business operations. The transfer of Nirex shares to the new CLG will be covered by an appropriate commercial transaction with existing Nirex shareholders. The CLG will, effectively, provide a means of placing Nirex assets and intellectual property into trust, whilst enabling it to continue with its important work that includes setting standards for the conditioning and packaging of radioactive waste, until the Government can take their decision on policy for the long-term management of the UK's higher activity radioactive waste, and the means

[1] In this note, 'grouping' refers to the practice (in both Houses) whereby related amendments are debated together, but the fate of individual amendments in the group is decided separately. 'Packaging' refers to the practice (currently only used in the House of Commons), in the final stages of a bill's passage, where a number of related amendments may be grouped together for the purposes of both debate and decision. So, for example, a motion on a "package" might invite the House to agree to amendments (a), (b) and (c) to a Bill, in lieu of Lords amendments 42 to 44 and 61.

of its delivery, in light of recommendations from the independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM). The funding will be by contract, primarily through the NDA. Nirex will be separate from, and independent of, the NDA.

The new arrangements will achieve both the objectives stated in my previous announcement, to make Nirex independent of industry and bring the company under greater Government control. The aim is to agree the detail of them by about October/November of this year for them to come fully into operation from 1 April 2005.

Successful implementation is subject to a significant amount of more detailed work currently being undertaken by DEFRA and the DTI in conjunction with Nirex and its present shareholders, including an ongoing programme of due diligence work. All parties are committed to achieving a successful outcome to this process.

Home Energy Conservation Act Data

The Minister for the Environment and Agri-environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): Data reported by energy conservation authorities in England under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 in the period 1 April 1996 to 31 March 2003 have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. These data have also been published on the Department for Food and Rural Affairs' website, at address http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/energy/heca95/index.htm.

Authorities have reported an overall improvement in domestic energy efficiency of approximately 12 per cent. as measured against a 1996 baseline.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Gender Equality Strategy Consultation

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): I wish to advise the House that on 14 August 2004, I will announce a public consultation exercise in respect of a proposed gender equality strategy, the Government's high level policy for tackling gender inequalities in Northern Ireland.

This consultation follows our fulfilment of a commitment given by the previous Northern Ireland executive, in its programme for Government (2001–04) to bringing forward and implementing a cross-departmental strategy to tackle gender inequalities.

Copies of the Consultation Paper "Gender Matters—Towards a Cross Departmental Strategic Framework to Promote Gender Equality For Women And Men 2005–15" have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Insolvency Service Annual Report and Account (Year Ending 31 March 2003)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Barry Gardiner): In accordance with Articles 372 and 358(4) of the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 copies of the Insolvency Service Annual Report and Account for year ending 31 March 2003 have been placed in both Libraries of the House today.

Invest Northern Ireland (Annual Report and Accounts 2002–03)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Barry Gardiner): The annual report and accounts of Invest Northern Ireland for the financial year ending 31 March 2003 were deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

Youth Council

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): The 2001–02 accounts of the Youth Council for Northern Ireland were deposited in the Libraries of both Houses on 21 July 2004.

Ordnance Survey (Corporate Plan 2004–07 and Business Plan 2004–05)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela Smith): I have today arranged for the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland corporate plan 2004–07 and business plan 2004–05 document to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. This document will also be made available on the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland website at: www.osni.gov.uk.

North/South Implementation Bodies—Tourism Ireland Ltd

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): I have today placed in the Library papers relating to decisions that have been taken during the period 1 October 2003 to 5 July 2004 which relate to the North/South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Ltd under the terms of the exchange of notes of 19 November 2002 (Cmnd 5708).

HOME DEPARTMENT

Visually Recorded Pre-trial Cross-examination

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 (the 1999 Act) contained, among other provisions, eight special measures for vulnerable or intimidated witnesses. They are essentially different ways of giving evidence in criminal trials that were designed either to improve the quality of evidence given by witnesses through reducing their levels of stress or to make it possible for witnesses who find difficulty in giving their evidence to have access to justice.

This Government have already implemented, or is piloting, seven of the eight measures. The eighth measure—visually recorded pre-trial cross-examination—was always going to be the most complicated of the measures to implement. It was also always likely to be applied to the smallest number of cases.

A number of stakeholders have expressed their concerns to us about the detail of its implementation. We therefore commissioned Professor Diane Birch, a leading academic in the field, to review and provide advice on the workability of visually recorded pre-trial cross-examination. A copy of Professor Birch's report has been laid in the Library today.

The report concludes that one of the two main reasons for undertaking visually recorded pre-trial cross-examination—that of capturing all the witness's evidence early in the pre-trial process—is no longer valid. That is because of new rules on disclosure that effectively mean that by the time both counsel are in a position to undertake visually recorded pre-trial cross-examination, they will be ready to go ahead with the trial itself.

The second reason—keeping the witness out of court altogether—is still valid. However, the report concludes that rather than introduce the cumbersome mechanism of visually recorded pre-trial cross-examination many months after having visually recorded evidence-in-chief, it would be far more sensible to return to the original recommendation in the report of the advisory group on video evidence (1989) chaired by his Honour Judge Thomas Pigot QC. This was that the child should appear at an informal hearing, at which both the child's evidence-in-chief (supplemented, where there was one, by an earlier video recorded interview) and the cross-examination would be recorded on video for subsequent transmission to the court.

The report recommends that section 28 of the 1999 Act that provides for visually recorded pre-trial cross-examination should be revisited. It recommends also that the operation of section 21 of the same Act should be reviewed. Section 21 provides that under-17 year olds who are witnesses in cases of sex or violence are given no choice in having certain special measures—such as visually recorded evidence-in-chief or live TV links—applied to them, whether they wish for them or not. So a 16½ year old who has witnessed any sort of violent crime, even where he was not himself involved, would be forced to give evidence in this way.

The Government are disappointed not to be implementing one of the eight special measures for vulnerable or intimidated witnesses that we provided for in good faith five years ago. But we believe it is better to take the advice of one of the leading experts in the field and many senior practitioners, and revisit this complex issue. Our aim is to achieve genuine improvements to the way in which vulnerable and intimidated witnesses give their evidence, and this will not be achieved by ploughing on doggedly with implementation of provisions which informed advice suggests will not be practicable or yield the benefits originally envisaged.

We have therefore decided that in the autumn we shall embark upon a wider review of how child evidence is taken and presented in the criminal courts, particularly in cases involving sex or violence, with the aim of delivering the greater flexibility recommended in Professor Birch's report. This will assist in our aim of enabling measures to be more tailored to the individual witness's needs.

We are also ensuring that everything that can be done to improve the experience of those witnesses who might have benefited from the implementation of section 28 is being done. The "No Witness No Justice" project will ensure that children's needs are assessed and met, so that, for example, pre-trial court visits are arranged; access to a range of emotional support and guidance through appropriate groups is offered; where possible home visits take place; and parents are provided with a single point of contact to access information and advice throughout the case. We will continue to improve court buildings so that encounters between the defendant and the child witness are minimised, for example through providing more TV live links. We will also continue to work with the judiciary and the bar to ensure that children's needs and wishes are recognised by the courts.

Public and Contracted Prisons

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): In my written statement on 15 July announcing publication of the Prison Service and national probation service annual reports for 2003–04, I stated that a full breakdown of the performance of both public and contracted prison establishments in relation to the applicable key performance indicators (KPIs) would be provided at a later date.

The information on all applicable KPIs is presented in the table that has been placed in the Library. No category A prisoners escaped from any prison and so performance on this KPI is not included in the table. Information is not available at establishment level on the resettlement KPI (which is calculated on the basis of a national resettlement survey), and on the two KPIs on contracted escorts (escapes and timely arrival at court) which are not managed at establishment level. The contracted prisons do not have targets on staff sickness levels or minority ethnic representation. Due to data collection problems there are no figures available for doubling in contracted prisons.

Forensic Science Service Annual Report and Accounts 2003–04

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): I have today laid before Parliament copies of the Forensic Science Service's (FSS) annual report and accounts for 2003–04.

Performance against agency targets 2003–04:

The FSS met 20 of its 22 targets and put in a robust financial performance. Of the two targets not achieved, one was missed narrowly and the other became unachievable through circumstances outside of the agency's control. Details are contained in the annual report.

The Forensic Science Service agency targets for 2004–05 are as follows:

Finance:

Target 1

Three year rolling average of 15 per cent. minimum return on capital employed.

Target 2

75 per cent. reduction in charges versus the average earnings index.

Target 3

Increase investment in development by a minimum of 12 per cent. of turnover.

Target 4

Secure £1.25 million of external funding for research and development.

Non-Finance:

Target 1

Embed the internal FSS end to end process.

Target 2

Implement the new definitions of timeliness (NDoT) based on investigative and evidential contributions of forensic science for 100 per cent. of forces.

Target 3

Make available to 100 per cent. of forces the process of end to end case ownership.

Target 4

Sign up 100 per cent. of customers (police and CPS) at force level to service agreements (timelines and charging) in context of national protocol.

Target 5

Allocation of 100 per cent. of cases to a dedicated FSS case officer.

Target 6

Roll out training packages for police and CPS to support new ways of working.

Target 7

Design and develop a link between NDNAD and NAFIS (carried forward from last year).

Target 8

Maintain a capacity to deliver fast track processing of DNA samples within 48 hours.

Target 9

Deliver 15 per cent. of DNA samples (subject to demand) within 48 hours (fast track processing).

Target 10

Average time of seven days to analyse and inform customers of DNA crime scene stain results (normal track).

Target 11

95 per cent. of DNA crime scene stain results (see above) will have a turn round time of 12 days.

Target 12

Average time of five days to analyse and inform customers of DNA suspect sample results on database (normal track cases).

Target 13

95 per cent of DNA suspect sample results (see above) will have a turn round time of eight days.

Target 14

Increase forensic effectiveness by fully implementing the index and benchmark system.

Target 15

95 per cent of jobs (excluding road traffic accidents and alcohols) will have a turn round time of 35 days.

Target 16

Maintain ISO Accreditation.

Target 17

Maintain Investors in People accreditation.

Target 18

Maintain diversity programme.

Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): On the evening of 19 July there was a serious disturbance at Harmondsworth immigration removal centre.

At about 8 pm staff found a detainee hanging in a shower-room at the centre. At about 11 pm a number of detainees became disruptive and started to set a number of fires in the communal areas. These fires were put out by the newly installed fire protection system. The police and fire services were called to the scene.

The disturbance continued and became more serious. Staff from UKDS, the company managing the centre under contract from the Home Office, withdrew from the association areas. Standing arrangements in the Prison Service for dealing with serious incidents were activated, and by midnight the Gold Command Suite at Prison Service headquarters was in operation. By 4 am on 20 July the Prison Service Operation Tornado teams went into the centre. By 8 am three of the four house blocks were under Prison Service control. The fourth came under control a little later in the morning, and by 2 pm all parts of the centre were calm.

The Centre is, for the time being, unsuitable for use. The 441 detainees who were there at the time of the disturbance are being removed to other accommodation, and we are in the final stages of dispersing them across a range of sites, including the IND removal estate and prison establishments while a small number have been taken into police custody. No detainees have been released. An assessment of the damage is being made with UKDS, and the centre will be reopened as quickly as possible. In the meantime, alternative arrangements are being made for the handling in particular of those detainees whose asylum claims were being dealt with under the fast track.

This was a serious disturbance, and I pay tribute to all those who responded quickly and succeeded in restoring order. It is important to note that the disturbance did not lead to loss of life or serious injury. No detainees escaped, and the measures which had been taken to prevent a recurrence of the fire at Yarl's Wood Centre proved successful. We are determined that the centre be restored to full use as soon as possible.

The tragic death of the detainee earlier in the evening of 19 July will be the subject of a full investigation by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman. The police are conducting a criminal investigation into the events themselves. There are also likely to be managerial lessons to be learned and I have instigated an immediate investigation, the terms of reference of which will be: to establish the facts of the events at Harmondsworth on the evening of 19 July and the morning of 20 July; to consider the factors which may have given rise to the disturbance and the effectiveness of the measures which were taken to deal with it; and to make recommendations.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Court Services

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): The MCSI inspection of courts services annual report for 2003–04 has been laid before Parliament today. This document gives full details of the MCSI's performance for that year. Copies of the report have been place in the Libraries of both Houses.

DEFENCE

Project ISOLUS

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): On 4 February 2004 I informed the House of Commons that Ministry of Defence owned coastal sites were being considered for their suitability to store radioactive material from nuclear-powered submarines under Project ISOLUS. That exercise is now complete and one site, the royal armaments depot (RNAD) at Coulport in Dumbartonshire, has been found suitable in principle. One of the industry bidders, Serco Assurance, in partnership with Parsons Brinckerhoff Ltd. and RWE Nukem Ltd., is seeking to use a MOD site in their proposal and they will now be asked if they wish to incorporate Coulport into their bid, as will the other bidders.

I want to make it clear that this does not mean that Coulport has been selected as the storage location—there is still much work to be done before a final decision is made. Nor does it mean that industry has to incorporate the site in any bid. It does, however, mean that those other coastal sites included in the review, some of which have been the subject of considerable speculation, have been assessed as unsuitable and are not storage options.

Coulport has, of course, previously been named in an industry bid, and is one of the sites on which we consulted the public last year. I do not envisage setting in train further consultation at this stage. If, however, any of the proposals from industry change in substance as a result of the inclusion of Coulport we will instigate a further public consultation exercise. As at all stages of the ISOLUS process, safety, in terms of the general public, the workforce and the environment, will be a key factor in all of our decisions. The concerns expressed by the public during the events at the various sites named in each of the industry bids have been captured by the 50 recommendations contained in the Lancaster University report on the consultation exercise. These recommendations are currently being considered and, following consultation with other government departments and devolved administrations, a Government response will be published later this year.

The exercise to identify potential MOD sites has concentrated on those by the coast in view of the current preferred option of land storage of cut out intact reactor compartments. The 118 sites were assessed against the following criteria: sufficient spare capacity to accommodate a storage facility; long term security of tenure; development of a storage facility that is feasible and cost effective, would not breach existing agreements with MOD, NATO or other countries, and would not inhibit the site's current principal operational function; access from the sea, capable of accepting heavy loads; and no safety hazard, such as flooding, coastal erosion and whether the site is used for handling and storing explosives, or where unexploded ordnance has been identified, for which there is no cost effective engineering solution.

In parallel with the detailed consideration of the outcome of the public consultation, and informed by the recommendations flowing from it, evaluation of the various industry outline proposals will be completed. We expect to be able to announce early next year how the project will be taken forward. Moreover, the Government remains committed to a further round of public consultation before any final decisions are taken.

Military Low Flying Annual Report

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The amount of low flying training carried out in the UK low flying system (UKLFS) during the training year April 2003 to March 2004 was the minimum required for aircrew to reach and maintain their ability to fly at low level. The number of low flying training hours booked in the UKLFS (excluding the rotary wing dedicated user areas, where different booking arrangements apply) decreased by 1,996 hours, in comparison with the previous training year.

We are committed to ensuring that low flying training across the UK is spread as widely as is practically possible across the UK so that no single area is too burdened. However, due to a variety of reasons, population distribution and geographical and climate restrictions, it is unavoidable that some areas of the country may experience more activity than others.

I have today placed in the Library of the House a report giving a detailed account of the low flying training that has taken place in the UK low flying system for the training year April 2003 to March 2004.

The report is also available on the MOD web site: www.mod.uk/issues/lowflying.

Quick Reaction Alert

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): On 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 30–31WS, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced that Typhoon aircraft would be based at RAF Coningsby, RAF Leeming and RAF Leuchars. I have now decided that RAF Leuchars will be the second Typhoon base after RAF Coningsby. This is in order to meet the requirement for quick reaction alert (interceptor) aircraft cover for the UK. RAF Coningsby and RAF Leuchars are already established as bases for this purpose, which will continue after Typhoon is introduced.

Woolwich Station

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): A review has been undertaken of the defence requirement for the retention of Woolwich station. The review took account of our future ground based air defence requirements, of the strategy for the rationalisation of the Defence Estate and of the recommendations of the Lyons review. It has concluded that the Ministry of Defence should re-locate units currently based in Woolwich to sites yet to be decided. This will allow the Woolwich site to be made available for non-defence use. Further work is now needed on implementing this decision. All personnel affected have today been advised of our intention and they and their union representatives will be consulted fully as our plans develop.

Defence Housing Overseas

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): Last year, the Ministry of Defence carried out a business process review of the management and delivery of defence housing. The review recommended merger between Defence Estates and the Defence Housing Executive, the agency responsible for the management and delivery of defence family housing in Great Britain but not in Northern Ireland or abroad. As Phase 2 of the study, following the above merger, a further review is being undertaken of the management and delivery of family housing for UK forces overseas and in Northern Ireland.

The aim of the review is to examine the function, role, operation, funding and organisation of defence housing in Northern Ireland and overseas. It will seek to identify the most efficient and effective process to support the management and delivery of defence housing in those areas.

The review team will consult with a range of stakeholders during the course of the review including single-service customers, trade unions, other Government Departments and other relevant bodies. The Ministry of Defence is interested also to hear the views of other organisations or individuals who would like to make a contribution to the review. Those wishing to do so should send their contribution by 31 August 2004 to:

Review team for the management and delivery of defence housing overseas:

Ministry of Defence

Directorate of Management and Consultancy Services

Main building

Whitehall

SW1A 2HB

Or by email: pat.rodger614@mod.uk.

Duke of York's Royal Military School

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The following Key Targets have been set for the Duke of York's Royal Military School for Financial Year 2004–05:

To achieve an average GCSE points score per 15 year old pupil of 61.

To achieve 90 per cent. of 15 year old pupils gaining five or more passes graded A* to C at GCSE.

To achieve 30 per cent. of GCSE passes at grades A* or A.

To achieve an average GCE points score per candidate of 268.

To achieve 35 per cent. of GCE passes at grades A or B.

To achieve a pupil per capita cost of no more than £13,545.

To generate income of at least £800,000.

To achieve at least 310 applications for September 2004 intake.

Armed Forces Pay Review Body

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): I am pleased to announce that I have re-appointed Dr Anne Wright as a member of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body for a second three-year term, commencing March 2005. This appointment has been conducted in accordance with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments guidance on appointments to public bodies.

HEALTH

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): We have received the annual report and accounts of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency for 2003–04 which has been laid before Parliament today in accordance with the requirements of sections 5(2) and 5(3) of the Exchequer and Audit Departments Act 1921. Copies have also been placed in the Library.

Meat Hygiene Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Miss Melanie Johnson): The 2003–04 annual report and accounts for the Meat Hygiene Service was laid before Parliament today.

Copies will be placed in the Library, but formal printing and publication will not take place for another six to nine weeks, pending preparation of a version in the Welsh language, as required by the Welsh Language Act 1993.

Health and Social Care Standards

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): I am publishing today "National Standards, Local Action: Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework 2005–06—2007–08", incorporating "Standards for Better Health". This will support the national health service and social care in taking forward the agenda set out in the NHS improvement plan, setting out a framework for continuing quality improvement.

Much progress has already been made across the NHS. Waiting times are falling, mortality rates for the major diseases are down and there are more NHS staff treating NHS patients. The development of clinical governance, the establishment of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, the publication of National Service Frameworks and the establishment of independent inspectorates for health and for social care have set a framework for safe, high quality care. This is underpinned by "The NHS Improvement Plan" that sets out a programme for further progress and clear improvements in health outcomes and patient care.

"Standards for Better Health" and "National Standards, Local Action" together set out a new approach that will deliver this agenda, with reduced national targets underpinned by robust standards to drive up quality and safety. NHS patients are entitled to care that is safe and effective and "Standards for Better Health" sets out the standards all providers and commissioners of NHS care are expected to meet to deliver safe and effective care.

The standards-driven approach set out in these two documents establishes an integrated framework for performance improvement, setting the parameters for

local plans and targets;

independent inspection by the Healthcare Commission and CSCI;

performance assessment and ratings.

"Standards for Better Health" is published by the Secretary of State for Health under Section 46 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. "Standards for Better Health" follows a formal consultation on draft proposals in the spring and defines standards covering the full spectrum of health care from public health through to acute care, which have been developed with two principal objectives. First, they include a set of core standards which provide a common set of requirements applying across all health care organisations to ensure that the health services that are provided are both safe and of an acceptable quality.

Secondly, there is a set of developmental standards providing a framework for continuous improvement in the overall quality of care people receive. Setting developmental standards in this way ensures that the extra resources being directed to the NHS are used to help raise the level of performance measurably year on year.

"Standards for Better Health" will apply with immediate effect to all health care organisations in England, including NHS foundation trusts. All those providing or commissioning NHS health care in England will have to take them into account when planning or commissioning health care services.

The Healthcare Commission will measure performance against the standards and progress against national and local targets developed in line with "National Standards, Local Action" into account in its annual reviews and assessments of health care by (and for) each NHS body in England, including NHS Foundation Trusts. By delivering on targets that relate directly to health care standards, NHS bodies will be able to demonstrate to the commission that they are performing well against those standards.

In "Standards for Better Health", for the first time the Government are setting out a comprehensive statement of the standards NHS bodies and providers of NHS care are expected to meet. "Standards for Better Health" will act as a key driver for quality improvement throughout the NHS, but one aim has been to clarify and to reduce the large number of requirements and standards that have (in the past) been set centrally, either directly from the Department itself or by its arms length bodies. Some of the Department's own standards and requirements are currently under review and the review of arms length bodies will provide an opportunity to change some of the requirements that they currently impose.

The development of the new high-level standards represents the first step toward simplifying and rationalising the expectations on the service. Taken alongside the reduced requirements in "National Standards, Local Action" this will give organisations greater flexibility for local innovation, underpinned by a strong focus on safe, effective health care and improvements in the outcomes that matter most for patients and service users driving forward the programme set out in the "NHS Improvement Plan".

Copies of "National Standards, Local Action" have been placed in the Library.

Health Service Bodies

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr. John Hutton): For the health service bodies listed as follows, their annual accounts and any accompanying Comptroller and Auditor General reports have today been laid before the House of Commons pursuant to section 98(1 C) of the National Health Service Act 1977. Copies have been placed in the Library:

Dental Practice Board

Dental Vocational Training Authority

Family Health Services Appeal Authority

Health Development Agency

Health Protection Agency

National Blood Authority

National Clinical Assessment Authority

National Institute for Clinical Excellence

National Patient Safety Agency

National Treatment Agency

NHS Appointments Commission

NHS Information Authority

NHS Litigation Authority

NHS Logistics Authority

NHSU

Prescription Pricing Authority

Retained Organs Commission

UK Transplant

National Health Service Pensions Agency

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr. John Hutton): I have approved the national health service pensions agency annual report and accounts for 2003–04, which have today been laid before the House of Commons in accordance with the requirements of Section 7 of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

Copies have been placed in the Library.

Medicines Commission and Medicines Act Advisory Bodies

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): We have received the annual report of the Medicines Commission and Medicines Act advisory bodies for 2003, which has been laid before Parliament today in accordance with the requirements of section 5(2) of the Medicines Act 1968.

Bound volumes have been placed in the Library containing the 2003 reports of the Medicines Commission, the committee on Safety of Medicines, the advisory board on the registration of homoeopathic products, the British Pharmacopoeia Commission, the independent review panel on advertising, the independent panel for borderline products and the veterinary products committee.

We are glad to acknowledge the valuable work done by the distinguished members of the Medicines Act advisory bodies and thank them for the time and effort dedicated in the public interest to this important work.

Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): The annual report for 2003 is being published today and copies have been placed in the Library. The report covers research and development work carried out by or on behalf of any Government Department in relation to equipment that might increase the range of activities and independence or well being of disabled people.

The current report places such research in the context of the national health service improvement plan, and outlines the role of assistive technology in making independent living easier for older people and people with disabilities. The report describes the wide range of Government funded projects supporting the development, introduction and evaluation of assistive technology.

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr. John Hutton): The NHS purchasing and supply agency's annual report and accounts has been published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The "Performance Standards for housing benefits" allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002-03, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council administered some £70.8 million in housing benefits, about 19.3 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

BFI inspected Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council against the performance standards for housing benefits, and concludes that the council's benefits service had not reached standard in any of the seven functional areas—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

The report finds that since 2000 the council had been implementing an ambitious programme of activity that included: implementation of the Verification Framework; implementing new IT systems; a re-organisation of its Revenues and Benefits division; and the establishment of one stop shops and a customer contact centre. Many of the earlier changes were responsible for a considerable backlog of housing benefit claims, attributed to poor management and pointing to a lack of effective planning and organisation.

The council's benefits service had improved from a "poor" classification in December 2002 to a "fair" classification in December 2003 as part of the comprehensive performance assessment programme. The benefits service had a committed workforce and the report acknowledges the considerable efforts made by Members, senior officers and staff over a sustained period of time.

The report finds that the council had not documented its approach to benefits administration, had not put in place essential strategic policies, and had insufficient procedural staff guidance which resulted in staff making inconsistent decisions when processing claims. The report notes serious concerns about the lack of management assurance and public accountability provided by the benefits service.

The council had received "Beacon Council" recognition for its accessible services, providing public access at several one stop shops and handling all incoming telephone calls at its customer contact centre. It had not however reviewed its service against the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and was also not complying with the Race Relations Amendment Act 1976. Physical access issues for customers with disabilities had been considered but their access to services including information needs had not been assessed neither had the needs of customers whose first language was not English. The council's benefit claim form was clear and simple.

The council had made an impressive effort to clear a backlog of new claims resulting in the council's average number of days to process new claims to housing benefits as being approximately 44 days, compared with the standard of 36 days. However, the council was not consistently applying the standards required for gathering and confirming supporting evidence. Claims processing had taken priority over other work, resulting in a backlog of over 20,000 items of post that was not being managed, contributing to high levels of avoidable overpayments. Sampling showed the average time taken to process changes of circumstances was 58.2 days, compared with the standard of nine days.

The council was making positive efforts to raise the profile of counter-fraud activity but it needs to improve publicity of its prosecution policy both internally and externally to demonstrate that it takes fraud seriously. The report notes extreme concerns that the prosecution process used by Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council allowed customers to remain under caution for excessive periods of time. Also that the council's prosecution referral process and scoring system that determined appropriate action to be taken and sanction to be applied, undermined the prosecution policy.

The council's benefit overpayment policies and procedures were of a good standard and fraud overpayments were pursued rigorously and promptly recovered. However, sampling showed that 70 per cent.

of benefit overpayments were as a result of the council not promptly processing notified changes of circumstances.

The on-site phase of the inspection took place in October and November 2003, and the report was cleared on 16 April 2004. The 17-week timeline was not met due to key officers in the council not being available for the clearance of the report.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and further to improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Bristol City Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Bristol City Council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The "Performance Standards for Housing Benefits" allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002–03, Bristol City Council administered some £78.7 million in housing benefits, about 9.7 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

BFI inspected Bristol City Council against the performance standards for housing benefits, and concludes that the council's benefits service had not reached standard in any of the seven functional areas—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

The report finds a high level of commitment by the council to improve its benefit service. During the inspection, the council implemented a number of changes to address issues that were highlighted by BFI.

In April 2001, having acknowledged that there were problems with the speed and quality of the service it was providing, the council began a programme of fundamental changes in the way it administered housing benefits. Changes included the centralisation and reorganisation of its benefits processing work, and an upgrade to the benefits IT system.

Despite the changes, delays in processing benefit claims and a significant backlog of work were still evident at the time of the inspection. Customers had to wait an average 74 days to have their new benefit claims processed compared to the standard of 36 days. Verification of supporting evidence for benefit claims was generally conducted to a good standard. However, insufficient and ineffective management checking meant that the council did not have sufficient assurance that the benefits system was secure or that benefit was being paid correctly. Accuracy rates in 2002–03 were reported as 86 per cent., placing the council in the bottom three of all councils.

Customers experienced problems with the council's benefits service, with almost a third of all calls being abandoned unanswered, and customers being asked to supply evidence to support a claim more than once.

The report finds that the quality of the council's counter-fraud investigation work was very effective and it was applying the full range of sanctions in line with its policies. All benefit fraud investigations staff were trained to professional standards.

The council was committed to the recovery of benefit overpayments and had a recovery team within the benefits service. However, many overpayments were caused by the council not processing reported changes of circumstances promptly, and delays in the adjudication of fraud overpayments. The lack of procedural guidance and management checking meant the council had no assurance to the accuracy of overpayments and recovery work.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Disability Rights Commission

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): The Disability Rights Commission's annual report and accounts 2003–04 have been published today and laid before Parliament. The DRC's annual report of its activities in 2003–04 details considerable success in its work to eliminate discrimination against disabled people; promote equal opportunities; encourage good practice and keep the working of the Disability Discrimination Act and the DRC Act under review.

Remploy

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Maria Eagle): Remploy's achievement against its targets set by Government for 2003–04 is in the table.

	Target	*Achievement*
Gross margin—the Company will achieve gross margin of £55 million	£55 million	£54.4 million
Progressions from Remploy factories and interwork to open employment	1,650	1,408
Average cost of a supported employee	£10,400	£11,095
Employee development time	5 per cent.	7.8 per cent.

Remploy will publish its annual report and accounts in the autumn giving further detail of its performance throughout 2003–04. Copies of the annual report and accounts will be placed in the Library.

Agency Annual Reports and Accounts

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): I am pleased to announce that the Department for Work and Pensions has today published the 2003–04 annual reports and accounts for three of its executive agencies: Jobcentre Plus (HC 909), The Pension Service (HC 722) and Appeals Service (HC785). Copies have been placed in the Library.

SCOTLAND

Commission on Boundary Differences and Voting Systems

The Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr. Alistair Darling): Following my announcement on the setting up of the Commission on Boundary Differences and Voting Systems, *Official Report*, 9 February 2004, Column 1150–51, I can now announce the members of the commission. These are as follows:

Professor Sir John Arbuthnott	Chairman of the Greater Glasgow NHS Board and Former Principal and Vice Chancellor of the University of Strathclyde
Mr. Adam Bruce	Director, McGrigors Public Policy, Edinburgh
Professor Mike Donnelly	Professor of Management, University of Paisley
Mr. Donal Dowds	Divisional Managing Director, BAA Scotland and USA
Mr. John Keggie	Self-employed businessman. Former Deputy General Secretary, CWU Postal
Mr. John Lawrie, OBE	Former investment manager. Former Chairman, Scottish Liberal Party
Councillor Alison Magee	Convenor, Highland Council
Mr. John Mc Cormick	Former Controller, BBC Scotland
Dr. Nicola Mc Ewen	Lecturer in politics, University of Edinburgh
Ms Mary Pitcaithly	Chief Executive and Returning Officer, Falkirk Council
Mr. Mike Russell	Freelance journalist and broadcaster. Former MSP for South Scotland

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments was fully involved in the process of appointment.

The commission will start its work very shortly and is expected to report to me and the First Minister in about 18 months.

TRANSPORT

Night Flying Restrictions

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Tony McNulty): I announced on 15 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 44–46WS that, following consultation last year, we had decided to continue the present night restrictions regime at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted until the end of the summer season 2005 (30 October 2005). This was to allow us time to consider comments received in response to the question about the appropriate review cycle in the consultation paper "The Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom: South East", and the wider policy context, before we consult on a new night restrictions regime for those airports, to take effect from 30 October 2005.

We intend to carry out the consultation on the new regime in two stages: we are publishing the consultation paper on stage one today. The consultation paper is rather different from previous consultations on night restrictions for Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. The paper sets out the general background to the whole of the consultation and our intention that the next regime should apply for six years, to the end of the summer season 2011. By that time the 5th Terminal at Heathrow will have been in operation for about three years and the opening date for a 2nd runway at Stansted (if planning permission is granted) should be known.

The consultation paper also includes:

- a statement of our broad aims for the night restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted and an invitation to suggest environmental objectives and specific noise abatement objectives for each of those airports;
- detailed proposals relating to the classification of aircraft, the main focus of this first stage of the consultation,
- further background information and extended preliminary consultation on some other aspects of the night restrictions regime; and
- an explanation of how and when we shall carry out assessments to comply with Directive 2002/30 of the European Parliament and of the Council (implemented into UK law by The Aerodromes (Noise Restrictions) (Rules and Procedures) Regulations 2003—SI No.1742 of 2003) and also a Regulatory Impact Assessment.

The issues relating to the way aircraft are classified for night restrictions purposes need to be resolved in stage one so that the effects of different options for the length of the night quota period, the size of the noise quotas and movement limits and the ratios between them, can each be assessed properly in stage two.

At present, aircraft are classified according to the Quota Count (QC) system that was specially designed for the night restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted and introduced in 1993. The QC classification system is based on aircraft noise certification data (determined in accordance with the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), and we propose to retain it.

The consultation paper on the one year extension to present restrictions referred to the findings of a technical review[1] which used data collected in normal operating circumstances to verify the QC classification of aircraft types. The results show that most aircraft currently operating at night at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted have operational noise levels that accord with their present classification. To the extent that the study highlights differences between observed operational noise and ICAO standards, the differences have been brought to the attention of the international technical

[1] Quota Count Validation Study: Noise Measurement and Analysis: ERCD Report 0205.

experts currently examining ICAO noise certification requirements. We believe in and support the international system of noise certification. We are pressing for the certification requirements to be updated, to reflect modern operating procedures and conditions, and to be made more rigorous.

Article 4(4) of Directive 2002–30 and Regulation 5(3) of SI No. 1742 preclude the use of any system of noise classification other than that based on ICAO noise certification data. It follows that, although the UK (and other Member States) may choose how to use ICAO data in imposing operating restrictions, it has no discretion to substitute measurements of operational noise as an alternative to the noise certification data. That would have the effect of decoupling the classification of the aircraft concerned from their noise certification data. We are, therefore, not consulting on this issue.

If we retain the QC system it is still possible to modify or extend it provided the classification remains based on noise certification data. Changes arising from earlier commitments and technical studies that we are considering taking forward are:

whether to remove the weight limit on jet aircraft able to qualify as exempt but, at the same time, to introduce a new QC/0.25 band;

whether to retain the minus 9 EPNdB adjustment for arrivals which takes account of the difference between the noise impacts of arrivals and departures;

whether to prohibit QC/4 aircraft from being scheduled or from operating in the present night quota period.

These are the key issues for this first stage of the consultation. They are explained in more detail in section 7 of the consultation paper.

The consultation paper also contains information to meet the new regulatory requirements established by Directive 2002/30/EC and SI 2003 No 1742, including data that will be used in stage two as the basis against which to compare the effects of proposed changes to the night restrictions regime. The data will also feed into the draft Regulatory Impact Assessment that we shall provide at stage two. All consultees are invited to include in their responses to this first stage of the consultation any data that they wish to have taken into account when we produce those draft assessments for stage two.

The consultation will close on 29 October. Copies of the consultation paper are available in the House Library. All responses will be taken into account and reflected as appropriate in the stage 2 consultation paper and related assessments.

TREASURY

National Statistics

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly): The National Statistics annual report has been published today. A number of copies of the report have been placed in both Libraries of the House. The report can also be obtained free of charge on the National Statistics website at: www.statistics.gov.uk/about/national_statistics/documentation.asp.

Office for National Statistics

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly): The Office for National Statistics annual report and accounts for 2003–04 are being laid before Parliament today. They contain an assessment of how the Office for National Statistics performed against its key targets in 2003–04. Electronic copies are freely available on the National Statistics website and a number of copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Spending Review (Regional Priorities)

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Healey): "2004 Spending Review: Meeting Regional Priorities", is being published today and copies are available in the Libraries of the House.

This document meets the Treasury's commitment to set out how the 2004 Spending Review, announced to Parliament on 12 July 2004, responds to the issues and priorities identified in the regional emphasis documents jointly prepared by the Government office, regional development agency and regional chamber in each English region.

The document reaffirms the Government's commitment to improving regional economic performance. It summarises the next steps the Government is taking to ensure that the evidence base supports the Government's regional policy agenda, and sets out the SR04 response to input from the regions as well as plans for devolving further resources and responsibilities in every region.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 22 July 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Southern Africa (Food Crisis)

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): There continue to be significant humanitarian needs in Southern Africa, but the widespread humanitarian crisis that began in 2001 has eased. The countries with the most acute needs are Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Since 2001, my Department has provided humanitarian assistance totalling over $136 million for the six countries covered by the UN consolidated appeals for Southern Africa—Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland.

Total availability of the cereals harvest in the region, including South Africa, is forecast to be around 22.7 million metric tonnes this year. This is around the same level as the past five year average for the region. Late rains and increased plantings have helped to increase production levels in Mozambique and Zambia in particular, while output in South Africa is slightly down on last year. Zambia has overtaken South Africa as the biggest regional source of grains for WFP programmes in Southern Africa this year. However, production in Malawi, Lesotho and Swaziland has declined compared to last year; and throughout the region, many poor people are unable to secure enough food regardless of the national or regional production level.

The UN has recently released the latest crop and food supply assessments for Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Swaziland. The biggest shortfall is again expected to be in Zimbabwe. The Government of Zimbabwe's refusal to allow the UN to complete its assessment in the country makes it difficult to quantify food aid needs, but the Government's forecasts of a bumper harvest are not taken seriously by the main agencies working there. The cereal shortfall after domestic production in Zimbabwe is likely to be in the region of around 600,000 to 1 million metric tonnes. Despite claims to the contrary, the Zimbabwe Government is expected to import cereals to cover this shortfall although it is difficult to say how much of the gap they will be able to cover. Pockets of extreme vulnerability are likely to remain beyond the period of the UN Consolidated Appeal (which ends in December), particularly among socially marginalised groups.

DFID is discussing humanitarian needs with the UN in order to prepare for periods of greater need over the next 10 months. We will respond to further funding appeals in close co-ordination with the Vulnerability Assessment Committees operating in the region.

Zimbabwe

DFID has spent £67 million in humanitarian assistance to Zimbabwe since September 2001. DFID's support for humanitarian relief will be funded through a protracted relief programme worth £18 million over the next two years. This will work with NGOs to provide support to approximately 1.5 million of the poorest households in the country, particularly those affected by HIV/AIDS. The programme will provide targeted food aid, low-cost agricultural inputs and rehabilitation of water points support to stop people falling into acute distress.

Zambia

Although Zambia is expecting a good cereal harvest this year, Zambians remain vulnerable due to risks associated with access to food, HIV/AIDS and adverse economic conditions—factors that are common throughout the region. DFID recently began a £10 million programme supporting CARE International to help some of the most destitute and poorest groups in Zambia manage these risks more effectively and are supporting the Government's efforts to establish a vulnerability monitoring system in the country.

Mozambique

In Mozambique, DFID's poverty reduction budget support programme has allowed the Government of Mozambique steadily to improve its disaster management capacity and end the previous pattern of annual emergencies. We continue to support targeted food aid and nutritional supplementation programmes as well as seed and input fairs in Mozambique, a method that gives farmers their choice of appropriate agriculture inputs while supporting the private sector and local economies.

Malawi

In Malawi, we are working with the UN to support school feeding programmes to feed over 100,000 pupils in five districts. In addition, through the Malawi Social Action Fund, DFID will provide £4.95 million to vulnerable people through a "cash-for-work" programme from which 100,000 households are expected to benefit.

Swaziland and Lesotho

In Swaziland and Lesotho, we continue to support targeted food aid programmes through the World Food Programme and supplemented by support for seed fairs with FAO. We are also supporting nutritional monitoring work in Lesotho. We are spending £2 million in Lesotho to support the Government's food security priorities as part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy process. This will include the establishment of a national food security policy, which will be aimed at sustaining and promoting livelihoods.

Longer-Term Response

In response to the International Development Select Committee's report of March 2003, DFID is working with Governments, the UN and the NGO community to improve our understanding and response to the problem of food insecurity in Southern Africa. We have produced a regional hunger and vulnerability strategy which outlines the regional dimensions of food security in the region and forms the basis of a regional programme of support, which is currently being designed.

We are also working with the regional UN office in Johannesburg to encourage better joint programming among UN Agencies and NGO partners in the region. And we are supporting the vulnerability assessment committees in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe so that they can better track vulnerability trends and allow countries and the international community to respond more effectively.

Ghana

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Ghana successfully reached completion point under the heavily indebted poor countries initiative (HIPC) on 13 July 2004, becoming the 14th country to do so.

Under the arrangements agreed when Ghana applied for HIPC status, Ghana will have its debt reduced in net present value terms by $2.2 billion. In addition, many bilateral creditors have indicated their intention to provide additional relief beyond the enhanced HIPC initiative (estimated to total about US$500 million in NPV terms). Between 2004 and 2013, Ghana could save approximately US$230 million annually in debt service costs.

Debt relief, together with bilateral assistance beyond HIPC relief, will lower Ghana's debt-to-export ratio to 84 per cent. and its debt-to-government revenue ratio to 130 per cent. in 2004. It is estimated that Ghana's debt will remain sustainable (by HIPC definitions) for a wide range of scenarios covering the next 20 years.

Ghana applied for HIPC status in 2001 with the strong encouragement of the UK, and in particular of my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Ladywood (Clare Short) then Secretary of State for International Development. Since then the Government of Ghana has begun to implement its poverty reduction strategy, maintained sound macro-economic management, and undertaken some important structural reforms as agreed at decision point.

Completion point is good news for Ghana, and an opportunity to move further and faster with its poverty reduction programmes.

DEFENCE

Reserve Forces

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): I am publishing today, a consultation document setting out proposals to update the financial assistance arrangements for reservists who are called out for permanent service and their employers.

The current arrangements are set out in statutory instrument 1997, Number 309. The Government fully recognise that it is important that reservists are financially secure when called out. We are equally aware of the need to avoid placing a reservist's employer at a financial disadvantage during that period. Therefore, as announced in the Defence White Paper of 2003 and which I restated to the House on 13 May, these arrangements are being reviewed in the light of our experiences in military operations.

The consultation document will be given a wide circulation, which will include the reserve forces' and cadets' associations, various bodies representing employers, the Trades Union Congress, the British Medical Association, the British Dental Association and other interested parties. The closing date for responses is 15 October 2004.

Copies of the consultation document will be in the Library of the House and will also be available on the Ministry of Defence website, at: http://www.mod.uk/consultation/reservists.htm

Armoured Vehicle Training Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): I am pleased to announce that the landmark training consortium has been chosen as the intended preferred bidder for the Ministry of Defence's armoured vehicles training (AVTS).

The AVTS project aims to deliver live and synthetic armoured fighting vehicles training for Britain's armed forces through a private finance initiative (PFI). The service is planned to last for 30 years and covers training in the UK and Germany, as well as refresher training for troops deployed on operations.

In line with the Ministry of Defence's announcement yesterday, AVTS forms part of the policy to modernise defence outlined in the recent defence White Paper. The service will exploit new technologies and invest in a flexible and modern training service that will help our Armed Forces maintain the battle-winning professionalism they displayed recently in Iraq.

PFI offers the opportunity for enhanced training capability faster and cheaper than could be achieved through a conventional procurement. The MOD will now engage with landmark training to assess if a satisfactory, affordable, value for money deal is achievable. Final decisions will not take place until the negotiations have been satisfactorily concluded.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Managed Migration Review

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): As part of the top to bottom review of immigration, the Government have already announced a number of measures to address abuses of the managed migration routes. This statement provides details of additional measures that we intend to bring forward. There will be further announcements in due course.

As part of this package, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills recently announced plans to establish a register of genuine education providers, by the end of the year. In the meantime we have continued our programme of visits to suspect colleges. To date we have visited 672: 178 (26 per cent.) were genuine; 195 (29 per cent.) were not; and 299 (45 per cent.) will require further investigation. All applications in respect of institutions found not to be genuine are now being refused.

Further detailed work on student applications and routes of potential abuse have raised concerns about the large numbers of overseas nationals switching in-country to the student category, often for lower level courses.

I have therefore decided to prohibit switching into the student category for anything other than degree level courses. Visa nationals are already prohibited from switching: this will place non-visa nationals in a similar position.

Genuine students wishing to study on courses below degree level will therefore need to seek entry clearance overseas. Those who intend to study but have not finalised their arrangements may use the prospective student category.

A related problem has been identified with overseas students who take a succession of short courses at a low level and demonstrate no clear plan of study. I have therefore decided to reduce the overall time that may be spent on such short courses below degree level to a maximum of two years.

Arrangements are in hand to bring these changes in to effect from September.

I am also announcing changes that will restrict further the circumstances in which those admitted to the United Kingdom in a temporary category will be allowed to switch into employment routes.

My hon. Friend the Minister for Citizenship and Immigration announced on 19 May that those admitted under the sectors based scheme (SBS) and seasonal agricultural workers scheme (SAWS) would no longer be allowed to switch into work permit employment. I am now also making further changes to the immigration rules which will mean that only those who are present in the United Kingdom as work permit holders, graduated students, working holidaymakers, postgraduate doctors, dentists and trainee general practitioners may switch into the high skilled migrant programme (HSMP) and innovator categories. Switching from most temporary categories into work permit employment, HSMP and the innovator category will therefore only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. The changes will come into effect on 1 October 2004.

These measures will help to ensure that the separation of temporary and permanent migration routes, which is necessary to an effective immigration control, is preserved. It is also desirable that switching policy should be clear and transparent.

These measures will not prevent UK employers from recruiting overseas workers with skills that they need. It will simply mean that those currently in the UK in a temporary category will normally need to return to their country of residence and seek entry clearance to come to the UK for employment.

The Government is determined to ensure that the benefits of managed migration should be realised, as well as limiting the scope for abuse of the system.

Sir Gareth Roberts' review—"The Supply of People with Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Skills"—highlighted the fact that the UK was suffering from a severe shortage of physical science, engineering and mathematics students at university and skilled workers in the labour market. He said that the shortage could do serious damage to the UK's future growth. In response, the Government have decided that students at UK universities graduating from specific physical science, engineering and mathematics courses should be permitted to stay in the UK for one year following their graduation to take up employment.

I am now announcing the detail of how the new science and engineering graduate scheme will work. The new scheme will be open to undergraduates (at 2:2 level and above), Masters and Doctors who have successfully completed a shortage physical science, engineering or mathematics course, as defined by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. The eligible courses will be reviewed by the Department for Education and Skills on an annual basis. The list of eligible courses for the first year of this scheme is annexed to this statement.

We want to attract individuals with skills in these shortage areas to the UK. We expect that individuals who do not initially find employment in their chosen field will successfully find work in their sector within the one-year period of the scheme. If an individual can not meet the requirements for work permit employment, or can not meet the requirements to switch into another of our managed migration schemes, they will be required to leave the United Kingdom once their one year on the science and engineering graduate scheme is over.

We will be making the changes required to the Immigration Rules to implement this scheme in October. It will be open to this year's graduates.

Further to my statement on 17 June about Ken Sutton's report on the operation of the European Association Agreements in Romania and Bulgaria, work has been in hand in the UK and at posts overseas to implement the recommendations in Mr Button's report about the procedures and guidance which need to be in place to manage applications under the agreements, and the additional safeguards which need to be in place.

It is now our intention to resume consideration of initial applications, that is for entry clearance and in-country switching (which will be limited under Mr Sutton's recommendations) from 1 September and to resume a service on further leave to remain and indefinite leave to remain later in the year.

I am also today announcing changes to the current arrangements for Ministers of Religion. The Government is concerned that those who come to the United Kingdom to serve as ministers or religion should understand and respect the community in which they teach and work. I am therefore making changes that take account of consultations which were carried out in 2002 after publication of the White Paper (secure borders, safe haven) and discussions held during June and July this year with faith representatives. Under the changes we will be bringing into force, those seeking entry as a Minister of Religion will be required to demonstrate that they have a basic command of spoken English by providing an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificate at the "limited user" level (Level 4). We intend to raise the requirement to level 6 spoken and written English (competent user) after an interim period of two years. Missionaries, Members of Religious Orders (i.e. monks and nuns) and preachers visiting the UK on a religious tour will not be expected to undertake an English language test before entering the UK.

I will shortly be laying before Parliament the proposed changes to the immigration rules that will allow the English language requirement to be introduced. I envisage the new requirement will come into force at the end of August.

For people with existing English skills—for example, those educated in an English speaking nation—discretion will be applied to allow entry where evidence is provided that an individual speaks competent English. These requirements will be set out in the immigration rules for all those seeking to enter the United Kingdom as a Minister of Religion as well as those switching in-country.

We are also amending the immigration rules formally to permit in-country switching to Minister of Religion status, with certain limitations. These include that the applicant is legally entitled to be in the United Kingdom as a student or through any other managed migration route; that they have been here not less than one year; and that appropriate evidence is provided of their suitability for the post. This provision will not apply to visitors or asylum-seekers. This was also in the White Paper, which specifically proposed allowing qualified people from overseas to switch their status in-country to fill local vacancies as Ministers of Religion.

During the second half of this year we will be launching a further round of consultations and meetings with faith communities about what further measures might be taken by the Government in collaboration with faith communities to ensure that the pastoral and religious needs of British congregations in a diverse and cohesive society are met. In particular, we will be consulting on whether there would be merit in introducing religious qualification requirements for those seeking admission as a Minister of Religion. Work will be undertaken with United Kingdom faith communities to identify what skills and qualifications a successful minister needs, with a view to developing standards or accredited qualifications that applicants for the Minister of Religion category must meet. We will look to faith communities to tell us what the requirements should be. In addition the Government is proposing to invite views on the proposal that at the point at which a Minister of Religion from abroad applies for an extension of stay, usually after their first year in this country, they should be asked to undergo an assessment of their civic knowledge and the level of their community engagement. We will therefore be consulting faith communities about the elements of such an assessment and arrangements for making training or tuition available.

Further announcements will be made in due course.

First Degree Graduates Course List

Principle Subject Heading	HESA Code
# Pre clinical medicine	A1
# Pre clinical dentistry	A2
# Biology	C1
# Botany	C2
# Biochemistry	C7
# Food Science	D4
# Other Agricultural Subjects	D9
# Chemistry	F1
# Materials Science	F2
# Physics	F3
# Geology	F6
# Environmental Science and other physical sciences	F9
# Statistics	G4
# Other Mathematical Sciences	G9
# Balanced combinations with Mathematical sciences excluding	GZ
# Computer science	H1
# General Engineering	H2
# Civil Engineering	H7
# Production Engineering	H8
# Chemical Engineering	HZ
# Balanced Combination with Engineering and Technology	J1
# Minerals Technology	J2
# Metallurgy	J4
# Polymers and Textiles	J5
# Other Materials Technology	J6
# Maritime Technology	J8
# Biotechnology	J9
# Other Technologies	K2
# Building	K3
# Environmental Technologies	K9
# Other Architectural Studies	

** Mathematics code G1 is not included in this list or the Post Graduate or PhD list as figure show that the number of graduated from this pure branch of mathematics are now increasing. However other variations of mathematics are declining such as statistics and other mathematical sciences and these principle subjects are therefore included on the course list**

Post Graduate Course List

Principal Subject Heading	*HESA Code*
# Botany	C2
# Zoology	C3
# Genetics	C4
# Agricultural Sciences	D8
# Other Agricultural Subjects	D9
# Physics	F3
# Astronomy	F5
# Balances Combination with Physical Sciences	FZ
# Other Mathematical Sciences	G9
# Balanced Combination with mathematical sciences Excluding Computer Science	GZ
# General Engineering	H1
# Electrical Engineering	H5
# Production Engineering	H7
# Other Engineering	H9
# Balanced Combination with Engineering and Technology	HZ
# Minerals Technology	J1
# Polymers and Textiles	J4
# Other Materials Technology	J5

# Maritime Technology	J6
# Environmental Technologies	K3

PhD Course List

Principal Subject Heading	*HESA Code*
# Pre Clinical medicine	A1
# Nutrition	B4
# Ophthalmics	B5
# Audiology	B6
# Botany	C2
# Zoology	C3
# Biochemistry	C7
# Agricultural Sciences	D8
# Chemistry	F1
# Materials Science	F2
# Balanced Combination with mathematical sciences Excluding Computer Science	GZ
# General Engineering	H1
# Mechanical Engineering	H3
# Aeronautical Engineering	H4
# Electrical Engineering	H5
# Electronic Engineering	H6
# Chemical Engineering	H8
# Balanced Combination with Engineering and Technology	HZ
# Metallurgy	J2
# Maritime Technology	J6
# Environmental Technologies	K3

Charity Commission

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am today announcing that the Charity Commission will be publishing their Department report for 2004 on 23 July. Copies of the report will be available in the Library.

Parole

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): The Criminal Justice Act 2003 introduced important changes in relation to the release of certain life sentence prisoners and extended sentence prisoners. In particular, the authority for determining the release of tariff-expired mandatory life sentence prisoners transferred from the Secretary of State to the Parole Board in December 2003. This followed the earlier decision by the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Dennis Stafford that a court-like body should determine the release of such prisoners. As a result of these changes, the Parole Board rules 1997 have been amended, as have certain related directions to the Parole Board made under the Criminal Justice Act 1991which have also been extended to cover all types of life sentence prisoners.

Parole Board Rules

The new Rules will address:

the arrangements under which Parole Board panels are appointed to consider the cases of tariff expired life sentence prisoners and extended sentence prisoners;

the procedural arrangements for panel consideration of such cases both on the papers and at oral hearings;

the information and reports to be provided by the Secretary of State and the evidence to be supplied by the prisoner, and

the arrangements for witnesses and observers to attend the hearing.

The rules will apply for the first time to Parole Board reviews for tariff-expired mandatory life sentence prisoners as well as to all other existing lifers to whom the previous rules applied. What this means in practice is that the new arrangements will provide for all tariff expired lifers to have their cases considered initially "on the papers", and, if not satisfied with the outcome of that paper panel decision, at a further oral hearing on request. The Government are persuaded that these new arrangements will be just as fair to all parties involved as the previous arrangements, and will have the added advantage of enabling the Board to deal with cases more efficiently and effectively.

The rules also provide for similar arrangements to apply to the review of the continued detention of recalled extended sentence prisoners.

The other major change to the rules is that they will now empower the Parole Board panels to call witnesses to oral hearings in their own right. Previously, panels have tended to rely on either party to call witnesses. This is in line with a recommendation of the comprehensive review of parole and lifer processes on which I have reported to the House previously.

Directions

Amendments have also been made to the Secretary of State's directions to the Parole Board on the release and recall of mandatory life sentence prisoners and their transfer from closed to open conditions. The amended Directions will, for the first time, apply to all lifers, not just mandatory lifers. They have been designed to reinforce the importance of risk assessment and they will set out more clearly, the factors that panels are expected to take into account in reaching decisions on a lifer's risk to the public.

The Parole Board have been extensively consulted on the content of the rules and directions and the rules have also been discussed with prisoners' legal representatives.

The new rules and directions come into force on 1 August 2004. Copies of the rules and directions have been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Immigration and Nationality Protectorate

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): I am today placing in the Libraries of both Houses a copy of the annual report by Mary Coussey, the race monitor appointed in respect of the Home Office's Immigration and Nationality Directorate under the terms of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2002. We will be studying the report carefully and I will publish my reply in due course.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Single Farm Payment

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I am announcing today further measures concerning the implementation

of the decoupled single payment in England. These include measures to promote more environment-friendly and sustainable farming, to go alongside the reduction in red tape and boost to farm incomes that CAP reform will deliver.

The CAP reforms agreed last year were a major advance which will encourage an improvement in the economic and environmental performance of English agriculture. The reform adopts a new deregulatory approach to farm support, by decoupling agricultural subsidy from production and simplifying the application process for farmers. Ten major CAP payment schemes will be replaced by one new single payment—considerably reducing the administrative burden for farmers. And the greater freedom to farm provided by the reform will offer opportunities for the industry to enhance incomes.

We have consulted widely on the key aspects of today's announcement. I believe the measures I have decided upon represent the best balance of interests, taking account of the all the representations I have received. Further decisions will be announced over the coming months.

As part of the reform, farmers in England sharing some £1.7 billion of payments under the CAP will have to meet new cross-compliance standards designed to protect the environment, animal health and welfare, public health and plant health. Following public consultation and discussions with the range of stakeholders, I have decided upon a series of practical cross-compliance measures that will set a new baseline standard for environmental performance for agriculture. These are a relatively light requirement, representing a mixture of common-sense farming practice and support for existing legislation, which should help drive an improvement in overall performance and deliver public benefit. They will help contribute to a number of the Government's objectives set out in the strategy for sustainable farming and food by protecting soils, wildlife habitats and the landscape. A description of these measures (which are distinct from those included in agri-environment schemes) may be found on the DEFRA website and my Department will be sending a communication to all farmers shortly.

The possible cross-compliance measure which has most divided opinion was whether farmers should be required to leave uncultivated two metre field margins alongside hedges and ditches, as an alternative to payment for these measures through the new entry level stewardship (ELS). After careful reflection I have decided that the way forward is to use both cross-compliance and ELS in a complementary way. For cross-compliance purposes farmers will be required to protect hedges and ditches by not cultivating, fertilising and spraying within two metres of the centre line (or a minimum of one metre from the top of the bank in the case of ditches). In addition, farmers will be able to receive payment under ELS for positive management of their hedges, as well as for establishing and managing a range of buffer strip options next to the cross-compliance protection zone around hedges and ditches. Since one of the qualifying conditions for the hedgerow management options in ELS will be that farmers leave a minimum uncultivated strip, those farmers entering hedges into ELS will largely be meeting their cross-compliance requirements in this respect. I am aware there are particular issues about how we accommodate those farmers who have retained small fields and those who want to plant new hedges. We will discuss with the industry and key stakeholders the practical details, so that we can announce the specific arrangements in the early autumn. Finally, I intend to implement this particular cross-compliance measure from the start of the main cropping cycle in July 2005, recognising that farmers have already made plans for the coming season.

Cross-compliance measures will be enforced in a cost-effective and proportionate way that avoids placing unnecessary burdens on farmers. Full use will be made of existing inspections where possible, with the Rural Payments Agency working in close partnership with the specialist agencies to ensure a fully co-ordinated approach. This will be developed in line with other departmental initiatives such as the whole farm approach, which is designed to streamline farmers' interactions with Government.

Close partnership working in order to join up public services at the point of delivery to our customers—whether to farm businesses or other customers—is a key element of the reforms I announced yesterday as part of our Rural Strategy 2004. The new Integrated Agency will be a future partner of the Rural Payments Agency, both in these arrangements for delivering cross-compliance, and in providing environmental grants through the agri-environment schemes.

The cross-compliance measures which have been selected will be complemented by those available through agri-environment schemes in England, which are designed to deliver environmental enhancement and positive management for the public good. A new scheme, environmental stewardship, is being introduced in 2005 and this includes the new entry level stewardship (ELS). The ELS will be open to applications from all farmers, and will provide payments to enable farmers to deliver what society increasingly demands: the sustainable management of our countryside as a whole. This expansion will be funded partly through a deduction (known as "modulation") from the new overall CAP single payment pot. Modulation takes two forms a compulsory element levied at a uniform rate in all member states and the possibility of an additional national rate, at the discretion of the member state. I have decided to take advantage of the option for additional national modulation in England, subject to detailed EU rules being formally adopted early in the autumn. Modulation will be levied at a rate of 5 per cent. in 2005 and 10 per cent. in 2006, when we expect take-up of ELS to be considerably higher. These amounts include both the compulsory EU element and the additional national element. The combined modulation rate to apply in 2005 will therefore be very similar to the modulation rate of 4.5 per cent. previously scheduled to apply in that year. The funds raised through modulation in these years will be matched by funds from the Exchequer, doubling the amount of money returned to the rural economy.

No decisions have yet been taken as to the rates of modulation and of Exchequer match funding that will apply in England from 2007. These will depend on a number of factors, including future EU financing

arrangements for rural development measures and take-up of the ELS. But, based on current estimates, the overall rate of modulation may rise further in future years.

On 22 April I made a written statement concerning the determination of the regional boundaries in England for the purposes of the single payment. I can now confirm that farmers will be able to make representations against the location of the Moorland Line on their holdings. The arrangements will be operated by officials in the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) and Rural Development Service (RDS), and farmers unhappy with the results of their representations will be able to make an appeal through a formal appeals procedure. The process will begin during August, when application forms and guidance notes will be available in an information pack from the RPA. Farmers will be able to ask for a pack by ringing an RPA helpline. Under the flat rate payment system we have adopted in England, set aside rates must be calculated using a method set out in European legislation concerning the single payment. I can now announce that the percentage of land to be set aside in the coming year in each of the English regions is as follows:

8.0 per cent. outside the upland severely disadvantaged area (SDA)

1.3 per cent. within the non moorland SDA

There will be no requirement to set aside land in the moorland SDA. These rates are lower than have applied in the past, but a greater area of land will attract a set aside obligation from 2005, thus approximately maintaining the area of land under set aside overall.

Information concerning the management conditions that will apply on set aside land will be made available shortly and a communication will be sent to all farmers.

The National Reserve is the mechanism by which certain defined categories of applicant may apply for subsidy entitlements for which they would not qualify through the normal process. A range of decisions relating to the reserve are required to be taken at UK level and some others have UK wide implications. As the Northern Ireland consultation process has only just finished and full consideration of the results has not been completed, it is not possible to make an announcement at this stage. We will be discussing the issues further throughout the summer and hope to be in a position to make an announcement shortly after the recess.

Another issue that will be given further attention over the coming weeks is how to apply the new scheme in respect of common land. My officials will shortly discuss a potential solution with stakeholders.

Further decisions concerning implementation of CAP reform will be announced in due course. The RPA is currently in the process of contacting those farmers with historic subsidy records to inform them of the crop area and livestock numbers that will be used to calculate the historic entitlement and resolve any queries. If a farmer is unhappy with the outcome of a representation against a decision concerning this data, he or she will be able to make an appeal through a formal appeals procedure. Also during the summer the RPA will provide an opportunity for farmers who have not yet registered their land on the rural land register to do so. This exercise is intended to benefit farmers who consider that they may be entitled to the flat-rate element of the single payment, and/or would like to apply for environmental stewardship. In Spring 2005 the RPA will despatch application forms to farmers for the single payment. The deadline for completed application forms to be returned to the RPA will be 15th May 2005. In the summer of 2005, when the aggregate area of land applied upon is known, we will advise applicants of entitlement amounts. The window for making single payments to farmers runs from 1 December 2005 to 30 June 2006.

Fisheries

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): We have been concerned for a number of years about levels of bycatch of common dolphins in the bass pelagic pair trawl fishery prosecuted off the south and south west coasts of England. I am also aware of the keen public interest in this issue which has been the subject of an EFRA Select Committee Report. We have been committed to making progress on reducing this bycatch and have carried out considerable research to identify the fisheries concerned and to seek mitigating measures which would allow fisheries to continue while at the same time protecting dolphins.

We have reluctantly concluded, in the light of findings from our most recent research, that current levels of bycatch in this fishery may constitute a threat to the common dolphin population and that Community action to address this problem is needed urgently. Our research this season observed 169 dolphin casualties. Across the UK fleet as a whole, and including the larger French element of the fishery, this constitutes a serious problem. It has also become clear from our research that mitigation methods are not currently sufficiently developed to reduce bycatch to more acceptable levels. Until such a time as a proven means of reducing bycatch has been identified, we believe that other more radical options to reduce bycatch in this fishery are now needed.

There is a clear need for action on a community level. This is because the fishery is prosecuted by a significantly larger number of vessels from other member states. This is why the UK has for many years, in the light of our research findings, pressed for meaningful action at an EU level. I was pleased that an EU regulation to reduce the incidental bycatch of small cetaceans was adopted recently, but this will not provide an early solution to the problem we now face in the light of research we now have available.

I therefore intend to request the European Commission to take action under Article 7 of Council Regulation 2371/2002. This provides for the introduction of emergency measures which could run for six months and be renewed for a further 6 months, allowing 12 months for more permanent protection to be put in place. We will be asking the European Commission to take action to close the fishery for the forthcoming season whilst permanent measures are considered. I look forward to the Commission's response to our case for emergency action. If it is not accepted then I will consider other options including restricting the number of vessels allowed into the fishery and seeking a ban on pair trawling within 12 miles of the UK.

Revised Large Combustion Plants Directive

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): The Government have listened to and take seriously the concerns that have been expressed by the various industrial sectors affected about the possible impact of the LCPD on jobs and security of energy supply. In view of this, Defra jointly with DTI have been carrying out extensive further analysis of all the possibilities that the Directive might offer in order to seek an optimal solution within the framework of sustainable development, in a way that will work for industry without compromising the environmental goals set by the directive.

Our further analysis has shown that a modified approach, drawing on work already done on the National Emissions Reduction Plan (NERP) and Emissions Limit Value (ELV) approaches would deliver the desired environmental outcomes in a way that is more cost-effective for business. The Government intend to explore this approach with the European Commission. We will also be holding further discussions with the Commission about the legal definition of a combustion plant which is unclear in the directive.

The LCPD does not come into force until 2008 for pre-1987 plants. Nevertheless, we are very conscious of the need for certainty about the application of EU environmental directives so that industry can plan future investments. Final decisions on the UK implementation approach will be made as soon as possible. We will keep stakeholders informed of developments in the meantime.

HEALTH

Reducing Bureaucracy

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): On 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 61WS, I announced the completion of the initial stage of the review of my Department's arm's length bodies (ALBs). I made it clear then that there is considerable scope to improve efficiency and reduce bureaucracy in the ALB sector and I laid down the following parameters for the review:

a 50 per cent. reduction in the number of ALBs;

a saving in expenditure by ALBs of £0.5 billion by 2007–08; and

a reduction in posts of 25 per cent. in the same period.

The next stage of the review has now been completed and decisions have been taken on a reconfiguration of the ALB sector and its functions. Some of these functions provide reassurance to patients about standards in an increasingly devolved health and social care system. Others provide functions that can literally be life saving. The reconfiguration will enhance these essential functions while eliminating overlaps and devolving functions where possible. It will not put the safety and welfare of patients in jeopardy. The changes are summarised below and explained in a report, "Reconfiguring the Department of Health's Arm's Length Bodies", copies of which have been placed in the Library.

I want now to move to detailed discussions with all interested parties about how to implement these changes. Some changes will require primary or secondary legislation and the parliamentary scrutiny that goes with that. Some statutory consultation will be required on specific changes.

Last week, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the Government's overall plans for releasing resources to the front-line. The ALB review contributes to those plans. It will also lift the burden that the central overhead can place on frontline staff. The way in which we achieve the ALB reductions will be linked to the analysis undertaken for the Gershon efficiency review. The changes I will be making reflect the Prime Minister's wider civil service reform agenda and will also deliver the expectations of the Lyons review on public sector relocation.

The ALB review covered the work of stand-alone national organisations sponsored by the Department to undertake executive functions. Some 38 of these existed in the baseline year of 2003–04, although the review also looked at four prospective ALBs. A list of the bodies can be found in the report. The decisions I have taken so far will reduce the number of ALBs by almost half to 20, in the following four main categories.

Regulation

ALBs in this category regulate, inspect and hold specific parts of the system to account. They often have their own primary powers and extra independence from direction by the Secretary of State.

The Healthcare Commission (whose statutory name is the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection), the Independent Regulator of National Health Service Foundation Trusts and the Commission for Social Care Inspection, will continue to regulate providers and their services. The Healthcare Commission will take on the main role of the Mental Health Act Commission, which will be abolished.

A new Regulatory Authority for Fertility and Tissue will be created to encompass the work of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and The Human Tissue Authority.

The Council for the Regulation of Health Care Professionals will continue to oversee the statutory health professional self-regulatory bodies and the General Social Care Council will continue to regulate social care workers. The Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board will take on the role of the Dental Vocational Training Authority, which will be abolished.

The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency will continue to regulate medicines and healthcare products.

Standards

ALBs in this category establish national standards and best practice.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) will take on the work of the Health Development Agency (HDA) in order to link standards work on both the prevention and treatment of ill health. The HDA will be abolished.

Public welfare

ALBs in this category are focused primarily on the safety, protection, well- being and involvement of patients and public.

The National Clinical Assessment Authority (NCAA) will be brought into the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) which will also support high quality, independent ethical review of all research that could affect patients. The NPSA will take on the lead national perspective on hospital food, cleanliness and safe hospital design. NPSA will also take over responsibility for the national confidential enquiries from NICE.

The Health Protection Agency (HPA) has taken on functions from the Public Health Laboratory Service and will take on the role of the National Radiological Protection Board under the Health Protection Agency Act 2004. The PHLS and the NRPB are to be abolished. The National Biological Standards Board will also be abolished and its functions taken on by others, primarily the HPA.

The regional functions and staff of the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse will be transferred to existing mainstream structures as soon as possible. A further announcement on this will be made shortly. Centrally the NTA will continue in existence until we are confident that a detailed programme of mainstreaming drug treatment within the NHS is successfully in place. A review of progress will take place in 2006 to agree any further action needed to ensure drug treatment is fully mainstreamed into the NHS including agreeing the future of the NTA's national functions.

The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health will be abolished. Patients' forums will remain the cornerstone of the arrangements we have put in place to create opportunities for patients and the public to influence health services. Stronger, more efficient arrangements to provide administrative support and advice to forums will be put in place after consultation. The NHS Appointments Commission will appoint forum members. A clearer quality framework for forum activities in monitoring and reviewing health services will be established and communicated to forums as quickly as possible.

Central services to the NHS

These ALBs provide services involving economies of scale and focused expertise.

A new Blood and Transplant Authority will be created to encompass the services provided by the National Blood Authority and UK Transplant, which will be abolished.

The NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) will be reconstituted to oversee the proposed NHS redress scheme and manage the financial compensation element at national level. Further details on how the scheme will operate will be published later this year, and implementation will require primary legislation. The NHSLA will also take on the functions of the Family Health Services Appeal Authority (Special Health Authority) which will be abolished.

The NHS Appointments Commission will be reconstituted as an executive non-departmental public body with wider powers to make public appointments. It will also make appointments to patients' forums and to research ethics committees.

The NHSU is subject to a more detailed study, within the overall ALB Review process, which will be completed shortly. The NHS Modernisation Agency will have most of its budget and staff devolved to the NHS, with a smaller core remaining within the Department for the present.

A new Health and Social Care Information Centre will be created to reduce burdens on the front-line by co-ordinating information requirements across a wide range of bodies. The new centre will retain some of the information-related functions of the current NHS Information Authority and will take on the statistics and information management functions of the Department. The NHSIA will be abolished. To build on the progress and momentum achieved to date, and reflect its sheer scale, the National Programme for Information Technology will become a time-limited executive agency for three to five years and will incorporate the IT functions of the NHSIA.

A new NHS Business Services Authority will be created to replace the NHS Pensions Agency, the Dental Practice Board, the Prescription Pricing Authority and the NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Authority, all of which will be abolished.

The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency will be reformed. The role of the NHS Logistics Authority will be market-tested. It is anticipated that the function will be contracted out and that the NHS Logistics Authority will be abolished.

A Dental Special Health Authority will no longer be created.

NHS Direct and NHS Professionals will retain their ALB status for two to three years. In the meantime, we will work with both organisations to consider how they may prepare to transfer to independent status as bodies established on foundation principles to operate in the public interest.

A small core estates team will be brought into the Department and NHS Estates abolished.

Releasing resources to the frontline

In 2003–04, ALBs spent a total of £4.8 billion, including operating costs of £1.8 billion, and employed around 25,000 staff.

The principles outlined in Sir Peter Gershon's efficiency review will be applied to the ALB sector to generate more than £200 million in cash-releasing savings for the front-line, for example by sharing back office services and by carrying out activities more efficiently. No ALB will be exempt from the need to improve efficiency. In addition, £150 to £200 million will be released to frontline control by devolving functions from ALBs. The scope for achieving full cost recovery for regulation will be investigated and taken forward.

The Department's commercial directorate is scrutinising the business processes and procurement activities of many of the central services ALBs to establish the full scope of the efficiencies to be made, especially in relation to the money (about £3 billion) that is spent by ALBs on behalf of frontline

organisations on NHS supplies, temporary staff and litigation services. The commercial directorate's work on the NHS supply chain is already well advanced, suggesting savings of approximately £150 to 200 million in the period to the end of 2007–08.

We are confident that expenditure on ALBs can be reduced by at least £0.5 billion by 2007–08. Savings of this magnitude will be associated with a reduction in the number of posts in the ALB sector of about 25 per cent.

The ALB Review will now move to implementation. Over the next three to four months my officials will work closely with the devolved Administrations, ALBs, staff interests and other stakeholders to draw up implementation plans and to resolve outstanding issues on allocation of functions. These plans will include decision points on new ALB functions and processes, staffing levels, budgets, location and time scales for transfer. A small team in the Department will oversee this process. These arrangements will ensure delivery of the saving of £0.5 billion by 2007–08 and the reduction of posts within ALBs.

Blood Donations

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): My statement on 17 December 2003 informed the House of the first case of possible transmission of vCJD via blood transfusion and the actions taken as a result of this case to protect future blood supplies. I promised then to provide updates on any major changes.

My statement of 16 March 2004 indicated that the committee on the microbiological safety of blood and tissue for transplantation (MSBT) had met at my request to consider whether further measures were needed. The recommendations were to exclude from donating blood anyone who had previously received transfusions of whole blood components since January 1980. These measures were introduced with effect from 5 April 2004.

MSBT met again on 29 June to review experience of these measures. The committee recommended tightening the exclusion criteria for two groups who have similarly received transfusions of whole blood components since January 1980:

previously transfused apheresis donors; and,

donors who were unsure if they had previously had a blood transfusion

Apheresis donors are a small pool of committed donors who make frequent attendances to donate blood, where machine processing removes only certain blood components and the rest is returned to the donor.

When actions were taken in April 2004 to exclude certain donors, neither of these groups were excluded until any potential impact on the blood supply became clearer.

In the light of experience since the exclusions came into effect, MSBT has now advised that these groups can be excluded without adverse impact on the blood supply. These new exclusions will take effect from 2 August.

In a separate development, a second case of possible vCJD prion transmission via blood transfusion has now been confirmed. A patient in the UK received a transfusion of blood in 1999 from a donor who subsequently developed vCJD. Though the patient died of causes unrelated to vCJD, abnormal prion protein has been found in spleen tissue. This patient had a genetic type that differs from that so far found in patients who have developed vCJD.

I understand that a detailed account of the case will be appearing soon in the medical journal *The Lancet*. This new finding was referred to the spongiform encephalopathy advisory committee (SEAC) and MSBT for expert advice. SEAC agreed that this second patient with apparent vCJD infection added to the evidence that the vCJD agent can be transmitted by blood. MSBT concurred with this view, and has advised that no additional public health measures are required to protect the blood supply. This confirms the precautionary approach set out in my statement of 17 December.

Counter Fraud and Security Management Service Accounts 2003–04

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr. John Hutton): For the Counter Fraud and Security Management Service, their annual accounts and any accompanying Comptroller and Auditor General report have today been laid before the House of Commons pursuant to section 98(1 C) of the National Health Service Act 1977. Copies have been placed in the Library.

Primary Care Dental Workforce Review

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): The Secretary of State's written ministerial statement on 16 July set out the Government's plans for rebuilding national health service dentistry, ensuring better access to NHS dental care and improving oral health in England. The plans included a significant increase in funding and a substantial programme of action to increase dental workforce capacity. These improvements will be made against the background of the move to local commissioning in October 2005.

The views of a wide range of organisations were helpful to us in drawing up our proposals. For example, the British Dental Association and representatives from the NHS and higher education were among those who contributed to the report of the primary care dental workforce review that was completed in 2002. Although time has moved on, the report is important contextual information about the perceived needs as seen in 2002. The report assisted our thinking as we developed the comprehensive plans announced last week. We are therefore publishing the report today. It is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/publications. Copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

David Bennett Inquiry

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): This statement follows publication of the independent inquiry into the death of David (Rocky) Bennett, and my written statement on 12 February, *Official Report*, column 77WS, which set out the action being taken to deliver race equality in mental health services, and respond to the recommendations of the inquiry.

I wish to inform the House that, further to the reply given to the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr Dhanda) by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health on 8 June at column 138, our response to the inquiry will not be available in July, but will be provided later this year.

I want to reassure the House that this delay is because we want to ensure that our response to the inquiry report recommendations can be set alongside our wider programme of action to improve mental health care for black and minority ethnic communities. This will be published in the autumn, following our consultation on the framework in the report "Delivering Race Equality". We need more time to consider the significant issues raised during our consultation on this document. We also want to ensure that we properly address the recommendations of the inquiry report.

In the meantime we must ensure that NHS staff have the skills they need to provide services, without discrimination, for people from black and minority ethnic communities. I am pleased to inform the House that the NHSU will be giving priority to develop and deliver this training for NHS staff, starting with staff in mental health settings.

Further information about progress on the national work we have started and to which I referred in my statement of 12 February is now available. This includes information about the programme of work led by the National Institute for Mental Health to support the development of effective services for people with mental health problems from black and ethnic minority communities; and guidance on best practice to support the safe and therapeutic management of aggression and violence in mental health inpatient settings.

I would like to draw particular attention to the publication yesterday of our Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework. It sets out the local action needed to commission services for the public to take forward the NHS Improvement Plan through effective partnership working. It sets out the national framework for PCTs and their partner organisations to take account of different needs and inequalities in their local populations. It commits us to providing national data year on year on the experience of service users from black and minority ethnic communities. It sets out how PCTs should support access to assessment, treatment and care for all those at risk, paying particular attention to the needs of those from black and minority ethnic communities and other groups that may be hard to reach.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate my view that there is no place for racism or discrimination in the NHS. Discrimination, both direct and indirect does exist. It is unacceptable; it contradicts the basic value of equity that is the cornerstone of the health service. We are committed to rooting out racism, tackling the inequalities that exist, and ensuring that the experience of people from black and minority ethnic communities is improved.

[1] Details of the NIMH(E) programme, including key publications, can be found at http://www.nimhe.org.uk/priorities/black.asp. NIMHE's guidance "Developing Positive Practice to Support the Safe and Therapeutic Management of Aggression and Violence in Mental Health Inpatient Settings: Mental Health Policy Implementation Guide" has been developed to support mental health service providers and enable them to review their current policies and procedures relating to education, training and practice in the safe and therapeutic management of aggression and violence. It can be found at http://www.nimhe.org.uk/whatshapp/item_display_publications.asp?id=441

PRIME MINISTER

Interception of Communications Commissioner and the Intelligence Services Commissioner (Annual Reports)

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I have today laid before both Houses the annual reports for 2003 of the Interception of Communications Commissioner, the right hon. Sir Swinton Thomas and the Intelligence Services Commissioner, the right hon. Lord Justice Simon Brown. Some sensitive information has been excluded from the reports of the Interception of Communications Commissioner and the Intelligence Services Commissioner in accordance with Section 58(7) and 60(5) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.

I am grateful to the Commissioners for their reports and the work that has gone into preparing them.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Berezovsky and Zakayev

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): Russian citizens Boris Abramovich Berezovsky and Akhmed Iliasovich Zakayev were granted asylum in the UK last year, as is public knowledge.

The grant of asylum to these two persons was made after due assessment by the relevant authorities of their cases and of the UK's obligations under the 1951 UN Convention on refugees and domestic law. They did not enter the UK at the invitation of Her Majesty's Government. A grant of asylum does not imply support from the UK Government for an individual's views, activities or statements.

We take very seriously the requirement for any person granted asylum in the UK to comply with the conditions of the UN convention under which refugees are recognised, and with the provisions of UK law. Recipients of asylum receive cautions not to take part in criminal activities, or activities such as support for or encouragement of terrorist organisations, or activities endangering national security or public order. Where individuals granted asylum breach these conditions we would not hesitate to take action against them and have strengthened the law to enable us to do so more effectively.

Iraq: Export Licence Applications

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): Following consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence, the Department of Trade and Industry recently approved a further licence to export military list goods to Iraq. The arms embargo against Iraq remains in place under United Nations Security Council resolutions 1483 (22 May 2003) and 1546 (8 June 2004). UNSCR 1483 (2003)

includes an exception for "arms and related materiel required by the (Coalition Provisional) Authority to serve the purposes of this and other related resolutions".

Accordingly, prior to the hand over of power on 28 June and the Coalition Provisional Authority ceasing to exist, Her Majesty's Government considered it appropriate to grant exemptions for the export of military listed goods for use by Iraqi police forces, Ministry of Justice personnel, Ministry of Oil security personnel and Iraqi security forces. The licence is consistent with the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria. Future applications will continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis against the UN embargo and consolidated criteria, taking into account the circumstances prevailing at the time.

Her Majesty's Government also considers it appropriate to grant a licence for the export of assault rifles and semi-automatic pistols for use by a private security company, contracted to provide support for personnel working under contract with the Iraqi Board of Supreme Audit. The coalition provisional authority (CPA) certified the requirement for these weapons prior to the CPA ceasing to exist on 28 June. The licence is consistent with the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria. Future applications will continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis against the UN embargo and consolidated criteria, taking into account the circumstances prevailing at the time.

British Council Trustees

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Chris Mullin): Copies on the British Council Trustees' report and accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2004 have been placed in the Library of the House. During the period the council received £165.5 million grant in aid from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Export Licensing

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): Enhanced statistical information on strategic export licensing will, from July 2004, be released on a quarterly basis, instead of once a year through the annual report on strategic export controls, as at present. The first quarterly report on strategic export controls will be published on the Department of Trade and Industry and Foreign and Commonwealth Office websites: www.dti.gov.ukand www.fco.gov.uk on 28 July. This report will contain information on export licensing decisions taken from January to March 2004.

From now on, statistical data will be published on the FCO and DTI websites three months after the last decision in any given quarter. Until now, decisions taken in one calendar year have been reported in the annual report on strategic export controls in the middle of the following year. Information on the earliest licensing decisions reported in the annual report was not therefore made available until some 18 months later.

From 2004, the annual report, which the Government have a statutory obligation to produce, will summarise information already provided in quarterly reports, as well as describing export control policy developments. It will be produced in hard and electronic copy. The hard copy will include a CD-ROM containing all of the licensing data published in the quarterly reports for that year. The Government intend to publish the next quarterly report, relating to decisions taken between April and June 2004, in October.

The introduction of quarterly reports reflects the Government's commitment to further improve the openness of its strategic export licensing system, which is already acknowledged to be amongst the most transparent in the world.

The Government's most recent strategic export controls annual report was published on 7 June.

CULTURE MEDIA AND SPORT

Independent Review of S4C

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): On 3 March this year, I announced the appointment of Roger Laughton, Head of Bournemouth University Media School, assisted by Meurig Royles as Welsh language assessor, to carry out an independent review of S4C.

I am today publishing Mr Laughton's report of his review and copies have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. I welcome this very thorough analysis of S4C's current position and the challenges facing the authority in the digital age. The report's conclusions and recommendations raise a number of issues relating to the Government's Digital Action Plan, BBC Charter review and Ofcom's review of public service broadcasting, which will need to be addressed in the context of those initiatives. My Department will liaise with the authority and with other interested organisations to consider Mr Laughton's recommendations in detail and I will notify the House of the resulting conclusions in due course.

Digital Television

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): In my statement of 19 May I said that I would report further stages in establishing the plan for switchover. I am pleased to say that much progress has been made in the discussions between the Government, Ofcom, and the public service broadcasters.

While the broadcasters have not reached a full consensus on the optimum timetable, some—including the BBC—have suggested that 2012 may be the most appropriate date for the completion of switchover. This could mean beginning the switching sequence as early as 2007. This would be subject to agreement on a detailed plan, including resolution of the remaining issues raised in the discussions, Ofcom plans to include reference to this timetable in the draft digital licences for Channels 3, 4, 5 and Teletext which they expect to publish for consultation later this summer.

We continue to believe that an ordered process leading to the earliest practicable switchover remains desirable given the advantages to consumers, the broadcasting industry and future growth of innovative new services. We believe that switchover should be broadcaster-led but that the final decision on timetable should balance these benefits against the need to ensure that the interests of the most vulnerable consumers are protected. I have therefore asked Ofcom's independent

consumer panel to consider what measures might be necessary to ensure this protection and to report to me later this year with their advice. We will also take advice from leading charities. The Government's final endorsement of a timetable will be subject to being satisfied that adequate measures are in place to meet this objective.

The BBC, in their 29 June publication "Building Public Value", proposed that 2012 should be the target-date for switchover. The BBC made clear its willingness to be a "leader and coordinator across the industry" and to "take a special responsibility for bringing the final cohorts into the digital television universe". I have asked the BBC how they propose to take this forward.

The Government remains committed to ensuring that switchover is planned and implemented in a way which is platform and broadcaster neutral. Consumers must have clear, unbiased information about what is available on each platform and from each provider so that they can make an informed choice. In particular, people who buy television equipment now should know that switchover will take place during the expected lifetime of television sets bought today. We are therefore engaged with retailers and manufacturers—who also need to plan ahead—to see that good clear information is given to consumers currently planning to buy a television or an item of recording equipment. We expect this information to spread through retail outlets from September, identified by the switchover logo.

As an early step towards switchover, we are proceeding with a technical trial in two villages—Ferryside and Llansteffan—in South Wales. The residents have responded overwhelmingly in favour of taking part in this trial. If, as we expect, this switchover trial is successful, this community will be the first in the UK to go fully digital next spring.

We expect further progress on these matters in the coming months and I will report to the House on material developments as they occur.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Civil Legal Aid

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): With the agreement of the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, the Legal Services Commission (LSC) has today published a consultation paper entitled "A New Focus for Civil Legal Aid—Encouraging Early Resolution; Discouraging Unnecessary Litigation".

The main theme of the paper is to re-focus the civil legal aid scheme from contested litigation and to encourage early resolution of disputes. With a limited budget, we need to ensure that legal aid funding is targeted on the most needy cases and in the priority areas. The proposed changes are also required to update the LSC's funding code in the light of new initiatives—for example, changes in handling clinical negligence cases and the new Independent Police Complaints Commission. The changes to family legal aid complement the proposals announced in our Green Paper entitled "Parental Separation: Childrens' Needs and Parents' Responsibilities".

The main proposals are as follows:

to restructure the levels of service for private law family cases to encourage the early and amicable resolution of family disputes wherever possible. A new level of service called family help will replace the existing three services, and will build upon the work already done through the FAInS (Family Advice and Information Service). This proposal will be piloted through FAInS providers before full implementation;

to introduce wider powers to refuse funding for divorce (ancillary relief) cases on the grounds that private funding mechanisms may be available, for example, using the value of the assets in dispute;

to introduce stricter controls over multiple and repeat applications in private law family cases and to limit funding to one certificate per client at any time;

to remove from scope low priority categories of case, such as legal help for drafting divorce and judicial separation petitions and changes of name;

to revise the financial eligibility limits to achieve uniform income limits across all levels of service. The upper limit for qualifying for legal representation in court would be reduced, to the (lower) level for legal help, as adjusted for inflation. However, there should be appropriate safeguards and exemptions in place to ensure the most vulnerable applicants are protected;

to remove the current rule which disregards £100k of equity in an applicant's home in assessing financial eligibility for legal aid. Again, there will be exemptions for the most vulnerable clients;

in clinical negligence cases and complaints against the police, a requirement that redress is initially pursued through the appropriate complaints procedure before funding for litigation can be considered.

Copies of the consultation paper have been placed in the Library of both Houses. It is available on the LSC's website: www.legalservices.gov.uk

Court Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): The Court Service annual report and accounts for 2003–04 has been laid before Parliament today. This document gives full details of the agency's performance and expenditure for that year. Copies of the report have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Magistrates' Courts business returns annual report 2003–04 has been laid before Parliament today. Copies of the report have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

International Human Rights Instruments

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): My right hon and noble Friend the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs has made the following written ministerial statement.

"The Interdepartmental review of international human rights instruments announced on 7 March 2002 by my right hon. and noble Friend the Lord Irvine of Lairg has been concluded.

In the course of the review, the Government has ratified the optional protocol to the United Nations Convention against torture; has signed and ratified Protocol 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights; ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, relating to Children in Armed Conflict; and extended the European Convention on Human Rights to the Cyprus sovereign base area. We have decided to accept the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, which will help us to assess the effects of individual petition to the UN generally. By accepting the Protocol we are also confirming the United Kingdom's commitment to women and equality issues, spearheaded by the Minister for Women, Patricia Hewitt. We will also sign Protocol 7 to the European Convention on Human Rights; ratify chapters A and B of the Convention on Participation of Foreigners in Public Life; withdraw the general reservation relating to immigration entered under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination Against women; and modify the reservation relating to the Throne and the armed forces entered under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Finally we will dispense with a group of reservations now obsolete".

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to publish in August new planning policy statements on both sustainable development in rural areas and renewable energy in England. These will be the first in a new series of planning policy statements that are being introduced as part of the Government's programme of reform to the planning system. The new planning policy statement 7 (PPS7) will replace existing planning policy guidance note 7 (PPG7), "The Countryside—Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development", published in February 1997. The new planning policy statement 22 (PPS22) will replace existing planning policy guidance note 22 (PPG22): "Renewable Energy" published in February 1993.

A draft of PPS7 was issued for public consultation in September 2003. The key policy aims of PPS7 are to plan for and facilitate good quality, sustainable development to support thriving rural communities and businesses, while protecting the beauty and character of the countryside.

A draft of PPS22 was issued for consultation in November 2003. The final document will be an important step towards facilitating the delivery of more renewable energy developments and thereby meeting this Government's commitments in respect of global warming and climate change.

Local planning authorities will need to have regard to the policies in PPS7 and PPS22 in preparing their local development documents, as should regional planning bodies in the preparation of regional spatial strategies. The policies may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

Copies of both PPS7 and PPS22 will be made available in the Libraries of both Houses following publication. They will also be made available on the website of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Copies of the responses to the consultation exercises will be made available for inspection through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's library and lists of those responses will also be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Planning Policy Statements 11 and 12

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to publish in August Planning Policy Statements detailing the process by which Parts 1 and 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) are to be implemented. Planning Policy Statement 11 (PPS11) sets out the implementation process of Part 1—Regional Functions and replaces Planning Policy Guidance 11—Regional Planning, published in October 2000. Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12) sets out the implementation process of Part 2—Local Development and replaces Planning Policy Guidance 12—Development Plans published in December 1999. These Planning Policy Statements are integral to the Governments programme of reforming the planning system.

A draft of PPS11 was issued for public consultation in October 2003. PPS11 provides Government guidance on the new arrangements for regional planning. The new procedural arrangements will better deliver policy at the regional level by giving more weight to what is currently Regional Planning Guidance by replacing it with a statutory Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The new local development documents will have to be in general conformity with this RSS, and the RSS will be made part of the development plan.

A draft of PPS12 was issued for public consultation in October 2003. PPS12 provides Government guidance on the new arrangements for the preparation of local development documents, which will comprise the local development framework. The local development framework is largely a "portfolio" of local development documents that collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area. Local development frameworks are intended to streamline the local planning process and promote a proactive and positive approach to managing development.

Copies of both PPS11 and PPS12 will be made available in the Libraries of the House following publication. They will also be made available on the web site of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Copies of the responses to the consultation exercises will be made available for inspection through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's library and lists of those responses will also be placed in the libraries of the House.

CABINET OFFICE

Central Office of Information

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Douglas Alexander): Copies of the Central Office of Information's annual report and accounts have today been laid before Parliament and copies have been placed in the Library.

Regulatory Impact Assessment Process

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Douglas Alexander): An updated measurement of the level of compliance with the regulatory impact assessment process is today being placed on the website of the Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact Unit. An exercise in June 2004 to establish a snapshot of the level of compliance, based on consultations carried out in the twelve weeks to 16 June 2004, showed a compliance rate of 96 per cent. We will continue to keep this under regular review and will report back to Parliament as appropriate.

Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Douglas Alexander): In response to a request from the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (The Ombudsman), I have agreed to extend her jurisdiction to include the role of the Government Actuary's Department in relation to the prudential regulation of insurers prior to this function being transferred to the Financial Services Authority in April 2001. This will enable the Ombudsman to conduct a full investigation into Equitable Life. The amendment to the legislation to make this change will be made as soon as possible.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Estate Agents (OFT Report)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Gerry Sutcliffe): On 23 March, the Government welcomed the publication of the Office of Fair Trading's (OFT's) comprehensive analysis of the estate agency market in England and Wales and the effectiveness of the Estate Agents Act 1979. The Government now propose a package of measures building on and strengthening the OFT's proposals. We plan to give enforcers the regulatory tools they need to tackle rogue agents without unnecessarily driving up costs to house sellers, and to provide a cost-effective means by which consumers may win any justified compensation from estate agents through a free independent redress mechanism such as an Ombudsman scheme.

The Government intend to use the Housing Bill presently before Parliament to provide for such a redress mechanism.

Estate agents have a key role in the housing market. For most people buying a house is the most expensive purchase they ever make. It is vital that this market works well and that consumers are adequately protected against unfair practices. Our proposals will mean that consumers have better information, that enforcement activity is directed on those agents who deliberately flout the law and that industry schemes to provide redress are available within a competitive environment.

The key elements of the Government's proposals are:

> A consultation document later this year on how the OFT's proposals could be brought into effect and what more could be done to strengthen the regulation of estate agents.
>
> Taking a power in the Housing Bill to require estate agents to belong to any industry redress scheme approved for the purpose by the Secretary of State. The power would be linked with marketing homes with Home Information Packs (HIPs) and its exercise would be subject to detailed evaluation and consultation once Government and industry have drawn up detailed proposals.
>
> Working with stakeholders to develop methods to evaluate trends in consumer detriment in this market and the case for an industry qualification and national quality standards for estate agents.

In their report, the OFT concluded that the estate agency market works well in many respects and the market structure is competitive, with businesses able to enter and exit the market with ease. But consumers could make average savings of around £300 on each house sale if they did more to shop around and negotiate fees.

However, the report highlighted significant consumer dissatisfaction with estate agents' services, ranging from serious uncorrected abuses that the Estate Agents Act should deter (for example, failure to pass on offers or declare a personal interest) to, more commonly, quality of service issues (for example, delays and inadequate communication). Much of estate agency business is conducted orally with relatively little documentation so the process is not transparent and it is consequently difficult for enforcers to detect and substantiate that abuse has occurred in order that it might be dealt with.

The OFT's broad approach to the problems they have found in the market is

> to ensure a baseline of protection for consumers by making the present regulatory regime more enforceable. The OFT recommend that estate agents should be required to maintain written records of offers, that these should have to be copied to those making the offer as well as sellers, and that the enforcement agencies are given enhanced powers to access these when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the Act has been breached. Breach of statutory undertakings given under the Enterprise Act 2002 should become "trigger" events enabling enforcement action, and the OFT should be able to ban a person who has committed certain offences, not just when he has been convicted of them (as is currently the case).
>
> to promote quality of service and redress beyond minimum standards by creating incentives for members of the industry to sign up to recognised Codes of Practice with free systems of redress. The Consumer Code of Practice of the Ombudsman for Estate Agents Company Ltd (OEA) has now completed Stage One of the OFT approval process (the code is meeting the OFT's core criteria on paper) and is seeking to complete Stage Two of the process (it will need to show the code is functioning effectively in practice) in order to obtain OFT approval. However, at present it only covers around 40 per cent. of agents. Whilst the OFT hope their promotion of the Scheme—should it be approved—will boost its membership and profile, the OFT recommend that powers should be obtained to establish a statutory redress mechanism in the event that voluntary methods do not realise the anticipated improvements.

The OFT's recommendations also cover such matters as making the statutory terms used in estate agency contracts clearer, extending the definition of an estate agent's personal interest in a deal and bringing the definition of estate agency in the Act up to date.

There have been calls for the introduction of a positive licensing system as a way of improving standards and increasing protection in this market. The OFT specifically addressed the question of whether positive licensing, which could include a fitness test and training or competence requirements, would improve regulation in this market. They reject it for a number of reasons:

> A requirement for estate agents to obtain licences before they engage in business would not deal with the main identified causes of serious problems in this market. These tend to concern the way existing agents conduct their business and are consequently unlikely to be detected by a screening test in advance of granting a licence.
>
> Estate agents clearly need to understand their obligations under the legislation but their role is primarily that of salesmen and intermediaries. Evidence from cases where estate agents have been banned suggests that misconduct results from a lack of integrity rather than deficiencies in their knowledge or expertise.
>
> Positive licensing would adversely affect the benefits consumers receive in terms of downward pressure on prices that results from the ease with which new businesses can enter the market and increase competition. It would also be costly to administer and these costs would ultimately be passed on to consumers in the form of higher fees.

The OFT's conclusion is that positive licensing would raise costs and inhibit competition without delivering enough improvements to justify this. In their view, a more effectively enforced negative licensing system combined with the OFT's new powers under the Enterprise Act will be effective in dealing with malpractice.

In considering our response to the OFT's report, the Government have consulted stakeholders and taken into account the representations we have received. We will continue to consult fully as we take this work forward.

In large measure, the Government agree with the OFT's analysis which identifies a number of clear problems and the case for action to deal with these. We believe that their recommendations potentially offer an effective and proportionate basis for tackling the problems they have identified in this sector.

However, we believe that it may be necessary to go beyond the OFT's proposals in tackling consumer detriment in this market. In particular we wish to take further views on the question of enforcement and to see what can be done to build on the OFT's initial analysis. It is clear that amendments to the legislation are necessary to improve protection in this area. The Government are therefore proposing to consult later this year on a package of measures that will bring about real improvements in this sector. Our proposals will cover:

> Making estate agents dealings with consumers more transparent by requiring them to copy to buyers the written offers they have passed on to sellers and to keep clear and comprehensive records of each property transaction. This will give consumers more confidence that they are being treated fairly.
>
> Giving the OFT and local Trading Standards Departments the comprehensive armoury of regulatory tools they need to investigate consumer complaints properly, address unfair practices and drive the rogues out of the market. We will look at whether they should have powers to demand the on-site production of administration records, files and copies of correspondence when they have reasonable grounds to suspect estate agents have not complied with the provisions of the Estate Agents Act.
>
> Allowing enforcement action to be taken where specified offences have been committed, regardless of whether or not the offenders have been successfully prosecuted.
>
> Widening the range of circumstances in which the OFT can consider the fitness of agents and the range of sanctions available to them.
>
> Widening the circumstances in which estate agents have to disclose their personal interest in property transactions.
>
> Modernising the Estate Agents Act so it is relevant to developments in estate agency practices, such as internet enterprises, and making it clear that consumers are protected.
>
> Making estate agency contracts more transparent so consumers have a better understanding of their liabilities and are not ambushed by clauses in small print or unclear language.
>
> Making it easier for the OFT and Trading Standards Officers to addressing flyboarding abuses by requiring agents to identify specific properties on "for sale" boards.
>
> Encouraging estate agents to improve quality of service by subscribing to and developing codes of practice that will meet the standards required to obtain OFT approval.

In addition, an OFT consumer information campaign will alert consumers to how they can get best value for their money by shopping around, negotiating fees and checking whether agents subscribe to consumer codes of practice, such as the OEA's Code of Practice.

In the Consultation Document, we will also raise whether there are other ways going beyond the OFT's recommendations in which enforcement could be improved e.g. whether some of the OFT's powers could be delegated to local authorities, whether the OFT's internal procedures for dealing with cases involving estate agents can be streamlined, and what could be done to improve communications between the OEA, the OFT and other relevant bodies to facilitate enforcement action being taken when there are serious complaints about estate agents. And we will work with the OFT and Trading Standards to ensure that the best use is made of their new enforcement powers. Updating the regulatory system on its own will not be sufficient to tackle unscrupulous behaviour unless it is effectively and speedily enforced and problems in this sector are prioritized and the necessary resources allocated to them. We are confident that the OFT and local Trading Standards Offices will rise to this challenge but we will want to work with them so that consumers benefit from real improvements in behaviour in this sector.

The Government have noted calls for positive licensing of estate agents but we agree with the OFT's analysis that this is not justified. We believe that stakeholders have underestimated the potential impact of the OFT's recommendations as an overall package for addressing mischief in this sector. These recommendations can address the most serious problems without imposing unnecessary costs on businesses or inhibiting competition (both of which would result in higher fees). But we are also committed

to going beyond the OFT's proposals, for example in making it possible to require estate agents to belong to an industry redress system.

The Government agree that access to free, independent redress is important in the estate agency sector and offers a proportionate means of dealing with consumer complaints about quality of service issues. The OEA is currently seeking approval for its Consumer Code of Practice from the OFT which would enable member agencies to demonstrate a clear commitment to higher standards.

The Government are concerned, however, that by itself this would leave many consumers unable to obtain redress without resort to the courts. Housing markets are local so a seller may not have the option of engaging an estate agent who subscribes to a redress scheme. A buyer who wants a particular property may also have no choice as he will have to deal with the estate agent or agents selected by the seller.

The Government are also conscious that with the introduction from 2007 of HIPs as provided in the Housing Bill estate agents may well play an increasingly pivotal role in housing transactions. On the other hand, the Government are concerned that any redress scheme should not impose an unnecessary burden on the industry or significantly increase barriers to entry, neither of which would be in consumers' interests. Proposals for a redress scheme need to be reconciled with the fact that there are no positive licensing arrangements for estate agents.

The Government also accept that there are advantages in redress arrangements being run by the industry rather than the state. The Government believe that a way of reconciling these different considerations is for Parliament to provide a power to require estate agents to belong to any redress scheme approved for that purpose by the Secretary of State. Under the proposed arrangements, enforcement would fall under the present statutory arrangements in the Estate Agents Act: that is, that Act would apply to breach of the duty to belong to the scheme as it currently applies to a person who has engaged in an undesirable practice under the Act, so that enforcement action, including prohibition from acting as an estate agent, could be taken against any estate agent who failed to comply with the duty. The Government consider that the Housing Bill represents an opportunity to deal with this matter and propose to bring forward amendments to the Bill during the Committee stage in another place to provide for such arrangements. In recognition of the fact that this is a new proposal on which the Government have yet to consult, we would not propose to exercise the power until it was clear what industry scheme or schemes would seek recognition, what arrangements they would have for providing redress including the fees they would charge estate agents, consultation had been carried out on the detailed arrangements and a full Regulatory Impact Assessment had been done. Subject to those considerations, the Government hope that the arrangements will be brought into effect before the introduction of HIPs in 2007.

We encourage those in the industry who wish to do so to subscribe to more wide-ranging codes of practice and to seek approval under the OFT's Consumer Codes Approval Scheme.

Turning to other steps the Government intend to take in respect of this market, we want to improve the evidence base so as to gain a better picture of just how much consumer detriment there is in this market and how much our proposals improve it. We plan to invite the main stakeholders to join us in trying to devise a methodology for this. Such a better evidence base might establish the need to take further steps in future.

We also plan to work with stakeholders on the scope for devising and promoting a recognised qualification for estate agents. We see benefit in this as something that, if properly done, could provide a career incentive to raise standards.

We also note that the British Standards Institute, the UK National Standards Body, is considering developing a service quality Standard and associated Kitemark for the provision of residential estate agency services and we shall follow with interest progress on this.

Consumers deserve a better deal from estate agents than, as the OFT's report shows, in many cases they have got. The Government's proposals will go a long way to providing consumers in this vital market with a much better deal.

Regional Development Agencies 2003–04

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Jacqui Smith): I have today laid before Parliament the annual reports and accounts for 2003–04 for the eight Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) outside of London. Copies have been placed in the Library of the House. The Government welcomes the contribution that the RDAs have made during this year to driving forward economic development in their respective regions.

Also published today are the RDAs' reported Tier 3 outputs for 2003–04. These results are evidence that the RDAs continue to play a valuable role in improving the economic performance of the English regions and, through working with their partners, the RDAs are making a real difference to the individual regional economies concerned. The figures cover the creation and safeguarding of jobs, the amount of brownfield land brought back into use, the number of businesses added to the regional economies, the number of learning opportunities created and the amount of private sector investment attracted benefiting deprived areas, all as a result of RDA activity.

Press releases on the Tier 3 outputs have been issued in each region. Copies of the output results have been placed in the Library of the House, and are also available on the DTI website atwww.dti.gov.uk/rda/info.

TRANSPORT

Street Works

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Tony McNulty): Regulations under section 74 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 came into force in April 2001. These allow highway authorities to charge utility companies for works in the street that overrun an agreed deadline.

Separate regulations under section 74A of the 1991 Act allow highway authorities to charge utility companies a daily rate, commonly known as "lane rental", whenever the latter carry out works in the street. The 74A powers have not, as yet, been activated nationally, but have been tested in pilot schemes in the London Borough of Camden and in Middlesbrough, which ended on 31 March 2004.

The Department appointed consultants, Halcrow, to monitor the effectiveness of both sets of powers in reducing disruption on the highway. Halcrow have produced two final reports covering the section 74 and 74A powers respectively. Copies of each report will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses shortly.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): I am pleased to announce that the Department for Work and Pensions has today published the 2003–04 annual report and accounts for the Child Support Agency (HC 782).

Copies have been placed in the Library.

New Child Support Scheme (Progress Report)

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): The new arrangements for child support came into operation for new cases and some linked old scheme cases from 3 March 2003. Progress has been slower than anticipated, chiefly due to problems with the new computer and telephony systems that are being progressively remedied by EDS, the service provider. Recovery has now proceeded to the stage at which the agency has sufficient confidence in the system's ability to handle new applications to permit it to undertake its own recovery programme to improve compliance and increase its clearance rate. The Department will continue to withhold substantial payments from EDS until more satisfactory system performance has been achieved.

The number of cases cleared was 45,000, taking the total number of clearances (calculations and closures) to over 197,000. The total number of cases cleared continues to rise but, clearly, we need to do much more and the agency has instigated a programme designed to drive performance improvement and build on the progress made during 2003–04, with further emphasis on achieving positive outcomes for families.

The poorest families are starting to gain significantly in real terms from the new system with the introduction of the child maintenance premium. This last quarter saw a further rise—the highest quarterly rise to date—with over 8,000 first child maintenance payments being made and bringing the total number of beneficiaries to over 25,000.

Whereas under the old system, most cases were closed before calculations were made, the reverse is now true. The ratio between those cases reaching calculation compared with those that closed remained consistent with previous quarters at around 6:4, comparing favourably with the ratio of 4:6 under the old scheme.

Technical issues precluded the reporting of reliable figures on compliance and throughput during 2003–04 and this, in turn, has impacted the agency's ability to manage performance improvements. We still do not have complete, fully accurate or timely information on compliance. The best information now available suggests that, in March 2004, just over half of those non-resident parents due to make payments did so.

The agency is in the process of validating the compliance information it has for this quarter with the aim of providing this in future quarterly reports. We expect performance to improve progressively over the next year or so as the new arrangements move into steady state and better information is made available to support performance improvements.

A special exercise was undertaken to test accuracy at the end of 2003–04. At the end of the first year of the new scheme, 82 per cent. of decisions checked were accurate to the nearest penny (against a target of 90 per cent.).

Average weekly child support maintenance payments to parents with care are shown in the table. Figures are for June 2004 only and are calculated as the total amount received and allocated divided by the number of cases.

	1 Qualifying Child	2 Qualifying Children	3 Qualifying Children
Average Weekly Payment	£33.25	£47.95	£53.49

Summary of Agency Performance to June 2004

Agency Performance	*Quarter 1 Mar–Jun 2003*	*Quarter 2 Jul–Sep 2003*	*Quarter 3 Oct–Dec 2003*	*Quarter 4 Jan–Mar 2004*	*Quarter 5 Apr–Jun 2004*	*Scheme to June 2004*
Applications received	73,582	78,982	85,306	83,652	83,094	404,616
Applications cleared	12,648	38,583	49,453	51,876[1]	45,097[1]	197,657[1]
of which: Maintenance Calculations	6,671	23,857	29,672	31,229[1]	25,657[1]	117,086[1]
Closures[2]	5,977	14,726	19,781	20,647[1]	19,440[1]	80,571[1]
First payments made through the Agency	461	5,164	11,473	14,017	14,974	46,089
First Child Maintenance Premium payments made	77	3,314	6,173	7,484	8,070	25,118

Agency Performance (April 2004 to June 2004)	*Apr–04*	*May–04*	*Jun–04*	*Total in Quarter*
Applications Received	28,530	27,933	26,631	83,094
Applications Cleared	14,729	14,809	15,559	45,097
of which:				
Maintenance Calculations	8,515	8,428	8,714	25,657
Closures[2]	6,214	6,381	6,845	19,440
First Payments Made Through the Agency	5,164	4,745	5,065	14,974
First Child Maintenance Premium Payments Made	2,813	2,546	2,711	8,070

Notes

1. Quarter 4 2003–04 totals, Quarter 1 2004–05 totals and Scheme to Date figures include clerical cases (new scheme cases unable to be progressed on the new system).

Figures for these are as follows:

Scheme to March 2004		Scheme to June 2004
Applications cleared	824	1,345
Maintenance Calculations	715	1,134
Closures	109	211

2. Closures: Applications close for a variety of reasons. The main reasons are that the parent with care withdraws the application, perhaps due to reconciliation, or having agreed private arrangements with the non-resident parent.

3. A proportion of cases that have a maintenance calculation in place may already be receiving payment directly, but will not be reflected in the figures shown above.

4. Figures for child maintenance premium payments include an estimate of the number of parents who receive the premium by way of a disregard to their income support/income-based jobseekers allowance.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 7 September 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pitcairn Island

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Gareth Thomas): Following detailed engineering assessment and design work over the past 12 months or so, I have set aside a total of £1.9 million from DFID funds to repair and refurbish the Hill of Difficulty road and the jetty/slipway in Pitcairn Island. Preparations are now in hand, with a view to expected commencement of the work in November of this year. In addition to this assistance, we will continue to provide medical and social welfare support for the island community.

Reducing Maternal Deaths

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Last week I published a strategy paper, "Reducing Maternal Deaths", setting out the evidence on what is needed to reduce maternal deaths in developing countries. The paper complements our recent position paper on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and DFID's target strategy papers on "Better Health for Poor People" and "Realising Human Rights for Poor People".

There is an urgent need to make faster progress towards the fifth millennium development goal of improving maternal health. Every year worldwide, more than 529,000 women die from complications in pregnancy and childbirth, all but 2,500 of them in developing countries. The UK is firmly committed to the target of reducing the maternal mortality ratio (the number of deaths per 100,000 live births) by three quarters by 2015, from a 1990 baseline. The health of the mother is inextricably linked to the health of her newborn child.

The paper sets out four priorities for DFID: increasing awareness and commitment to action, supporting partner countries to improve access to services, addressing wider barriers to maternal health, especially improving the status and rights of women, and generating and using new knowledge.

DFID is already supporting work in all these areas but will increase those efforts and encourage partners to do likewise. The strategy includes a commitment to increase year-on-year investment in maternal health.

I am placing a copy of the paper in the Library of the House. It is also available on DFID's website at www.dfid.gov.uk.

TREASURY

United Kingdom Coins

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): Her Majesty the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve my recommendation that the following coins should be issued in 2005 and 2006:

a gold half-sovereign, sovereign, double-sovereign and five pounds in 2005 bearing a new reverse design;

a crown piece to celebrate the eightieth birthday of Her Majesty the Queen in 2006;

a pair of two-pound coins to mark the 200th anniversary in 2006 of the birth of Isambard Kingdom Brunel; and

a series of three fifty-pence pieces to commemorate the 150th anniversary in 2006 of the institution of the Victoria Cross.

Collector versions of all these coins will be released at a premium above face value. In the case of the crown, the two-pound coins and the fifty pence pieces, during the course of 2006, versions will also become available at face value from banks and post offices.

HEALTH

Pharmacy Services (Control of Entry Regulations)

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): On 17 January 2003, the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) published its report "The Control of Entry Regulations and Retail Pharmacy Services in the UK". It recommended abolition of the current restrictions on National Health Service pharmacy applications known as "control of entry".

On 17 July 2003 the Government published their response to the report for England, in which they announced their intention to move cautiously in the direction recommended by the OFT.

In summary, the package of measures proposed first the introduction of new criteria of competition and choice to the current regulatory test. Secondly they would exempt completely four types of pharmacy applications from that test. These four exemptions would apply to applications in respect of large shopping developments over 15,000 square metres (though we will not now include town centre developments); to pharmacies intending to open more than 100 hours per week; to pharmacies which are part of consortia developing new one-stop primary care centres; and to pharmacies which would be wholly internet or mail-order based. Finally, we would further reform and modernise the current regulatory system.

We issued a consultation document on 29 August 2003, "Proposals to Reform and Modernise the NHS (Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 1992", which explained these proposals in more detail and sought views on how best to implement the package of measures; 270 responses were received. A summary of those responses is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/mpi.

We also set up an expert advisory group, the advisory group on the reform of the NHS (Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 1992, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Anne Galbraith, chair of the Prescription Pricing Authority. Its role was to advise how best to implement the proposals, taking account of the OFT report and

responses subsequently received, and to offer further advice. We received the group's report in January this year. We published the executive summary of their report in March. This is available on the Department's website at http://www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/pharmacyregulationconsultation/execsum.htm. We will publish the group's full report later this year when we bring forward the necessary regulatory changes.

We took careful account of the advisory group's report and recommendations and the responses to the consultation in drawing up our plans for implementation. Stakeholders from a wide range of key interests were represented on the group. These included patients and consumers, the NHS, pharmacists and health professions as well as those with experience of competition and regulatory reform. The group provided constructive and valuable advice. In order to end any uncertainty for patients, for the NHS and for community pharmacies, I announced on 18 August that the Government had accepted the great majority of their recommendations in relation to the proposals set out in the consultation document and would now proceed to implement them, but with some amendments.

We will work to introduce the new criteria of competition and choice to the current regulatory test through secondary rather than primary legislation. We also intend to develop criteria for primary care trusts (PCTs) to reject administratively any application which does not undertake to provide the required essential pharmaceutical services under the proposed new contractual framework for community pharmacy. Similar arrangements will be made for appliance contractors. We intend these criteria to be rolled out to all PCTs later this year subject to our ongoing discussions with the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) and NHS Confederation to finalise the details of that framework.

We will proceed with our plans to exempt four types of pharmacy application from the control of entry test.

However, we will not exempt pharmacy applications for town centre shopping developments over 15,000 square metres. The exemption would still apply to out-of-centre and out-of-town developments as we originally proposed. Such exempted developments will be included in a published list and a provisional list is now available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/mpi. We are considering further how the list is to be updated and will provide more information when we bring forward the draft changes to the regulations. Pharmacies, which have hitherto found difficulty in gaining a NHS pharmacy contract in shopping developments in town centres, will nonetheless be able to apply to their local PCT for admission to the pharmaceutical list under the reformed regulatory test, when it is introduced, or to make use of the exemption to open more than 100 hours per week.

For pharmacies which intend to open for more than 100 hours per week, we will include a requirement for PCTs to remove from their pharmaceutical list any pharmacy that consistently fails to meet the terms of the exemption unless there is good cause—for example, a fire causing temporary closure.

Applications from members of a consortium establishing a new one-stop primary care centre will also be exempted, provided the centre provides a regular, comprehensive range of services and serves a substantial population of 18,000 to 20,000 patients. The exemption will only apply to centres which are part of the local PCT's strategic service development plan or equivalent written service development strategy. Such centres will, in addition to usual general practitioner services, offer a wide range of primary and community based services, such as dentistry, optometry, podiatry, or other social or community services. The Regulations will define a consortium and specify governance arrangements. Guidance for PCTs will cover situations where a service provider withdraws from a centre so that this does not require the closure of the exempted pharmacy.

Applications for wholly mail order or internet-based pharmacy services will similarly be exempted and we will apply a number of measures to ensure such pharmacies provide a fully professional service within the provisions of the new contractual framework. Internet pharmacies, as with all retail pharmacies in England, Wales and Scotland, must be registered with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB). All pharmacies, whether or not they provide online services, are subject to the same statutory requirements; and to the RPSGB's requirements including standards; inspection arrangements; and code of professional ethics.

We will also introduce regulatory safeguards to protect against manipulation or abuse of the new freedoms. For example, the four exemptions will require applicants to provide a full and prescribed range of services. These would be for local determination by the PCT in relation to the first three exemptions, or nationally determined by the Department in discussion with the NHS in relation to the exemption for wholly internet or mail order based pharmacies. Apart from dispensing prescriptions, such services might include managing a patient's repeat medication, helping patients get the best from the medicines they are taking and promoting healthier lifestyles. For example, pharmacies are well placed to provide support for people at risk of coronary heart disease, giving advice on stopping smoking, or how to improve nutrition or physical activity.

Key elements of our proposals, including the four exemptions, are either implicitly or explicitly linked to the delivery of pharmaceutical services under the new contractual framework. Our plan is to implement these reforms in tandem with that framework. The Department has held tripartite negotiations on the framework with the PSNC and the NHS Confederation for the last 18 months. On 24 August, the PSNC accepted our offer of funding subject to final agreement on a number of detailed issues which we are discussing with them and the NHS Confederation. We aim to conclude these as soon as possible. We will prepare and consult on the necessary regulatory changes and aim to implement the reformed regime as soon as is practicable thereafter.

Guidance for the NHS on how to implement the regulations was last drawn up in 1992. An overhaul is long overdue. So we will amend this information to bring it fully up to date to assist PCTs in implementation. This would include developing supplementary questions to inform PCT assessments of

pharmacy applications. We will also propose enhanced data collection from PCTs, subject to approval by the body overseeing NHS data requirements, to inform assessment of progress on our package of reforms and evaluate the impact of these exemptions in 2006.

We will also take additional steps as proposed to further modernise and reform the current system through a combination of regulatory and administrative changes.

PCTs will be able to invite applications from contractors. We will revise the application forms to reflect the criteria that PCTs use in assessing applications. We will require PCTs to reach a decision on an application within four months of the due date for receipt, unless there is good cause. We will also require them to consult widely with patient, consumer and local community groups that have a direct interest in local pharmaceutical provision, and set an administrative minimum consultation period of 45 days.

We will introduce an automatic exemption for all minor relocations under 500 metres, but retain the discretion for PCTs to override this where there is good cause. An example of this would be where geographical obstacles or transport difficulties would affect continued access to pharmaceutical services. Similarly there will be a minimum 12-month trading period requirement before a further application for a minor relocation can be accepted, unless, again, the applicant shows there is good cause.

We will remove the current restriction, which prevents cross-PCT boundary minor relocations, but ensure there are means to remove the contractor from the list of the PCT he is leaving and the receiving PCT agrees to the relocation.

We will retain the concept of preliminary consent for a pharmacy application, but will limit the maximum period for grant of such consent to six months.

Similarly, we will provide for a maximum period of grant of full consent of nine months. We will also enable PCTs to have the discretion to require an applicant to commence pharmaceutical services within a given period not exceeding three months unless there is good cause.

In addition, we will introduce two measures proposed to us by the advisory group. We will allow PCTs to set a fixed date every month for the receipt of applications and we will require PCTs to deal with applications that do not require local consultation within a maximum of 30 days.

However, we will retain in guidance the long-stop discretion which enables PCTs to decide competing applications of equal merit on the basis of the first past the post.

We will also reform the appeals system. We will allow appeals for change of ownership to be combined with appeals concerning minor relocations.

Certain of our proposals would require primary legislation. When parliamentary time permits, we will consider introducing new legislation to enable reasonable charges, but not full cost recovery, for pharmacy applications to be introduced. We will also consider enabling PCTs to take into account, when assessing applications, the improvements they would bring to the provision of, or access to, over-the-counter medicines and other healthcare products. We do not intend, however, to introduce legislation to enable charges to be levied for appeals. We would consult further on such legislation.

We also plan to introduce, subject to further discussions, measures developed by the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee and the General Practitioner's Committee of the British Medical Association and the Dispensing Doctors' Association to reform the rules governing NHS rural dispensing. These bodies reviewed their proposals in the light of the Government response to the OFT report, presented their findings to the advisory group which in turn recommended they should proceed. Officials from the Department have met these organisations recently to hold further discussions on how best the reforms should be introduced to the current legislation. We aim to implement these in tandem with the other reforms I am announcing today.

The measures I have announced represent an important step forward for community pharmacy services and our ambition to deliver a balanced package of reform measures. They will raise standards for patients, encourage innovation and excellence in service provision whilst at the same time supporting community pharmacies, many of which are small businesses. Community pharmacies provide a highly valued service and we are committed to their ongoing development and integration in the NHS. We also want to ensure that our reforms do not mean that services to more vulnerable groups of patients or those in deprived or rural areas suffer.

We are determined to improve access to, and the choice of, pharmacy services so that community pharmacy is recognised as a key player in the provision of NHS services. These reforms will provide an environment in which community pharmacy services can thrive.

NHS Foundation Trusts

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): I announced on 26 July that I would support 20 National Health Service trusts in their bids to become NHS foundation trusts as part of wave 1A.

These trusts have made an application to Monitor (whose statutory name is the independent regulator of NHS foundation trusts) for authorisation as NHS foundation trusts, and are setting up their new governance arrangements including recruiting members to hold elections to the board of governors. On 2 August, Monitor announced that wave 1A applicants would be handled as two groups, with target dates for authorisation being 1 November 2004 and 1 February 2005. Details of the two groups are as follows:

1 November 2004

Barnsley District General Hospital NHS Trust

Burton Hospitals NHS Trust

Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Royal Hospitals NHS Trust

Gateshead Health NHS Trust

Harrogate Healthcare NHS Trust

Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust

Southend Hospital NHS Trust

South Tyneside Healthcare NHS Trust

West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust

1 February 2005

Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust

Birmingham Heartlands and Solihull NHS Trust

Birmingham Women's Healthcare NHS Trust

East Somerset NHS Trust

Frimley Park Hospitals NHS Trust

Lancaster Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Liverpool Women's Hospital NHS Trust

Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust

Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch NHS Trust

Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Trust

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust

On 26 July, I indicated that in addition to three-star rated acute and specialist trusts, mental health trusts would for the first time be invited to apply for NHS foundation trust status. We will formally invite applications for wave 2 later this autumn and outline the timetable for authorisation, which will be subject to the outcome of the review into NHS foundation trusts being undertaken by the Healthcare Commission (whose statutory name is the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection).

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Summer Examinations Results

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Mr. Charles Clarke): I would like to report on this summer's results for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, GCSE and A level, which show that we are making steady progress in raising standards at every level.

At age 7—Key Stage 1

Some 1.85 per cent. of pupils achieved the expected level in reading (an increase of 1 percentage point over 2003) and 90 per cent. of pupils did so in maths (unchanged from 2003).[1]

At age 11—Key Stage 2

A record 77 per cent. of pupils achieved the expected level in English, an increase of 2 percentage points from last year (up 12 percentage points compared to 1998), and 74 per cent. of pupils achieved the expected level in Maths, a 1 percentage point increase from last year (up 15 percentage points from 6 years ago). These are good results and show that standards achieved by pupils in our primary schools are continuing to improve. Pupils and parents can be confident that their primary schools are still getting better and better.

Standards at Key Stage 2 are improving in all areas but some of the biggest strides are in some of the poorest areas, such as Hackney where English improved by 7 percentage points and Maths by 6 percentage points compared to 2003 and Sunderland, where there was a 5 percentage point improvement in English and a 4 percentage point improvement in Maths. Among other LEAs Hartlepool and Southampton recorded the highest improvements in both English and Maths results. It shows that poverty is not a barrier to success. It is a tribute to the hard work of teachers who have made this possible. We will continue to offer them targeted help and support.

At age 14

I am pleased to see progress made in maths. At Key Stage 3, there has been a 2 percentage point increase in the number of pupils achieving level 5 in Maths and over 50 per cent. of 14 year olds are now reaching level 6 in maths, a tremendous achievement. There has been a 2 percentage point fall in the number of pupils achieving level 5 in Science compared to last year, although there has been a 10 percentage points increase since 1998.

Publication of Key Stage 3 English results has been deferred until the outcome, in terms of scale and nature, of the extended marking process for schools is known. Under the National Statistics Code of Practice, it is the statistics Head of Profession in the Department who decides on the content and timing of the release of National Statistics, and provides advice to ministers.

At GCSE

I welcome the rise in the number of entries achieving top grades for all candidates in England and Wales—the biggest rise in A* to C grades since 1999. The provisional results show that:

Grades at A*–C for all candidates in England and Wales have increased by 1.1 percentage points to 59.2% (compared to a 0.2 percentage point rise last summer)

Some 97.6 per cent. of GCSE entrants achieved a grade A*–G—the same rate as last year

Grades A*–C at maths have increased by 1.6 percentage points to 51.7 per cent. English is up by 0.2 percentage point to 59.9 per cent.

An increase of entries in chemistry of 5 per cent., in physics of 5.1 per cent. and in biology of 4.4 per cent.

Boys' improvement at grades A*–C has increased by 1.3 percentage points compared with 0.9 for girls

These results are excellent and reflect the hard work of pupils and teachers. I am encouraged that more pupils are taking maths and gaining good grades, mirroring the rise for 14 year olds. It is also good to see more pupils taking science.

As with the primary schools, some of the biggest improvements this year have been in schools in some of our poorer and lowest attaining areas. In North Tyneside early indications are that the GCSE results have increased from 48 per cent. of pupils gaining five or more good GCSEs to 54 per cent. this year. At school level the International School in Birmingham increased from 9 per cent. of its pupils gaining 5 A* to C grades last year to 32 per cent. this year—still a long way to go but huge improvement and a tribute to the leadership of these schools.

A further example of this improvement can be seen in London. For the first time all London boroughs are now achieving above 40 per cent. of pupils gaining 5 A* to C grades at GCSE. The provisional results also indicate that some of the fastest improving areas are among the most deprived boroughs: Islington is up by 7 percentage points; Tower Hamlets is up by 5.3 percentage points; Haringey is up by 5.6 percentage points; Hackney is up by 5.8 percentage points; Lewisham is up by 6.3 percentage points and Newham is up by 3.9 percentage points.

These results build on very fast improvement from last year's results when Hackney was up by 8 percentage points and Islington up by 5 points. So the trend is clearly upwards.

At A level

The overall pass rate rose to 96 per cent. from 95.4 per cent. last year. A grades at A level increased by 0.8 percentage points to 22.4 per cent. and the overall AS pass rate has increased by 0.2 percentage points to 86.9 per cent. Excluding General Studies, English and Mathematics attracted the highest number of entries at A level and are two of the three most popular subjects at AS.

These results are built on the hard work of students, schools and colleges and will open up more opportunities for our young people to achieve success. I congratulate the students and thank our teachers for their commitment.

At a time when Ofsted says the standard of teaching has never been higher, we should expect to have rising levels of achievement in our schools and colleges. We are getting better as a country at getting the best out of our young people. We should applaud them and applaud their teachers, schools and colleges.

I am determined that we should move forward to improve performance further. We will continue to progress with some important developments from the start of the new school term.

Specialist schools

Some 506 specialist schools will begin operating as specialist for the first time this September. This means that 2.1 million pupils will be educated in one of the 1,954 specialist schools—62 per cent. of all English secondary schools, up from just 257 in 1997. The evidence shows that specialist schools help pupils to gain better grades.

Academies

Five new Academies open in Barnet, Hackney, Hillingdon, Lambeth and Northampton. They will build on the success of the existing 12 where I was pleased to see some excellent GCSE results this summer. For example The King's Academy in Middlesbrough where 34 per cent. of pupils achieved five or more A*–C GCSEs, an increase of around 12 percentage points on the joint results of the predecessor schools in 2003.

Workforce Reform

Workforce reform is in the next phase and the radical enhancement of the role of teachers continues. There are not just more teachers than at any time since the early 1980s but teachers are being given professional support in class with more assistants. Teachers will increasingly have more time to prepare better lessons.

Education Maintenance Allowance

This will be available nationally to help young people stay on in education, at school or college.

ICT

Current activity focuses on supporting the personalised learning and transforming school workforce agendas. Over 99 per cent. of schools in England are now connected to the Internet of which, at June 2004, 61 per cent. of primary and 98 per cent. of secondary had a connection at broadband speeds appropriate to their needs.

Schools continue to invest in the new technologies that support enhanced teaching and learning. By March 2004 63 per cent. of primary schools had an electronic interactive whiteboard (average 1.9 a school) and 92 per cent. of secondary schools (average 7.5 a school).

In the longer term I am looking forward to receiving later in the autumn the final report from Mike Tomlinson's Working Group on 14–19 Reform. He will be coming forward with proposals looking at how we stretch the most able, boost participation, improve the vocational offer and reduce the burden of assessment.

[1] Figures for 2004 and 2003 are not strictly comparable because of the trial involving 34 LEAs and a quarter of 7 year olds that reported only teacher assessment. The independent assessment of the trial is expected later this month and we shall comment further on these results then.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Procedures Committee

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): In accordance with Section 20(5) of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, I have placed the Committee's annual report for 2003 in the Library today. Among other things the report includes advice given by the Committee to Ministers about applications for licences to perform particular experiments on animals; results of research projects funded by the Home Office on the Committee's advice; and advice presented to Ministers on how to assess more accurately the costs and benefits of animal experimentation.

Scientific Procedures on Living Animals

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): I wish to announce that the publication entitled "Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals in Great Britain—2003" is being presented as a Command Paper, Cm 6291, today. Copies will be placed in the House Library.

This annual report meets the requirement in the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 to keep Parliament informed about the use of animals for experimental or other purposes. It also forms the basis for meeting periodic reporting requirements at EU level. The format and content of future reports is currently being reviewed by the Animals Procedures Committee.

The report shows an overall increase over last year of 2.2 per cent. in the number of procedures undertaken. The total number of procedures was 2.79 million, an increase of 59,000 over the previous year. This is within typical year-on-year variability.

Non-toxicological procedures accounted for about 84 per cent. of the procedures carried out in 2003. These included studies for fundamental biological or applied research in human and veterinary medicine, with the main areas of use being for immunological studies, pharmaceutical research and development, and cancer research.

Procedures for toxicological purposes accounted for the remaining 16 per cent. of all procedures. About 63 per cent. of these were for testing the safety and efficacy of new drugs and medicines.

In keeping with previous years, those procedures which used mice or rats (or other rodents) were the great majority at 85 per cent. Those using fish amounted to 6 per cent. and those using birds, 4 per cent. The total of all procedures using dogs, cats, horses and non-human primates, that is those species offered special protection by the Act, was less than 1 per cent. of the total.

Genetically normal animals were used in 1,749,000 regulated procedures, representing 63 per cent. of all procedures for 2003 (compared with 65 per cent. in 2002 and 84 per cent. in 1995). Genetically modified animals (nearly all rodents) were used in 764,000 regulated procedures, representing 27 per cent. of all procedures for 2003 (compared with 26 per cent. in 2002 and 8 per cent. in 1995).

These trends have been evident over recent years, reflecting the changing balance in use between genetically normal and modified animals, and are set to continue as advances in genetic science open up new and promising avenues of research.

I should point out in relation to the statistics that the Home Office, as regulatory authority under the 1986 Act, does not control the overall amount of animal research and testing which takes place, the imperative being to minimise the numbers of animals used for justifiable purposes. We ensure, in carrying out our licensing function, that the provisions of the Act are rigorously applied in each programme of work. All animal use must be justified, and for each particular programme of work the number of animals used and the suffering caused must be minimised.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Director and Auditor Liability

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): The House will be aware that, between December 2003 and March 2004, the Government consulted widely on the case for reform of the law on director and auditor liability. Over 120 responses to the consultation were received from investors; companies, both large and small; auditors; legal advisers; industry bodies; academia; and the general public. I am grateful to all those who took the time and trouble to contribute. In the light of the consultation responses the Office of Fair Trading was asked to undertake a study of the potential impact on competition in the audit market of a cap on auditor liability. I am grateful to them for completing and publishing this so quickly.

Directors

It is essential for British competitiveness that we have a diverse pool of high-quality individuals willing to become directors, and that directors are willing to take informed and rational risks. But it is also important that directors act in accordance with their duties, and that negligent directors can be held to account by their companies. The courts have in recent years imposed a much more demanding standard of care, skill and diligence on directors. This has been a very welcome development.

The consultation built on the recommendations both of the Company Law Review and of Sir Derek Higgs' study on non-executive directors. It identified two particular concerns:

> exposure to liabilities arising from legal action against directors by third parties. The sharp rise in the number of class actions by groups of shareholders in the US has made this a particular concern for directors of British companies with a US listing;
>
> the cost of lengthy court proceedings. Companies are currently permitted to indemnify a director against the cost of defending legal proceedings, but only when judgment has been given in the director's favour or he has been acquitted. For many directors, such indemnification comes too late and the prospect provides cold comfort.

The consultation indicated these issues are affecting the recruitment and behaviour of directors. I therefore intend to introduce a balanced and proportionate package of reforms, by tabling amendments to the Companies House (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Bill at its Commons Committee stage. The proposals will in particular introduce two important relaxations of the current prohibition on companies exempting their directors from, or indemnifying them against, liability:

> they will permit, but not require, companies to indemnify directors in respect of proceedings brought by third parties (covering both legal costs and the financial costs of any adverse judgement, except for the legal costs of unsuccessful defence of criminal proceedings, fines imposed in criminal proceedings and penalties imposed by regulatory bodies such as the financial services authority);
>
> they will permit, but not require, companies to pay directors' defence costs as they are incurred, even if the action is brought by the company itself. The director would still be liable to pay any damages awarded to the company and to repay his defence costs to the company if his defence were unsuccessful (except where the company chooses to indemnify the director in respect of his legal costs in civil proceedings brought by third parties).

The Government amendments will also remove an arguable loophole under which a company in the same group may currently provide an indemnity to a director that would be unlawful if it was provided directly by the company of which the individual was a director.

The amendments will also require disclosure in the directors' report by companies that indemnify directors. Shareholders will also have the right to inspect any indemnification agreement. Companies that do not indemnify directors will not have to make any disclosure.

Auditors

The consultation also covered the position of auditors.

The Government wish to see a competitive and high-quality market for audit services, shareholders using high quality and reliable information, and an adequate system of redress for when things go wrong. There must also be an appropriate degree of transparency and accountability for the audit process.

The Government are actively pursuing this agenda. The Bill already extends the powers of auditors to obtain information, and contains new provisions for each director to confirm there is no relevant audit information of which he is aware but the company's auditors are unaware.

There are also a number of initiatives to improve the quality of the audit and other information provided to shareholders. For example:

the recommendations of the Review chaired by Sir Robert Smith mean that in listed companies there will shortly be enhanced audit committee reporting to shareholders, including better information on key audit judgements;

the auditing practices board, a subsidiary of the financial reporting council, has published for comment draft new ethical standards relating to the independence of auditors which are expected to be finalised this autumn;

the financial reporting council has established an audit inspection unit which has begun independent reviews of the effectiveness of the audit procedures of the four largest audit firms;

the audit regulatory activities of the professional accountancy bodies are now subject to independent oversight by the professional oversight board for accountancy, a subsidiary of the financial reporting council;

a new accountancy investigation and discipline board has been established, as a subsidiary of the financial reporting council, in order to investigate public interest cases of alleged breaches of professional standards by auditors and it has commenced its first investigation;

the financial reporting council has recently set up a group under Douglas Flint to review the current guidance on internal risk control;

we are also considering carefully the responses to our recent consultation on the operating and financial review.

In line with the company law review's recommendations, and as supported in the consultation, I have decided not to bring forward amendments to the current Bill to extend an auditor's duty of care.

The consultation showed a wide variety of views both as to whether reform of the law on liability of auditors was needed, and if so what form it should take. Some investors also had concerns about whether the audit process was serving them sufficiently well. It was also a matter of concern that the leaders of some of our largest companies were worried their choice of auditor was limited.

I have considered carefully whether there is a case for a change in the law on auditor liability. I am grateful to the Office of Fair Trading for looking at the competition implications of enabling shareholders to agree in advance a maximum amount for which the auditor would be liable. In the light of the consultation responses, and the OFT's advice that introducing a cap would not significantly enhance competition, I have concluded against proposing changes to the law on this.

The Government remain committed to improving the operation of the audit market and will continue to consider any proposals, including the possibility of limiting liability on a proportionate basis by contract, which can be demonstrated significantly to enhance competition, and to improve quality, in the audit market. The Government intend to look closely at this option and actively call upon auditors, business and investors to work together to examine whether proposals for a system of proportionate liability via contract are practical and/or desirable.

However no change to the law on financial liability could protect one of an auditor's greatest assets—its reputation. That responsibility rests with the professionalism of auditors themselves.

National Grid Company

The Minister for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Services (Mr. Stephen Timms): On 17 December 2002, *Official Report*, column 45WS, the then Minister for Energy and Construction, my right hon. Friend the Member for Cunninghame, North made a statement to Parliament saying that Ministers were minded to accept the recommendation of the GB system operator selection panel that National Grid Company's application for the role of GB system operator should be accepted. Licensing of the GB system operator could not take place until the Energy Bill had received Royal Assent. The necessary legislation is now in place and I have confirmed the appointment of the National Grid Company as the GB system operator under the British Electricity Trading and Transmission Arrangements (BETTA), with effect from 1 September 2004.

World Trade Organisation

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): On 1 August the General Council of the World Trade Organisation agreed a framework text for further negotiations on the Doha development agenda. Commissioners Lamy and Fischler negotiated on behalf of the European Union. I warmly welcome this framework agreement, which is a crucial step on the road to delivering a trade round that will benefit developed and developing countries alike.

On 17 September last year I made an oral statement to the House, *Official Report*, columns 861–863, about the WTO ministerial conference in Cancun, where WTO Members had been unable to reach an agreement. In that statement I said that in order to get the Doha development agenda back on track, the WTO community would need to lift its sights to the prize on offer. I believe that WTO members have done just that. The period since Cancun has been marked by a much more positive and business-like atmosphere and the framework agreement has now cemented the progress made.

For the most part the purpose of the framework agreement is to set out guiding principles for future negotiations rather than to provide specific proposals. However, it contains sufficient detail to allow technical discussions to continue during the rest of this year, when the US presidential elections and the appointment of a new College of Commissioners are likely to limit political engagement in the round.

The framework agreement gives greater detail on the direction of the negotiations on agriculture, industrial tariffs, commits WTO members to negotiate on a trade facilitation agreement and sets a revised target date for more requests in the ongoing services negotiations. Agriculture is generally acknowledged to be the key to progress in the round and the agriculture section contains a welcome level of detail. The agreement provides for extensive special and differential treatment for developing countries across all the sectors covered. Three of the four so-called Singapore issues (competition, investment and transparency in government procurement), divergent views on which did much to derail talks at Cancun, have been dropped from the Doha development agenda. The fourth—trade facilitation—will now be the subject of negotiations.

The text of the agreement reflects the increasing influence of developing countries within the WTO. This is a development that I have previously welcomed. India and Brazil in particular played an influential role in the lead up to the agreement. Both the G20 group (larger developing country agricultural exporters) and G90 (some 62 smaller developing countries) engaged in the negotiations in a flexible and constructive manner. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs and I were in regular contact with a number of influential members of both of these groupings, as well as our EU colleagues, to underline the importance of reaching an agreement. My hon. Friend the Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs and I between us attended the two General Affairs and External Relations Council meetings held in the last week of July to agree the EU's position for this stage of the negotiations.

The Government have been strongly supportive of the Commission's approach to negotiations in the period since Cancun. We consider that the Commission have shown leadership and flexibility to move talks forward, capitalising on the stronger negotiating position that the EU enjoys after the CAP reforms of June 2003 and March 2004, which will cut significantly the level both of trade-distorting domestic support and export subsidies. In particular, the conditional offer to eliminate of export subsidies in the letter of 9 May from Commissioners Lamy and Fischler to WTO trade Ministers helped to breathe new life into the talks and encouraged other developed countries to match the EU's level of ambition. My hon. Friend the Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs and I attended meetings of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in the week leading up to the Framework Agreement where we strongly supported the European Commission.

There is much still to be done. The challenge now for the whole WTO membership of 148 countries is to build on this success and to ensure that the momentum that has been built up is maintained in the detailed negotiations that will now follow. Success in the round has the potential to deliver huge benefits, including for developing countries as their opportunities for trade increase, so adding to their prosperity, aiding development and contributing towards the achievement of the millennium development goals.

The Government will continue to do all we can, both inside the EU and within the broader WTO community, to help deliver an ambitious development-focussed round. In particular, we will press hard for substantial progress before the sixth WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong scheduled for December 2005.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Remploy

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Maria Eagle): I have, on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, written to the Chairman of Remploy approving the 2004–05 and 2005–06 performance and resources agreement targets between the Department and the company. The targets have been negotiated by the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. The targets for 2004–05 are:

- a total of 1,400 progressions from Remploy factories or Interwork to mainstream unsupported employment;
- Remploy Ltd will keep within an average cost per supported employee of £10,500;
- the company will achieve a gross margin (sales less cost of materials) figure of £60.5 million;
- the company's employee development time will be at least 5 per cent.

The full agreement for 2004–05 has been placed in the Library.

Pension Credit

The Minister for Pensions (Malcolm Wicks): I can now provide the latest monthly progress report on the take-up of pension credit, which became payable on 6 October 2003.

At the end of July, there were 2.58 million pensioner households (3.13 million individuals) being paid pension credit, an increase of 33,000 households (40,000 individuals) during July. As at 31 July, there were 1.92 million households (2.33 million individuals) receiving more money as a result of the introduction of pension credit, gaining by an average £16.02 a week. The average pension credit award at the end of July was £41.80 per week.

Customers whose applications are successful in the period up to October this year will have their entitlement backdated to 6 October 2003 (or to the date of entitlement if this is later). The 2004 Budget statement confirmed that backdating arrangements will continue beyond October 2004. This means that anyone eligible applying after October 2004 will see their entitlement backdated by up to 12 months. A report showing progress to the end of July is available in the Library. The report includes regional breakdowns of the number of pension credit households and is accompanied by tables showing numbers of pension credit awards in parliamentary constituencies in Great Britain. Copies of the report are also available for hon. Members in the Vote Office.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East Peace Process (Civilian Deaths)

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Denis MacShane): I answered PQs 180074 and 180090 on 28 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 129W and 131W respectively. Both PQs related to the Middle East Peace Process. The questions and answers given were as follows:

PQ 180074

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate his Department has made of the number of Israeli civilians killed since the beginning of the intifada in September 2000; and how many were under the age of 18.

Mr. MacShane: We estimate that 944 Israeli civilians have been killed since the beginning of the intifada in September 2000. This estimate is based on a variety of sources, including the UN, NGOs and the media. We do not hold figures for those killed under the age of 18 years.

PQ 180090

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate his Department has made of the number of Palestinian civilians killed since September 2000; and how many were under 18.

Mr. MacShane: We estimate that 3,242 Palestinian civilians have been killed since the beginning of the intifada in September 2000. This estimate is based on a variety of sources, including the UN, NGOs and the media. We do not hold figures for those killed under the age of 18 years.

Since answering PQs 180074 and 180090 however, it has been brought to our attention by the British Embassy in Tel Aviv that the figures provided in these answers on 28 June were inaccurate. The figures given were for total deaths on each side rather than civilian deaths, so these figures would also include Israeli Defence Force soldiers, militants and suicide bombers as well as civilians.

I apologise for this error and would like to clarify that the figures initially given in the answer of 28 June were for the total numbers of Israeli and Palestinian deaths rather than just civilian deaths. Figures for civilian deaths are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Sanctions

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): Currently the United Kingdom implements mandatory UN sanctions, imposed by the UN Security Council acting under chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, in relation to Al Quaeda and the Taliban, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Somalia. In addition, the UK implements sanctions imposed by the European Union in relation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burma, China, the DRC, the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Libya, Moldova, Sudan and Zimbabwe. In accordance with a decision of the OSCE, the United Kingdom implements arms embargoes on Armenia and Azerbaijan. A full list of sanctions regimes and restrictive measures implemented by the UK has been placed in the Library of the House. Annexed to this is a summary of additional UK restrictions on the export of strategic goods. These documents are also available on the FCO website at http://www.fco.gov.uk/sanctions. and are updated each time there are changes to sanctions regimes implemented by the UK, or to UK restrictions on the export of strategic goods. Restrictive measures implemented in the UK are also implemented in the Overseas Territories and Crown dependencies.

European Union

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): I will today lay before Parliament the latest White Paper on Prospects for the EU (Cm 6310). Copies will be placed in the Library of the House and will be available from the Vote Office in the House of Commons and the Printed Paper Office in the House of Lords. A copy will also be available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website www.fco.gov.uk.

This White Paper is a supplement to the one published in April on Prospects for the EU in 2004 (Cm 6174). As well as setting out the issues we expect the Union to address in the rest of the year, it updates readers on developments since April and provides a short breakdown of the achievements of Ireland's EU Presidency, which ran from January to June. It covers the full gamut of EU business, from enlargement—and whether we should start negotiations with Turkey on membership of the Union—to the Lisbon Agenda for economic and social reform—which includes developing the single market, simplifying new and outdated regulation, and increasing employment.

The purpose of this White Paper, and April's, is to keep Parliament and the public informed about developments in the EU, the Government's approach to them and the benefits they will bring to the UK and its citizens.

The next White Paper on Prospects for the EU will be published in January 2005, to be followed by a shorter update—along the lines of the one published today—in July 2005.

These White Papers are part of the Government's commitment to make EU business more accessible and interesting for Parliament, the media and members of the public alike—by providing an appropriate amount of detail and depth on significant progress that might have an impact on our daily lives. I hope they will play a vital role in involving Parliament more closely in EU affairs, and trust that Members of both Houses will read them. I commend this White Paper to the House.

Sanctions (Recent Changes)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): On 11 June the Council of the European Union adopted common position 2004/510/CFSP. The Council adopted EC regulation 1353/2004 on 27 July. These amend common position 2004/31/CFSP of 10 January and EC regulation 131/2004 of 28 January, which renewed the arms embargo against Sudan and added an exemption for the supply of de-mining equipment. The new measures broaden the exemptions to the prohibition on the supply of arms, technical assistance and financial assistance to include crisis management operations of the African Union. This allows EU member states to offer full practical and financial support to the deployment of the African Union's ceasefire commission to Darfur. With the support of her Majesty's Government, the United Nations Security Council on 30 July unanimously adopted resolution 1556 (2004), which, inter alia, imposes an arms embargo against non-governmental entities and individuals, including the Janjaweed, operating in the states of North Darfur, South Darfur and West Darfur in Sudan.

With the support of Her Majesty's Government, the United Nations Security Council on 27 July 2004 unanimously adopted resolution 1552 (2004) on the

situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This renewed the arms embargo imposed by UNSCR 1493 (2003) for one year and extended the mandate of the UN expert group established by UNSCR 1533 (2004) to monitor the embargo for a further six months.

With the support of Her Majesty's Government, the United Nations Security Council on 8 June unanimously adopted UN Security Council resolution 1546 (2004). Among other measures, the resolution leaves the arms embargo in place, with new exemptions for arms and related material required by the Government of Iraq or the multinational force to serve the purposes of the resolution. The resolution passes all outstanding rights, responsibilities and obligations relating to the oil for food programme to the Government of Iraq, including ensuring independently authenticated confirmation that goods have been delivered, and it leaves in place the financial sanctions upon former Government of Iraq funds and any funds belonging to Saddam Hussein, senior members of his regime and their immediate family members.

On 26 April, the Council of the European Union adopted common position 2004/423/CFSP and EC Regulation 798/2004, concerning Burma. These renewed the restrictive measures imposed by common position 2003/297/CFSP from 30 April 2004 for a further 12 months, in view of the current political situation in Burma, notably the failure of the regime to pursue the process of national reconciliation, respect for human rights and democracy. The restrictive measures comprise an assets freeze and travel ban against members of the regime and others, an arms embargo, a prohibition on the attachment and hosting of military personnel to diplomatic missions, restrictions on development programmes and a suspension of high-level bilateral governmental visits to Burma.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 8 September 2004

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I am announcing today the publication of a consultation draft of a new planning policy statement on biodiversity and geological conservation and a draft circular (published jointly with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to accompany it. The draft of planning policy statement 9 (PPS9) sets out the Government's national planning policies for biodiversity and geological conservation. The accompanying draft circular provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England.

It is intended that PPS9, together with the circular and future good practice guidance will, in due course replace planning policy guidance note 9 on nature conservation published in 1994. The draft PPS9, and its supporting documents meet the commitment set out in the planning Green Paper for shorter, more focused and policy rich statements of planning policy with separate advice on non-policy matters.

The draft PPS takes account of legislative changes since 1994 that affect biodiversity and geological conservation, and reflects the commitments in the "Biodiversity Strategy for England", published in 2002. It has a clearer focus on the need to conserve, enhance and restore biological diversity.

Consultation on the draft of PPS9 and the accompanying draft circular will run until 9 December 2004. Copies of the draft consultation papers have been made available in the Libraries of the House.

Standards Board for England

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Phil Hope): The Standards Board for England's annual report and accounts for 2003–04 have been placed in the Library of the House together with an annual review of the board's activities during the year.

The report and accounts cover the second year of significant operations by the standards board for England. During the year ended 31 March 2004, 3566 allegations of misconduct had been referred to the Standards Board, an increase of about 20 per cent. compared with the previous year.

The annual report highlights that the board is continuing to work in partnership with local government to promote and sustain the high standards of conduct, which are essential to public confidence in our local democracy.

HEALTH

Mental Health Bill

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): The Government have today published a Mental Health Bill. This Bill will be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny. A joint scrutiny committee has been established and has been asked to present its report by the end of March 2005.

Mental health legislation sets out the circumstances in which a person can be treated for mental disorder without their consent and the safeguards they are entitled to. The vast majority of people with mental health problems do not need to be treated against their wishes but occasionally this is necessary, normally to protect themselves, but more occasionally to protect others.

It has long been recognised that the current mental health legislation, the Mental Health Act 1983, needs to be updated, in line with the development of services and of human rights law to give a greater focus on patients' needs and wishes. In 1998, the Government set up an expert committee to advise on how mental health legislation should be shaped to reflect contemporary patterns of care and treatment and to support government policy. In 2002, following a Green and a White Paper, a draft Bill was published for consultation.

Since then, the comments received on the 2002 draft have been considered in full and, following further work and meetings with stakeholders, a revised Bill has been produced. We have made changes to address the concerns expressed by stakeholders. The Bill brings the framework for the compulsory treatment of people with serious mental health disorders up to date.

This Bill needs to be considered in the context of the wider Government strategy to improve mental health services. In 1998, the National Service Framework for mental health set out national standards for the care and treatment of adults with mental disorder. The NHS Plan announced, in 2000, substantial additional investment for mental health services. As a result of the National Service Framework and the additional investment, significant improvements have been made in mental health services. This is particularly the case in relation to community-based services, such as crisis resolution and assertive outreach teams. It is important that mental health legislation is now modernised.

The Bill will provide important benefits. The Bill means that the small minority of people with mental health problems who need to be treated against their wishes, normally for their protection but occasionally to protect the public, will get the right treatment at the right time. This meets the needs of the individual patient and makes sure that the public is protected.

The Bill ensures there is no compulsion without the provision of appropriate treatment. Safeguards for patients will be greatly strengthened with a choice of representative, access to advocacy and all use of compulsory treatment beyond 28 days having to be authorised by the new independent mental health tribunal or the courts. Under the Bill, patients who are ill and vulnerable will be able to get the treatment they need in the community, including non-dangerous mentally disordered offenders who may otherwise receive a prison sentence.

Legislation about compulsory treatment inevitably raises many difficult issues. There has already been much discussion about this proposed new legislation. Pre-legislative scrutiny will now allow further considered debate. We look forward to receiving the report of the scrutiny committee.

Copies of the Bill and of the explanatory notes have been placed in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): The Government are firmly committed to ensuring that the country information material they produce to inform asylum decisions meets the highest standards.

Accurate, objective and up to date country information is fundamental to a fair and effective asylum system. The independent advisory panel on country information (APCI) was set up to provide rigorous external scrutiny of country information material produced by the Home Office and make recommendations to help ensure that it is of the highest quality. The APCI has already shown itself to be working in a robust and forthright manner.

While we are satisfied that the country information material produced by the Home Office is already of a good standard, we recognise that improvements can be made. We have responded swiftly and positively to issues raised by the APCI and announced earlier this year the introduction of a range of improvements in the way the material is produced and quality assured. The measures introduced were welcomed by the APCI and have resulted in a clear improvement in the quality and presentation of country information material.

The panel rightly considers it essential that the Home Office's country information material should not only be objective in fact, but that it should also be perceived as being objective and have the confidence of all its users. The APCI was concerned that the country information would not be perceived as impartial while it was being produced by country information and policy unit (CIPU) which also has the function of advising on the development of country specific asylum policies. The APCI made a recommendation that the Home Office bring forward proposals to address this issue.

We have given very careful consideration to the APCI's recommendation and I am announcing today that the current country information and country policy functions of the CIPU will be separated. In future, the production of country information material used by the Home Office will be undertaken by a country information unit dedicated solely to that function. The existing CIPU country policy function will be undertaken separately within the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. These changes, which directly reflect the APCI's thinking, will be put in place as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made.

I am also announcing today that in future country reports will be produced and published at six-monthly intervals on the top 20 asylum generating countries (and other countries for which an operational need is identified) instead of the current top 35 countries. The reduction in the number of country reports produced is consistent with the significant reduction in asylum intake. This step will enable the resources freed to be used to help assure the standard of the country information material produced, whilst ensuring that country reports are still produced on the main asylum generating countries. Country information material will continue to be produced on those countries which fall outside the top 20 in the way that is now done for countries which fall outside the top 35.

Immigration Applications

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): I am publishing today a consultation document setting out options for new fees for immigration applications. As part of the ongoing review of the immigration system, the Home Office has been reviewing the charges for a range of immigration services: leave to remain; leave to remain associated with an immigration employment document; the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme, the Sectors Based Scheme, and Travel Documents.

We are seeking the views of the public, businesses, the education sector, legal representatives and our other stakeholders, regarding proposals to include the costs of non-asylum appeals and enforcement activity in the overall charge for an immigration application. We are also consulting on proposals to:

- introduce new payment methods for customers;
- introduce fees for applications for the transfer conditions of limited leave to a new passport or travel document; and
- introduce separate travel documents for children.

We aim to implement new charges from 1 April 2005.

We will be consulting on charges for work permits and for applications to the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme later in the year.

A partial regulatory impact assessment, which estimates the likely cost to business of increasing the fees for applications to the sectors based scheme and applications for leave to remain associated with an immigration employment document, is available by visiting www.homeoffice.gov.uk or www.direct.gov.uk, or by telephoning 0114 279 3422.

An electronic version of the consultation document is available from 8 September on the Home Office website at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk. Hard copies of the consultation document will be available from 15 September, in the Libraries of both Houses or from the Charging Programme Office (telephone: 0151 235 8359).

Interested parties are invited to submit their comments and views, by Wednesday 8 December 2004 to:

Charging Programme Office, 3 Floor Cunard Building, Water Street, Liverpool, L2 OPP or by e-mail to: charging.consultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

All replies that are received will be made public unless the author explicitly requests that this should not happen.

DEFENCE

Defence Procurement Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Six key targets have been set for the Chief Executive of the Defence Procurement Agency for the financial year 2004–2005.

In a change to previous years, the first three key targets now apply to all projects over £20 million which have passed their main gate approval but not yet achieved in service date (ISD). Key targets 2 and 3 are consistent with the goals set in the Department's public service agreement (PSA) for major equipment projects, although for the key targets, all movement in most likely ISD and cost forecasts will be measured, rather than only that which is in excess of the approval. The fourth key target relates to improvements in DPA Customer satisfaction. A revised key target 5, comprising a basket of measures, replaces the previous straight measure in order to provide a better indication of DPA efficiency. There is a new sixth key target reflecting the importance which the Department attaches to delivery of assets to the front-line. The key targets are:

Key Target 1: Key requirements Compliance

Predicted achievement of customers' core requirements[1] for projects: 97 per cent.

Key Target 2: Average in-year in service date slippage

Average in-year slippage of in service dates not to exceed 0.9 months

Key Target 3: Average in-year cost growth

Average in-year cost variation not to exceed 0.5 per cent.

Key Target 4: Customer survey satisfaction rating

Customer satisfaction rating of 72 per cent.

Key Target 5: Achievement of planned efficiency measures[2]

(i) Measured asset turnover in months by comparing assets delivered to total assets less current liabilities	69.6
(ii) Measures value of assets delivered as a multiple of operating cost	10.7
(iii) Measures value of assets added to the balance sheet as a multiple of operating cost.	16.2

[1] Around 10 core requirements per projects are agreed between the DPA and MOD headquarters, defining the essential characteristics of the equipment/capability.

[2] Target levels differ from those in the published corporate business plan as they reflect start of year forecast data.

Key Target 6: Asset deliveries

Variance between planned and actual in-year asset deliveries not to exceed 15 per cent.

Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): Key Targets have been set for the chief executive of the Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency (MDPGA) for the financial year 2004–05. This year the key targets focus on MDP and work is ongoing to establish an effective and joined up performance management system that will fully incorporate the MGS and MDP from next year.

The targets are as follows:

Key Target 1:

By March 2005, as a means of providing greater public reassurance, ensure that no more than 25 per cent. of the duty time of dedicated patrol officers is expended on activities not directly related to patrol duties.

Key Target 2:

By 31 March 2005, as a means of reducing crime and protecting MOD property and interests, achieve a crime-solving rate of 50 per cent. for the investigation of primary crime.

Key Target 3:

By 31 March 2005, in order to delivery performance as defined in relevant establishment CSAs, ensure that the Agency fulfils at least 95 per cent. of its funded and agreed customer taskings.

Key Target 4:

By 31 March 2005, in order to maintain appropriate levels of security as defined in relevant MDP CSAs, seek to maintain and improve upon the average baseline Security Contribution Index score achieved in the previous quarter at each establishment contributing to the index system.

Key Target 5:

By 31 March 2005, within the overall recruitment of police staff, and as part of an overall programme to retain personnel levels, to have recruited at least 15 per cent. women and 4 per cent. from minority ethnic communities.

Key Target 6:

By 31 March 2005, excepting unforeseen operational commitments, and with the intention of providing cost effective policing and guarding, as well as maintaining an appropriate work life balance for personnel, reduce the amount of overtime worked by each officer to no more than eight hours worked per week averaged over a 17 week rolling period.

Key Target 7:

By 31 March 2005, in order to maintain a healthy and effective workforce and contribute to the achievement of other key targets, reduce the overall level of sickness lost within the Agency (except MGS personnel) by one hour per member of staff per month against the corresponding achievement in the previous year.

Key Target 8:

By 31 March 2005, to have provided a greater clarity as to the extent of fraud within the MOD and thereby to have raised the awareness, by engaging with, and encouraging the MOD community to provide intelligence, with a view to increasing the number of reported fraud cases.

Deployment of RAF Harrier GR7s to Afghanistan

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): The United Kingdom has a long-standing commitment to help the people of Afghanistan to rebuild their country as a stable, secure and prosperous nation. That process is now approaching a vital stage. NATO is in the process of expanding the international security assistance force (ISAF) by creating more provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs). The coalition, meanwhile, continues to deploy PRTs of its own and to engage the remnants of the Taliban and its al-Qaeda supporters that reject all the Afghan people have achieved since 2001. Both the ISAF and the coalition provide essential support to the Afghan transitional

authority and to the United Nations' Assistance Mission Afghanistan as they prepare for the Afghan presidential elections which are due on 9 October 2004.

These are important tasks and both the coalition and the ISAF merit our support. In response to a coalition request for the United Kingdom to provide a close air support capability to coalition forces operating in southern Afghanistan, I have agreed the deployment of six Royal Air Force Harrier GR7 aircraft to Kandahar, Afghanistan. The aircraft will be provided by No. 3 Squadron, Royal Air Force, and the deployment is planned to be for nine months. The first personnel from 53 Field Squadron (Airfield Support), Royal Engineers, and No. 3 Squadron have already deployed to Kandahar and the force should be operational by the end of this month. The deployment will reach a strength of some 315 personnel in its early stages but will eventually settle at a strength of about 230. The cost of the deployment is estimated to be some £35.5 million.

This is our first deployment of combat aircraft to Afghanistan in the current campaign. While their principal role will be to support coalition forces, the aircraft will also be available to support the ISAF. NATO has identified three such tasks: close air support as ISAF expands into Western Afghanistan; an airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capability to support all ISAF forces, and; the provision of "air presence patrols" as part of the ISAF's support for the security of the Afghan presidential elections.

The versatility of the Harriers, which will be equipped with laser-guided bombs, air to surface missiles and the joint reconnaissance pod, makes them an ideal asset to meet all these tasks. Deployment of these aircraft confirms our commitment to the NATO mission in Afghanistan, our support for the ISAF and our determination to help ensure the success of the international community's support for the Afghan electoral process. The Army and Royal Air Force personnel will provide a highly capable and credible force that will contribute to improving the security environment in the region. This is another clear sign of the UK's long term commitment to achieving a stable and secure Afghanistan.

Naval Recruiting and Training Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): In 1997 the initial and major phase of the transfer of support service activities to Flagship Training Ltd (Flagship), under partnership arrangements with the Naval Recruiting and Training Agency (NRTA), was agreed and subsequently implemented.

I am pleased to inform the House that I have now agreed in principle to the next phase under this arrangement and the transfer of the provision of services which falls into two categories: harmonisation, and the integration of the nuclear department.

This phase will enhance the support services already transferred, providing greater efficiencies and effectiveness across the five major training Establishments for the Royal Navy. There are potential total savings for the Naval Recruiting and Training Agency of approximately £6 million over the remainder of the contract period to 2011.

The anticipated number of posts to be transferred is 296 (273 civilian and 23 service) under harmonisation and 24 (20 civilian and 4 Service) in the nuclear department. The trades unions have been regularly informed of progress and the formal consultation process has begun. A copy of the consultative documents has been placed in the Library of the House.

Training Group Defence Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The commander-in-chief, Royal Air Force personnel and training command has set the chief executive of the Training Group Defence Agency the following targets for financial year 2004–2005:

Key Target 1A:
Output—RAF Initial Flying Training

To recruit and train the required number of Royal Air Force aircrew to the standards required for entry to operational conversion unit training and other specialist flying training courses.

Fast-Jet Pilots	42
Multi-Engine Pilots	48
Rotary Wing Pilots	46
Fast-Jet Weapons Systems Operators	28
Multi-Engine Weapons Systems Operators	9
Non-Commissioned Aircrew	103
Total	276

Key Target 1B:

Output—RAF Initial Ground Training

To recruit and train the required number of Royal Air Force personnel to the standards required to undertake ground appointments.

Officer Basic Specialist Training	274
Airman Basic Specialist Training	2,166
Total	2,440

Key Target 2A:
Output—Defence Flying Training

To train aircrew of the three services to standards for entry to the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy operational conversion unit training, the Defence Helicopter Flying School and other specialist flying training courses, as well as providing training places for international students.

RAF	560
RN	164
Army	305
Tri-Service	95
International	113
Total	1,237

Key Target 2B:
Output—Defence Ground Training

To train personnel of the three services to the standards required to undertake ground appointments.

RAF	17,763
RN	3,983
Army	6,766
Total	28,512

To underpin the military effectiveness of the Royal Air Force by the timely provision of military personnel trained to the standards agreed with the agency's customers.

Key Target 4:
Cost Management

To ensure that the necessary systems are in place to manage the business on an output-cost basis.

Key Target 5:

Efficiency

To reduce the average per capita cost of training by improving first time and overall pass rates.

	First Time Pass Rate	*Overall Pass Rate*
Officers—Phase 1	75%	98%
Officers—Phase 2	90%	97%
Airmen—Phase 1	75%	90%
Airmen—Phase 2 (< 38 weeks)	80%	90%
Airmen—Phase 2 (> 38 weeks)	63%	83%

SOLICITOR GENERAL

Iraq: Prosecution of Trooper Williams

The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman): My right hon. Friend the Attorney-General has made the following Ministerial Statement.

"As I indicated in my written statement to the House on 14 June, *Official Report, Lords*, columns WS 22–24, this case, which involves an alleged unlawful killing by shooting of an Iraqi citizen during the course of an arrest, was brought to my attention after charges were dismissed by the soldier's commanding officer. This meant the case could not be tried by court martial. I referred it to the CPS who asked the Metropolitan Police for assistance in collecting further evidence.

I can confirm that today the Metropolitan Police, on the advice of the CPS, charged Trooper Williams with the murder of Hassan Said on 3 August 2003 in Ad Dayr Iraq. Trooper Williams has been kept in custody to appear at Bow Street magistrates court this afternoon.

Trooper Williams is a member of 2nd Royal Tank Regiment."

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 9 September 2004

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Nuclear Industry (Decommissioning)

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): The Government's updated policy on the decommissioning of the UK's nuclear facilities has been published today. Copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The statement is also available on the DTI website at: www.dti.gov.uk.

HOME DEPARTMENT

"Policing: Building Safer Communities Together"

The Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety (Ms Hazel Blears): I have today placed in the Libraries of both Houses copies of the results from the consultation paper "Policing: Building Safer Communities Together".

On 4 November 2003 a major consultation on police reform was launched with the publication of the above paper. A shorter questionnaire version aimed at the general public was also published on 27 February 2004. These documents set out the Government's vision for the future of police reform and posed a series of questions on how to achieve this. We want to build a modernised, truly representative police service which is more visible and accessible and which delivers core national standards of policing to all communities within a framework which enables forces to respond to local priorities.

The response to the consultation was very encouraging and the clear message received was that, while there are areas in which debate and discussion will continue, we are heading in the right direction. In particular there was a strong appetite for greater community engagement, more visible and accessible policing and giving local people a greater say in determining local community safety priorities.

Additional copies of the consultation results, and the original consultation paper and questionnaire are available on the police reform website www.policereform.gov.uk.

Terrorism Act 2000 (Independent Reviewer)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): Lord Carlile of Berriew QC has agreed to continue in his role as independent reviewer of the Terrorism Act 2000 for a further three years.

I am grateful to Lord Carlile in accepting this invitation.

HEALTH

Blood Donation and vCJD

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): Following my statements to the House on 17 December 2003 and 16 March 2004 concerning variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) and blood, I wish to provide an update on some further developments in this area.

My statement on 17 December 2003 informed the House of the first case of possible transmission of vCJD via blood transfusion and the precautionary actions taken. Those actions included measures to protect future blood supplies and contacting recipients of blood from donors who subsequently went on to develop vCJD. A further written statement on 22 July 2004 indicated a second case of possible vCJD prion transmission via blood transfusion had been confirmed.

I also made reference in December to the fact that other patients, including people with haemophilia and other bleeding disorders, would have received plasma products before they were sourced from the United States of America. Although there are now two reports of possible transmission of vCJD via blood, the risk of transmission via plasma products, which will have been derived from large pools of plasma donated from many thousands of people—and therefore heavily diluted—is uncertain. But it cannot be excluded. The CJD incident panel (CJDIP) was asked to advise on a case-by-case basis (having adopted a highly precautionary approach) which recipients of plasma products will need to be contacted. This advice has been received and a programme of action has been agreed.

In June 2004 the Health Protection Agency (HPA), on behalf of the CJD incident panel, reported on an assessment of the risk associated with each batch of product and advised my Department on:

> which patients needed to be assessed and possibly subsequently contacted, and
>
> managing the possible risk to public health of those patients.

In the light of these assessments, the HPA is today initiating a process to notify relevant patients of these developments. The HPA is sending information to clinicians to enable them to trace particular plasma products. The clinicians will then notify any patients identified as "at risk" as a precaution. Any patients affected should expect to be contacted by clinicians later this month.

Aside from patients with haemophilia or other bleeding disorders, the other main group of patients who may have received significant amounts of affected blood products are patients with primary immunodeficiency (PID).

Throughout this exercise we have been concerned to ensure that the results of the risk assessment are communicated to patients by the clinicians responsible for their day-to-day care, so that appropriate supporting information can be provided. Further details about the risk assessment exercise will not be disclosed until after patients are informed of the outcome. I will make a further statement at a later date, if necessary.

Richard Neale

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): The report of the committee of inquiry into how the National Health Service handled allegations about the conduct of Richard Neale (Cm 6315) was published today and copies have been placed in the Library. This is one of the three inquiries announced in July 2001 by my right hon. Friend, Alan Milburn, the then Secretary of State for Health. The other two inquiries were to consider how the NHS handled allegations about the conduct of Clifford Ayling, a former GP; and William Kerr and Michael Haslam, former psychiatrists.

The Government would like to thank the chairman of the inquiry, Her Honour Judge Suzan Matthews QC and the two members of her panel, Christine Funnell and Derek Caldwell, for their thorough review of the circumstances surrounding the appointments and employment of Richard Neale in the NHS. Their hard work in bringing together the relevant issues and their sympathy and understanding in dealing with them is very much appreciated. The Government would also like to thank the secretariat and legal team who provided such excellent support for the review.

The Government are very grateful to the former patients of Richard Neale who chose to provide evidence to the inquiry, and to Richard Neale's former colleagues and other witnesses who also gave evidence, all of whom generously gave their time to assist the inquiry.

If we are to learn the lessons when things go wrong we must ensure that systems are in place which have the confidence of patients who wish to raise concerns. All patients have the right to expect a high standard of care from clinicians. Richard Neale fell short of these standards and as a result caused the patients in his care unnecessary distress. I should like to extend my sympathies to all those patients involved who suffered in this way.

The NHS failed many of Richard Neale's former patients and the inquiry has provided the opportunity not only for their voices to be heard, but also to ensure that their experiences will help strengthen the systems now in place to try to prevent similar incidents in the future.

The report sets out in detail the history of Richard Neale's appointments in Canada and his subsequent employment in the UK. It charts the system failures that allowed him to be employed as a consultant without a proper understanding of his background; and a mixture of similar failures coupled with complacency that permitted him to continue practising in spite of concerns being raised about him.

Since these events have come to light, we have taken a number of steps to help avoid similar incidents in the future. In setting out details of the failures over many years, the inquiry found that

"... even before the inquiry began many of the wider lessons had been learnt and change implemented".

The NHS has indeed been subject to considerable changes over the past few years, many having the specific aim of improving the patient experience, especially patient safety. But we are not complacent and we recognise the need for further improvements. The inquiry's conclusions and recommendations, together with those of the Clifford Ayling inquiry also published today, will help us to ensure that the patient experience is properly at the centre of our work in the NHS.

Many of the recommendations made by this inquiry are concerned with improvements in way that complaints are handled by the NHS. These include ensuring that patients have both sufficient and correct information about their treatment to inform their decisions as well as strengthening the role of the Patient Advisory Liaison Service (PALS) to support patients who have concerns, and some of this work is already underway. Issues around complaints are also being considered by the Shipman inquiry, which is likely to produce recommendations in its Fifth Report due later this year. They are also being considered by the William Kerr/Michael Haslam inquiry, whose report is also expected later this year. We will therefore consider these recommendations together with those of the Shipman, Clifford Ayling and William Kerr/Michael Haslam inquiries and give a detailed response in due course.

In the meantime, the Government will consider very carefully the other recommendations concerning the appointment and employment of consultants and doctors in other grades, as well as the role of the Council for the Regulation of Healthcare Professionals (now known as the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence), and will respond to these as soon as we can.

We have made clear that patient safety is a priority and the UK has led the way in pushing forward in this area. Tomorrow, I will be talking to fellow EU health ministers about the lessons EU members can learn from one another and make clear that patient safety will be a key issue during the UK presidency of the EU next year.

This inquiry has provided a valuable insight into a series of errors over a long period of time in the appointment processes and in Richard Neale's employment performance. It has painstakingly identified the causes of those errors and has made helpful recommendations about how best to avoid repeating them. We will review the improvements we have made in the past few years to ensure that they address the concerns raised in the report. The Government are grateful to all those whose contributions to the review will help us fulfil our commitment to patient safety.

Clifford Ayling

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): The report of the committee of inquiry into how the National Health Service handled allegations about the conduct of Clifford Ayling (Cm 6298) is being published today and copies have been placed in the Library. This is one of the three inquiries announced in July 2001 by my right hon. Friend, Alan Milburn, the then Secretary of State for Health. The other two inquiries were to consider how the NHS handled allegations about the conduct of Richard Neale, a former gynaecologist; and William Kerr and Michael Haslam, former psychiatrists.

The Government would like to thank Dame Anna Pauffley, the chairman of the inquiry, and the two members of her panel, Peter Berman and Mary Whitty, for their delicate handling of undoubtedly sensitive issues. Their report is painstakingly researched and

provides in clear detail a history of events in the NHS that led, in December 2000, to Clifford Ayling's conviction on 12 counts of indecent assault. It charts the procedures then in place through which patients could raise concerns about their treatment; and the failures in those systems that let down many of Clifford Ayling's patients so badly. The Government are very grateful to Dame Anna and her panel for producing such a comprehensive report and to the secretariat and legal team for their tremendous support.

The Government are also grateful to those former patients of Clifford Ayling who came forward and provided evidence to the inquiry which must, at times, have been very difficult and painful. The systems in place in the NHS to help and support these patients who raised concerns about Clifford Ayling's behaviour and treatment let them down. No patient should be left in a position where those in charge of their care are able to abuse their trust and take advantage. My sympathies go to the patients involved in this case. They will have the benefit of knowing that their evidence will help to ensure that better and more robust systems will be put in place to avoid similar incidents in the future.

Similarly, the evidence provided by former colleagues was clearly very important to the inquiry in determining how the systems worked, or failed. Their candour in giving evidence is very much appreciated.

Since these events have come to light, we have taken a number of steps to help avoid similar incidents in the future and the report itself recognises that considerable change has taken place in the NHS since Clifford Ayling practised, concluding . . .

> "The impact of the Government's plans and investment in health services has dramatically altered the landscape of the NHS. At an organisational level, it is almost unrecognisable as the NHS in which Ayling practised. The emphasis on patient safety, remedial action for poor clinical performance, closer scrutiny of untoward events and empowering patients in the management of services are greatly welcomed."

The changes introduced in recent years have already sought to address the weaknesses found by the inquiry as being a cause for concern. For this reason the inquiry has directed its recommendations towards strengthening the systems now in place rather than offering new or alternative proposals for action.

The Government welcome the recommendations in the report which include proposals both to address the issue of sexualised behaviour and to ensure that guidance is available for dealing with it; and that all trusts and primary care practices should have an explicit policy on the use of chaperones. These are important issues that will require detailed consideration if changes are to be implemented effectively. Likewise, the role of patient advocacy when dealing with 'sexualised behaviour' in both the hospital and the primary care setting will also require further detailed consideration.

The report acknowledges that considerable changes have already been made. These include substantial changes to the NHS complaints procedure and the current development of guidance to trusts on how to handle untoward incidents. Further changes are in hand and planned.

It recommends improvements to the recording of complaints against individual practitioners and the importance of co-ordinating complaints, coupled with the need to ensure that employers are aware of other employment being undertaken by their medical staff.

Other recommendations include requiring staff of NHS trusts and other healthcare organisations employing staff, such as deputising services, to declare concurrent employment and for this requirement to be suitably adapted to ensure that PCTs are kept informed of other professional work undertaken by GPs; the provision of better support for single-handed practitioners and their practice managers; and clarification of the roles of the respective professional and local bodies in primary care.

The Department of Health is also asked to develop a memorandum of understanding with professional regulatory bodies and the Crown Prosecution Service; and to work with strategic health authorities to provide guidance to trusts on handling untoward incidents.

Issues around complaints are also being considered by the Shipman inquiry, which is likely to produce recommendations in its fifth report due later this year. *They are also being considered by the William Kerr/* Michael Haslam inquiry whose report is also expected later this year. We will therefore consider these recommendations together with those of the Shipman, Neale and William Kerr/Michael Haslam inquiries and give a detailed response in due course.

The Department of Health is asked to take account of the inquiry's recommendations in the development of its current work on a memorandum of understanding with the NHS, the police and the Health and Safety Executive. We shall of course ensure that the report and its recommendations are brought to the attention of the project board taking this work forward. As part of this work, guidance is currently being developed for the NHS including a strategy for involving patients and others.

Our purpose in setting up this inquiry, as with all investigations of errors in the NHS, is to learn the lessons and put in place procedures to minimise the risk of similar errors occurring in the future. As already indicated, much work has already been done and further work is in hand. We very much welcome this report and its recommendations, and those of the Richard Neale inquiry also published today, with their emphasis on putting patients at the centre of health care. These reports will provide an important contribution to a continuing process of improvement.

We have made clear that patient safety is a priority and the UK has led the way in pushing forward in this area. Tomorrow, I will be talking to fellow EU health ministers about the lessons EU members can learn from one another and make clear that patient safety will be a key issue during the UK presidency of the EU next year.

It is completely unacceptable that the events described in this report were allowed to happen. In acting on the inquiry's recommendations we will be guided by the need to prevent future patients having to suffer in the same way as many patients of Clifford Ayling.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Libya: Future Defence Requirements

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): On 19 December 2003, Libya announced that it would dismantle its weapons of mass destruction programmes, and limit its ballistic missiles to a range of less than 300km. Since then, Libya has been working to put these commitments into effect, and has been pursuing a course of reintegration into the international community. The Government welcome and fully supports this process.

The Government recognise that Libya, following its decision to renounce weapons of mass destruction, has legitimate defence requirements. The United Kingdom has a clear interest in developing an open and co-operative relationship with Libya on defence matters. During his visit to Libya on 25 March, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced the appointment of General Robin Searby as the United Kingdom Defence Co-ordinator for Libya in order to offer Libya a new military relationship with the United Kingdom. As a natural part of progress towards full normalisation of the United Kingdom's relations with Libya, the Government intend to respond to Libyan requests to discuss their legitimate defence requirements in detail.

The Government welcome news of Libyan and German agreement on a compensation package for the victims of the 1986 La Belle disco bombing as a significant milestone in the process of rebuilding the United Kingdom's and the European Union's relations with Libya. In light of this agreement, the United Kingdom expects to revisit the issue of the EU arms embargo imposed on Libya in 1986 with EU partners over coming months. If the embargo were removed, the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria (which apply to all countries) would be the test against which any proposed export of defence equipment to Libya would be assessed.

While the embargo remains in place, all contact with Libya in this area must fall within the terms of the EU arms embargo and United Kingdom law. This means that no commitments in relation to the actual supply of licensable defence equipment will be made while the embargo is in place.

European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): At the European Council in Brussels on 17–18 June 2004, EU Heads of Government agreed to include the charter of fundamental rights as part II of the constitutional treaty. This statement sets out the Government's views on the charter of fundamental rights.

Changes to the European Union charter of fundamental rights, which make it suitable for incorporation into the treaties.

The EU charter was agreed at Nice in 2000 as a political declaration, not as treaty law. At the same time, the European Council agreed that

"in accordance with the Cologne conclusions, the question of the charter's force would be considered later"—

conclusions of the Nice European Council reference 00/1843, deposited in the Library of the House on 11 December 2000. Her Majesty's Government made it clear that we could not agree to incorporation of the charter into the treaties without further legal clarification of its meaning and application. In the White Paper "A Constitutional Treaty for the EU", Cm 5934 of September 2003, Her Majesty's Government said we would make a final decision on incorporation of the charter into the constitutional treaty only in the light of the overall picture at the IGC.

The charter, including its original preamble, and its own special rules of application and interpretation, is now part II of the constitutional treaty, and is introduced by article I-7(1) of the treaty. Article I-7 deals with fundamental rights generally. Besides introducing the charter, article I-7(1) acknowledges the distinction made in the charter between rights and principles. Human rights and other fundamental rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and in the constitutional traditions common to all the member states remain general principles of EU law (see article I-7(3)); and insofar as the charter affirms such rights, they will be interpreted in accordance with the ECHR. Article I-7(2) enables the Union to accede to the ECHR in its own right.

Significant amendments have been made to articles II-51 and II-52 in title VII of the charter, now entitled "General Provisions Governing the Interpretation and Application of the Charter". The charter applies to the Union—its institutions, agencies and bodies—and, though only when they are implementing Union law, to the member states. Paragraph (1) of article II-51 has been further clarified to show that the charter does not entail any extension of the Union's competences or any extension of the scope of its application for member states. Paragraph (2) of article II-51 also confirms that the charter does not have the effect of extending the scope of application of Union law beyond the powers of the Union as established in the other parts of the constitutional treaty.

Article II-52 deals with interpretation, and significantly improves the original charter provisions. It indicates that there are four sources for the content of the charter's rights, freedoms and principles: provisions of EU law, the ECHR, the constitutional traditions common to the member states and national law. Under article II-52(2), charter articles based on existing EU law are to be read subject to the conditions and limits set out in the constitutional treaty; that is, they are effectively subordinated to their legal base in other parts of the constitution. Under article II-52(3), rights in the charter that correspond to rights in the ECHR have the same meaning and scope as given by the jurisprudence of the Strasbourg Court. Article I-7(2) on EU accession to the ECHR will help ensure consistency of jurisprudence as between the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice.

Under article II-52(4), those charter provisions which draw upon the common constitutional traditions of the member states must be interpreted "in harmony" with such traditions.

Article II-52(6) emphasises the respect to be given to "national laws and practices", as referred to in the charter provisions.

Article II-52(5) is aimed at clarifying the distinction the charter makes between legally enforceable rights on the one hand, and the principles, of an aspirational nature, on the other, which are to be found mainly in the solidarity title of the charter. Principles are designed to guide the actions of the Union institutions, and of the member states when implementing Union law. The Union must observe principles by virtue of article II-51(1) when deciding whether to exercise its competences; but there is no obligation to legislate, and the charter itself generates no additional powers to do so. Principles apply within the limitations set out in article II-51(2).

Finally, a further new horizontal article, article II-52(7), has been added to the constitutional treaty. Article II-52(7) requires the charter to be interpreted with due regard to the official explanations, which address the legal bases for each of the charter's provisions. The explanations have been updated and strengthened and are the subject of a special declaration by the member states which ensures that they are published with the new treaty. The official explanations constitute an authoritative guide to the legal meaning of the charter's provisions and will help ensure that the charter is not misinterpreted.

Whether incorporation of the European Union charter of fundamental rights into the treaties will increase the powers of the European Union

Incorporation of the European Union charter of fundamental rights into the treaties will not increase the powers of the European Union. The charter of fundamental rights must be read as a whole, including the general provisions governing the interpretation and application of the charter, as set out in articles II-51 to 53 of the charter. Article II-51(2) provides that the charter does not extend the scope of application of Union law beyond the powers of the Union or establish any new power or task for the Union, or modify powers and tasks defined by the other parts of the constitutional treaty.

The benefits to the United Kingdom of the European Union charter of fundamental rights

Although fundamental rights, freedoms and principles are guaranteed by the Governments of the member states in accordance with national law, there was no statement of rights, etc. binding the European Union. The charter sets out such a statement for the Union. Following incorporation of the charter, the institutions, bodies and agencies of the Union will be bound to recognise those rights, etc. in exercising any of their powers. The charter should help ensure that citizens' basic rights and liberties are protected at EU level, as they are in their own countries.

The effect of Article II-28 of the charter of fundamental rights upon the laws governing industrial relations in the United Kingdom

In practice, article II-28 of the charter of fundamental rights will have no effect upon the laws governing industrial relations in the United Kingdom. Article II-28 states that workers and employers enjoy rights of collective bargaining and action

> "in accordance with Union law and national laws and practices".

There is no Union law in this area, nor could there be in future. EU action on pay, the right of association, the right to strike and the right to impose lock-outs is specifically excluded—see article III-104(6) of the constitutional treaty. Charter article II-52(6) provides that full account should be taken of national laws and practices as specified in the charter. As with all the charter provisions, and by virtue of article II-52(7), it is important to read article II-28 alongside the official explanation, which in this instance points out that

> "The modalities and limits for the exercise of collective action, including strike action, come under national laws and practices".

The United Kingdom's laws governing industrial relations maintain a balance between workers' rights to pursue legitimate trade disputes and employers' rights to conduct their businesses without undue disruption from illegitimate strike action. Article II-28 will not alter that balance.

Diplomatic Missions: Outstanding National Non-domestic Rate Bills

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): The majority of diplomatic missions in the United Kingdom meet their obligations and pay the national non-domestic rate (NNDR) requested from them. The total amount outstanding from all diplomatic missions is approximately £980,000. However, as at 31 July 2004 missions listed below owed over £10,000 in respect of NNDR. Twelve additional diplomatic missions, who owe £10,000 or more in respect of national non-domestic rates, have made arrangements with the valuation office agency to clear their outstanding debts and have not been included in this list.

Country	*Amount*
Mozambique	£33,718,35
Cameroon	£32,640,33
Zimbabwe	£31,778,64
Uganda	£30,892,13
Egypt	£26,674,46
Bangladesh	£25,948,51
China	£25,241,49
Côte d'Ivoire	£20,788,06
Senegal	£19,198,79
Saudi Arabia	£14,400,70
Yemen Republic	£13,582,61
Total	£274,864,07

Diplomatic Missions: Serious Offences

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): From a community of around 20,000 in the United Kingdom entitled to immunity, 16 serious offences, allegedly committed by such persons, were drawn to the attention of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2003. Serious offences are defined in accordance with the 1985 White Paper on Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges—that is as offences that would in certain circumstances, carry a penalty of 12 months or more imprisonment.

Diplomatic Missions: Unpaid Traffic Fines

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): There were 4,565 outstanding parking and other minor traffic violation fines incurred by diplomatic missions and international organisation in the United Kingdom recorded during the year 1 January

2003 to 31 December 2003. These totalled £407,950.00. In May this year the Foreign and Commonwealth Office wrote to all affected diplomatic missions and international organisation giving them the opportunity either to pay their outstanding fines or to appeal against them if they considered that the fines had been issued incorrectly. As a result payments totalling £49,280.00 were received, leaving a total of 3,941 (£350,170.00) unpaid fines for 2003. The table below details those diplomatic missions and international organisations that have 11 or more undisputed fines unpaid.

Diplomatic Mission/ International Organisation	*No. of fines outstanding*	*Amount in £*
Libya	365	34,480.00
Saudi Arabia	264	24,200.00
Nigeria	232	15,850.00
Georgia	172	16,460.00
China	160	14,080.00
Kazakhstan	146	13,670.00
Turkey	116	10,410.00
Egypt	115	10,930.00
Ghana	106	9,650.00
Greece	94	8,230.00
Senegal	93	8,680.00
United Arab Emirates	92	7,900.00
Angola	87	7,380.00
Kuwait	85	8,270.00
France	78	6,370.00
Afghanistan	76	7,370.00
Russia	75	6,980.00
Algeria	72	6,780.00
Jordan	71	6,660.00
Yemen	60	5,110.00
Malaysia	59	5,720.00
Oman	58	3,830.00
Hungary	56	5,500.00
Kenya	44	4,200.00
Brunei	41	3,920.00
Iran	41	3,280.00
Sudan	40	3,350.00
Rwanda	35	2,650.00
Bahrain	34	3,400.00
Mozambique	34	2,690.00
Germany	32	2,980.00
Brazil	32	2,660.00
Korea (DPR)	31	2,450.00
Uganda	30	2,950.00
Bangladesh	29	2,820.00
Ukraine	29	2,480.00
Tunisia	28	2,590.00
Philippines	28	2,380.00
Poland	27	2,030.00
Tanzania	26	2,370.00
Bulgaria	26	2,350.00
Romania	25	2,300.00
Latvia	24	2,130.00
Zambia	23	2,140.00
Lithuania	22	2,150.00
Morocco	22	2,090.00
Cyprus	22	1,780.00
Guinea	22	1,430.00
Syria	18	1,570.00
Cuba	18	1,440.00
Belgium	16	1,600.00
Fiji	16	1,600.00
Pakistan	16	1,540.00
Vietnam	16	1,540.00
Spain	16	1,220.00
Azerbaijan	15	1,400.00
Thailand	15	1,360.00
Sierra Leone	15	990.00
United States of America	14	1,310.00
Cameroon	14	1,300.00
Jamaica	14	1,280.00
Panama	14	1,240.00
Uzbekistan	12	1,020.00
Zimbabwe	12	710.00
Total	3,720	331,200.00

The number of outstanding fines incurred by diplomatic missions in the UK for non-payment of the London congestion charge at the end of its first year of operation in February 2004 was 1,847. The table below shows the 10 diplomatic missions with the highest number of outstanding fines.

1	Egypt	250
2	U.A.E	182
3	Angola	126
4	Kazakhstan	84
5	Sudan	81
6	Tanzania	72
7	Sierra Leone	66
8	Zimbabwe	52
9	Algeria	50
10	Malawi	50

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Mental Capacity Bill

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Baroness Ashton of Upholland, has made the following written ministerial statement.

The draft code of practice that supports the Mental Capacity Bill has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The Mental Capacity Bill, when it is being considered at Commons Committee stage will be informed by having the draft code available. (We are not in parliamentary terms scrutinising the code itself). The code gives a greater level of detail on many of the Bill's provisions and demonstrates how we think those acting under the Bill will need to be guided when putting these provisions into practice.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

State Opening of Parliament

The Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. Peter Hain): The State Opening of Parliament will be on Tuesday 23 November. I plan to announce the date of prorogation as soon as I am able.

NORTHEN IRELAND

Tourist Board

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Barry Gardiner): The Northern Ireland Tourist Board's 2002–03 annual report and accounts were deposited in the Libraries of both Houses today.

Written Ministerial Statement

Monday 13 September 2004

WORK AND PENSIONS

Opportunity for All—Sixth Annual Report

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Alan Johnson): Today I have published "Opportunity for All—Sixth Annual Report 2004", Cm 6239. The report sets out our strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion, and reports on the indicators used to monitor progress. Copies have been placed in the Library.

Poverty and social exclusion are deep-rooted problems that have built up over many years and will take time to resolve. Our strategy has been to tackle the root causes of poverty. I am pleased to report substantial progress has been made on a range of our indicators. For example, we have seen improvements for children living in workless households, people of all ages living in homes that are of the set standard of decency, employment rates, including those for disabled people, lone parents, ethnic minority people and people aged 50 and over, and the number of people sleeping rough.

Undoubtedly there is more to do. Tackling the root causes of poverty takes time as well as commitment and investment. It also requires a partnership across all sectors of society. However, it is exciting that we are now starting to see early signs of some equally deep-rooted change.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 14 September 2004

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education (Admissions)

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Mr. Charles Clarke): I am delighted today to commend to the House the report from Professor Steven Schwartz, vice-chancellor of Brunei University, on fair admissions to higher education.

Professor Schwartz and his group have over the last 15 months carried out an extensive and thorough examination of the processes for admission to higher education and have consulted widely on two occasions before presenting their conclusions. I am indebted to Professor Schwartz and all who have worked so diligently with him on this important task.

Responsibility for admissions to higher education rests firmly with the institutions themselves. They have to be satisfied that the students they admit have the ability and potential to complete their studies successfully. That is right and proper and this report unreservedly maintains that position. It also confirms, on the basis of the evidence, that admissions processes in our universities and colleges of higher education are generally fair. Nevertheless, Government has an interest in ensuring that admissions processes also command the confidence of prospective students, their parents, advisers and teachers. That is why I invited Professor Schwartz to identify options for institutions to adopt when assessing the merit, achievement and potential of applicants for their courses.

The report "Fair Admissions to Higher Education: Recommendations for Good Practice" will stand as a practical guide for institutions as they review and develop their admissions policies, practices and systems. Everyone involved with admissions to higher education has a deep concern to ensure that they are fair and that they are seen to be fair. In pursuit of that end, Professor Schwartz has identified five underlying principles that I wholeheartedly endorse as the basis for fair admissions.

These principles will support:

transparency in admissions processes;

selection for merit, potential and diversity;

reliability, validity and relevance of assessment methods;

minimising barriers for applicants; and

professionalism in all aspects of admissions services.

Taken together, the five principles provide the bedrock for building fair admissions systems that provide equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of background, to gain admission to a course suited to their ability and aspirations. The implementation guidelines also offered by Professor Schwartz will help institutions in mainstreaming the principles within their own admissions systems. I hope that all universities and colleges will take immediate steps to introduce the principles and guidelines within their own arrangements.

The report is more than just a guide however. It is also a call for action by higher education institutions and across the wider education establishment including some matters for Government and the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

These include:

setting up a new Centre of Expertise on Admissions. I can confirm that the Higher Education Funding Council for England will work with Universities UK, the Standing Conference of Principals and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service to see how this Centre can be established, perhaps under the umbrella of the HE Academy where it would dovetail well with the role for staff development.

research to assess the feasibility and reliability of a single, national test for potential that is not fully demonstrated by exam results. I support this as an early task for the new Centre of Expertise on Admissions and will look carefully at the outcomes of the study alongside the final report from Mike Tomlinson on 14–19 qualifications reform that is due in the autumn, before deciding on the way forward. What we must not have is tests for tests sake, but if there is a genuine need, it would be right to explore the opportunity.

ensuring that consistent levels of advice and guidance are available to all applicants. Similar messages are emerging from Mike Tomlinson's working group as well as from the End to End Review of Careers Education and Guidance that my Department has undertaken. As part of its work on the Youth Green Paper—to be published in the autumn—the Department is consdering how it can best ensure that all young people are able to access and interpret the information and advice they need to make well-informed decisions.

the introduction of a radically different system for applications to higher education whereby students will not apply for higher education courses until they know their exam results. I am concerned that over very many years such a system has acquired the reputation of a holy grail for the HE admissions world—desirable but not achievable. I am aware of the complexity of the practical difficulties that would need to be overcome before a post-qualification application (PQA) system could be introduced, but I remain persuaded by the arguments for PQA which have been endorsed by Professor Schwartz and his group. It must be fairer and more transparent for students to know their final results before making important choices about where and what to study, and this must also aid decision-making by universities. PQA could also help many students, including those from families without a tradition of HE, to feel more confident in applying to our leading universities. I have therefore asked Sir Alan Wilson, the Director General for Higher Education and the former Vice Chancellor of Leeds University, to lead the work on implementation for PQA. He will be assisted by an implementation group which he will establish. Sir Alan will consult with all interested parties, engaging fully the devolved administrations, and advise me on the arrangements and an appropriate timescale for the introduction of PQA.

Finally, ProfessorSchwartz has asked that I initiate a further review of admissions after three years as a means to assess progress in implementing his group's recommendations. I accept that it would be sensible to follow up this initial review and that three years will allow time for some of the more immediate benefits to have been realised and for appropriate action to be underway to secure the longer term ones. I shall commission the further review in due course.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Housing and Planning in the Regions

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I am pleased to announce the publication of a consultation paper concerning the merger of the regional housing boards and the regional planning bodies.

The paper responds to one of the recommendations in Kate Barker's review of housing supply (ISBN 1-84532-010-7) published in March. We have already accepted her recommendation that responsibility for housing and planning regional strategies should be merged. The paper proposes that responsibility should rest with regional assemblies. This is in line with our general policy on devolving decision-making and the broadening of the role of assemblies on integrating regional strategies.

The paper also covers proposals for taking forward Kate Barker's recommendation for the provision of independent advice to the regions to strengthen the evidence base that supports regional housing and planning strategies and increase the transparency of the processes for producing these strategies.

Consultation will run until 30 November 2004. Copies of the consultation paper have been made available in the Libraries of the House and it is available on the ODPM website.

Poor Planning Authorities

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): In my statement of 17 July 2003, *Official Report*, column 57WS, I explained our approach to achieving the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's public service agreement six (PSA6) target. This requires all local planning authorities to complete local development frameworks by 2006 and to perform at or above best value targets for development control (BV109) by 2006 with interim milestones to be agreed in the service delivery agreement. The revised PSA6 target, announced in July as part of the outcome of the spending review, will require all local planning authorities to sustain this level of performance to 2008.

We are now one year nearer to the 2006–07 target date and, whilst local authorities' performance overall has shown encouraging progress, there is still much to be done. I am therefore setting out today ways in which we are working with local planning authorities and strengthening our strategy of engagement with those that are performing poorly in their handling of planning applications.

We will continue to designate poorly performing authorities as planning standards authorities on an annual basis, as described in my statement of last year. Where their performance falls below specified thresholds, in terms of the percentage of applications determined within the target time frame, then they are asked to achieve specific performance standards in the following year. In 2004–05 both the thresholds and the standards were raised by 2–5 percentage points. This was a relatively modest increase to give local authorities further time to make use of the additional resources available though planning delivery grant. We envisage a more significant ratcheting up of both the thresholds and standards for 2005–06 (by up to 10 percentage points) as a necessary step towards meeting the targets in 2006–07, as follows:

Percentage of applications determined within time

		2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*2006–07*
Major	Threshold	28	30	40	50
	Standard to be met	50	52	57	60
Minor	Threshold	37	40	50	55
	Standard to be met	55	58	63	65
Other	Threshold	55	60	65	70
	Standard to be met	70	73	75	80

Threshold = performance below this level at previous year ending June would qualify authority for standard.
Standard = percentage achievement required within 13 weeks for major and eight weeks for minor and other applications.

We will encourage authorities to draw up trajectories and improvement plans as soon as they are identified as potential standards authorities, and will review their progress against trajectories shortly after they are designated. Help in this process will be made available, including support from the new planning advisory service that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has invited the Improvement and Development Agency to host. Further support comes in the form of continued funding through the planning delivery grant after 2005–06, as announced in July following the spending review.

In the course of the year for which an authority has been designated as a standards authority, my officials will contact the authority's planning service to collect information on what steps have been taken or will be taken to improve its planning performance. This will be assessed to determine if further action will be needed to support performance improvements. Regard will be given to authorities' progress towards the specific performance standards they were set and, in the longer term, authorities' ability to reach the targets set out in ODPM's public service agreement six (PSA6).

Engagement with an authority will be reviewed at the end of the year for which it has been designated as a standards authority in light of whether it has achieved the standards specified in the best value order and any demonstrable sustained improvement in performance over the period. We will remain engaged with authorities until we are confident that a sustainable level of improvement has been achieved, with the level of engagement proportionate to the risk of failure.

Authorities causing serious concern will be asked to self-assess their performance against trajectories and draw up improvement plans to share with the relevant Government office for the regions, who in turn will report on progress to ODPM on a quarterly basis. If performance continues to deteriorate then we will

consider the case for further more direct intervention. In doing so we would adopt the proportionate approach outlined in my earlier statement and would have regard to the authorities' CPA status.

Authorities causing a lesser degree of concern will be asked to self-assess performance against trajectories and share their conclusions with the relevant Government office for the regions on a quarterly basis. Government Offices will report to ODPM by exception, where performance shows significant deterioration.

I will consider the case for relaxing the intensity of engagement or for disengagement with other authorities where the annualised performance in all three categories of application is on or above the relevant planning standard and the authority's own trajectory for two consecutive quarters.

Over the last year 39 planning standards authorities were found to have made significant improvements in performance, and outstanding improvements in a number of cases. I congratulate them all on their success in improving their performance and I expect to see them making further rapid progress towards meeting and exceeding the national targets. The 39 authorities were:

Bedford District Council

London Borough of Brent

Brighton & Hove Unitary Authority

Bristol City Council

Calderdale Met. Borough Council

Canterbury City Council

Chichester District Council

Durham City Council

London Borough of Ealing

East Cambridgeshire District Council

East Hampshire District Council

Epsom and Ewell District Council

Fareham District Council

Forest Heath District Council

Gloucester District Council

Havant District Council

Isle of Wight Unitary Authority

Kerrier District Council

London Borough of Lambeth

Leeds City Council

Mansfield District Council

Medway Unitary Authority

Milton Keynes Unitary Authority

North Devon District Council

Oldham Met. Borough Council

Reading Borough Council

Reigate and Banstead District Council

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Rossendale District Council

Sheffield City Council

Spelthorne District Council

Taunton Deane District Council

Three Rivers District Council

Vale of White Horse District Council

Wansbeck District Council

Wear Valley District Council

West Lindsey District Council

Weymouth and Portland District Council

Worcester District Council

The new planning advisory service (PAS) will play an important role in supporting local planning authorities. This includes through a newly developed improvement planning programme. Already the PAS has held an introductory event on improvement planning which will be followed up with a series of regional workshops and other ongoing support. Also as part of the PAS a new advisory panel on large applications is now gearing up to assist a number of local planning authorities in the high demand regions of London and the wider south east.

The PSA6 targets are challenging but we believe achievable. We will continue to monitor progress and to keep our strategy for engagement under review as we approach the target year of 2006–07.

North East Regional Assembly

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): I am today publishing a consultation paper on draft guidance to the Electoral Commission on drawing up the constituencies for a North East regional assembly.

If, following a yes vote in the referendum on the establishment of a regional assembly in the North East, the Secretary of State proposes that a regional assembly should be established, the Government will direct the Electoral Commission to provide advice on the drawing up of the electoral areas for a North East regional assembly. This direction will be accompanied by statutory guidance on what the Electoral Commission should take into account in preparing its advice. It is this guidance on which we are consulting.

The consultation paper includes a full draft of the guidance the Secretary of State proposes to issue. The Secretary of State proposes to direct the Electoral Commission to provide advice on:

the number of electoral areas;

the electoral areas into which the North East is to be divided; and

the name by which these electoral areas are to be known.

Therefore, the draft guidance sets out the matters the Government feel that the Electoral Commission should take into account when preparing its advice. The Secretary of State is not proposing to seek the Commission's advice on the total number of members for a North East assembly.

A copy of this consultation paper will be available in the Libraries of both Houses and in the "Regions" section of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister website. The end date for the consultation is 22 October 2004.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Hong Kong

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): We welcome the fact that Legislative Council elections were generally well run. Clearly there were a number of technical problems on the day in some locations and we understand that the SAR Government and the Electoral Affairs Commission will be looking into these. That said, there appears to have been fair treatment for all candidates and we have no reason to question the validity of the outcome.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Offers in the 22nd Offshore and 12th Inshore (Oil and Gas) Licensing Rounds

The Minister for Energy and E-Commerce (Mr. Mike O'Brien): I am pleased to inform the House that as a result of the 22nd offshore and 12th onshore oil and gas licensing rounds, I am today offering 97 offshore licences (58 of them under "promote" terms, seven under frontier terms and 32 under the traditional terms) and 26 petroleum and development licences for the onshore area. The companies will have a fixed period in which to accept the offers made.

This is a very good result and demonstrates the keen interest still being shown in exploiting the United Kingdom's hydrocarbon resources.

A list of the successful companies in the rounds can be viewed on the DTI website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/.

Regulator of Community Interest Companies and Sectoral Regulators

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Jacqui Smith): To assist discussion of the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Bill in Standing Committee, it may be helpful if I outline how the Government intend the powers of the new regulator of community interest companies (CICs), created by clause 24 of the Bill, to interact with those of other regulators in particular sectors of activity, and in particular the regulators of registered social landlords (RSLs).

The consultation paper on CICs which the Government published last year said that the CIC regulator

"will work with other companies' regulators, and with any sectoral regulators with relevant competences, to ensure that there is a single interface between CICs and their stakeholders on one hand, and regulators on the other".[1]

The consultation confirmed that this is the right approach, and that simplicity of regulation is highly valued by social enterprises. The single most important step in achieving it is to integrate the new regulator with companies house. The CIC regulator will therefore be located in companies house, and the processes for setting up a CIC and making annual community interest company reports will be linked to the equivalent processes for all companies.

The consultation paper referred to "sectoral regulators with relevant competences" because CICs potentially have a wide range of uses. Some CICs may therefore operate in sectors that are already subject to legal and regulatory constraints in matters such as the use of assets. In such cases, the Government are determined that overlapping regulation should be avoided.

We have already identified one sector where work is necessary to achieve this. registered social landlords, or RSLs, are subject to statutory constraints on the use of their assets, and on their activities, under housing legislation. The RSL sector is regulated in England by the Housing Corporation, in Scotland by Communities Scotland, and in Wales by the Housing Directorate of the National Assembly for Wales.

RSLs currently use a variety of legal forms, and we believe that some may be interested in becoming CICs, or in establishing CIC subsidiaries. The Government are particularly mindful of the need to avoid complicating the regulation of RSLs that choose to use the CIC form, in the light of a recent report on the Housing Corporation by this House's Committee on Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions, which stressed the need to streamline the regulation of RSLs and to avoid duplication.

We intend to achieve this streamlining for RSLs using the CIC form, by making orders under the Deregulation and Contracting Out Act 1994, to enable the CIC regulator to delegate relevant powers to the appropriate RSL regulators in England and Wales. The orders will be subject to affirmative resolution in both Houses of Parliament. The position is rather different in Scotland because of the devolution settlement, and we are in discussion with the Scottish Executive and Communities Scotland about the appropriate way to arrange the delegation of powers.

The detail of which powers should be delegated to the RSL regulators is being discussed by the Government, the RSL regulators and the devolved administrations. The principle will be that the CIC regulator should delegate those powers that duplicate or overlap with those of the RSL regulators. Regulatory action in respect of RSLs using the CIC form will then normally be the responsibility of the relevant RSL regulator, using either their powers under housing legislation, or the powers delegated to them by the CIC regulator.

The real value of delegating powers in this way is that it will allow the RSL regulators to take the clear lead in regulating RSL CICs. Those CICs can then be confident that the relevant RSL regulator in England, Scotland or Wales is the key body with which they must deal, in respect of their obligations both as RSLs and as CICs. Delegated powers will be exercisable concurrently by the CIC regulator and the sectoral bodies, but we expect that the CIC regulator will only have a limited "backroom" role in respect of RSLs using the CIC form, for instance in agreeing their registration as CICs. Clause 39 of this Bill allows the CIC regulator to use his supervisory powers only to the extent necessary to maintain confidence in CICs, and it will not normally be appropriate for him to act where he has delegated those powers to a sectoral regulator.

[1] "Enterprise for Communities: proposals for a Community Interest Company", para 46, published March 2003, available at www.dti.gov.uk/cics.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 15 September 2004

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Key Stage 1

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Mr. Stephen Twigg): The trial of the new assessment arrangement at key stage 1 has now concluded and a decision about extending the new arrangements to all schools has been made.

In 2003, we asked the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to trial an approach that placed more emphasis on teacher assessment and national reporting of teacher assessment levels. Schools taking part in the trial administered the national curriculum tasks and tests in reading, writing and mathematics and the outcomes of these, plus all the evidence from work done throughout the year, were used by teachers to make judgments about children's progress in each subject, which were reported to parents and LEAs.

An independent evaluation of the new arrangements was carried out by Leeds university on behalf of the QCA. The evaluation proved favourable and we have accepted the QCA's recommendation to extend the new arrangements to all schools at key stage 1 from the current academic year.

HOME DEPARTMENT

M26 Taser

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): Five police forces have been trialling the use of Taser since April 2003 on a strictly limited basis. In the light of the results of the trial, I have authorised chief officers throughout England and Wales to deploy Taser for use in the same strictly limited circumstances. Chief officers can now make the M26 Taser available to authorised firearms officers in their force as a less lethal alternative for use in situations where a firearms authority has been granted in accordance with criteria laid down in the ACPO manual of guidance on police use of firearms.

The Defence Scientific Advisory Council (DSAC) sub-committee on the medical implications of less lethal weapons (DOMILL) was invited to provide a second statement on the medical implications of the use of the M26 Advanced Taser. The DOMILL statement confirms that the risk of death from the M26 Taser is very low. I have placed a copy of the statement in the Library of the House.

HEALTH

National Service Framework (Maternity and Children's Services)

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): In February 2001, we announced that the Department would be developing a new national service framework (NSF) to set in place new standards for children's services. I am pleased to announce that the children's NSF is today being published. Copies have been placed in the Library.

This NSF is the most complex to date, covering maternity services and the full range of issues for children and young people across health and social care, as well as the interface with education. It has been developed in active consultation with young people and the direct participation of over 250 experts and practitioners from the field. We also sought the views of key stakeholders through a major consultation exercise.

The children's NSF is an evidence-based, 10-year strategy that advocates a cultural shift in the provision of care, with services being designed and delivered around the needs of children and their families. The NSF recognises that children's needs are different and that it is important they have personalised services that take account of their individual views and beliefs, and enable them to make informed choices about their care. Setting standards for maternity care will also enable women to make real choices about the birth of their babies. It highlights the need for high-quality services that offer choice and are prompt, convenient and responsive and that look at the whole child, rather than as a presenting illness or problem.

The broad remit of the NSF is covered in 11 standards, which are:

promoting health and well-being, identifying needs and intervening early;

supporting parents or carers;

child, young person and family centred services;

growing up;

safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people;

children and young people who are ill;

children in hospital;

disabled children and young people and those with complex health needs;

mental and psychological well-being of children and young people;

medicines;

maternity.

The children's NSF has been developed in line with the Government's wider public sector reform, to devolve power and responsibility to local agencies. Consequently, although this NSF sets out the levels of service quality that we expect services to attain by 2014, it is to be left to local discretion to determine how change should be effected.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Regional Assemblies Information Campaign

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): In August we sent a leaflet to every household in the north-east entitled "An Elected Assembly for the North East—Have Your Say". The leaflet provided information about the regional assembly and local government referendums to be held on 4 November, including details of the options for local government reorganisation.

An error has been discovered in the information provided about the cost of local government reorganisation in County Durham. The cost figure for option A—one single tier local authority for the county of Durham—was correctly shown. However, the upfront cost of implementing "option B"—that is, of restructuring local government to create three unitary authorities to take over the functions currently exercised by the existing county and district councils—was stated as £38 million. It should have been £49 million.

We will shortly be writing to all households in County Durham correcting this error. The Government will meet the costs of implementing either option, as stated in the leaflet.

TRANSPORT

Network Rail

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): Network Rail plans to launch a Debt Issuance Programme (DIP) later this autumn. This will provide a long term, flexible financing platform for Network Rail. It will allow the company to raise finance at a lower cost than the previously envisaged securitisation. Details of the DIP and the support Government intends to provide for it by means of a financial indemnity are set out in Minutes laid before the House today.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards Accounts 2002–03

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Barry Gardiner): The 2002–03 accounts of the Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards were deposited in the Libraries of both Houses today.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 16 September 2004

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Resources for Children and Learners

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Mr. Charles Clarke): In his Budget in March, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer outlined continued growth in investment in education and children's services up to 2007–08; showing again the priority the Government give to children and learners.

On 8 July, we published our five year strategy for children and learners, setting out how the Government will use new forms to build on substantial improvements in every stage of education and children's services since 1997—from the early years of a child's life to lifelong learning and adult skills.

Today I am giving more detail of how the additional investment announced by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor will support the reforms set out in the five year strategy.

Early Years and Children's Services

Investment in early years and childcare will increase £769 million between this year and 2007–08. The Government will announce a 10-year childcare strategy in the pre-Budget report when more detailed plans will be published. The broad areas to be covered will include:

- By 2008, there will be up to 2,500 children's centres;
- Bringing education and childcare together into a single integrated offer for pre-school children; and
- Developing a year round, 8am-6pm, child care offer in many primary schools; with secondary schools offering a range of "things for young people to do".

Investment in children's services will increase by almost £1 billion by 2007–08 compared with 2004–05. We will use this investment to start taking forward key areas of reforms set out in "Every Child Matters" to achieve better opportunities and outcomes for children, young people and their families. We will provide support in the following areas:

- Increase the information available to parents and carers.
- Ensure that the professionals working with children have the right skills and competencies to support children and their families more effectively.
- Improve support to looked alter children by enhancing the provision of mentoring to this group and improve support to tester carers in order to increase recruitment and retention.
- Improve early identification and protection of vulnerable children by supporting a common assessment framework and developing arrangements for sharing information between agencies to prevent any child slipping through the net.

We are committed to rationalising funding streams to local authorities and the voluntary sector and reducing the number of processes. We will discuss with partners how resources can be delivered to ensure funding can be flexibly deployed at the front-line where delivery of services impact most.

Schools

We will increase revenue funding for schools by some £3.5 billion overall between 2005–06 and 2007–08. That means that we will have increased revenue funding for schools by about £1,300 per pupil or 45 per cent. in real terms in the years since we took office.

Our twin aims are to make the quality of teaching even better than it is now with schools driving their own and others improvement and to widen opportunities for pupils and teachers through enriching the curriculum. Specific examples of additional investment include:

- The budget for specialist schools will increase by over £100 million by 2008 to help all schools that meet the standard to become specialist;
- There will be an extra £30 million by 2008 for our leading schools which will be expected to work together with other schools to raise standards everywhere;
- There will be an extra £65 million a year for our primary and secondary strategies that have helped to increase pupil attainment since 1997, with resources targeted on those schools that need the greatest support;
- There will be continuing support for schools in areas served by the "Excellence in Cities Programme" which has helped to improve exam results at a faster rate than the national average;
- We will be making additional resources to the teacher training agency to improve the supply of high quality maths and science teachers and support the professional development of teachers: and
- To help schools enrich the curriculum, the budget for sport will increase by over £30 million by 2007–08 and there will also be more resources for music, modern foreign languages and for partnerships between schools and the arts.

We look forward in the months ahead to discussions with schools and local education authorities on the best way to deliver all the resources that support schools. We will have a new ring-fenced budget for schools from 2006–07 and are committed both to delivering three-year budgets for schools and to rationalising the existing funding streams.

Capital investment in schools will increase by £750 million to £6.3 billion by 2007–08 including ICT and PFI credits to support further improvements to all schools and allowing every secondary school to be refurbished or rebuilt to a modern standard over the next 10 to 15 years.

14–19. Further Education (FE) and Skills

Total funding for FE, skills and to develop the 14–19 phase will rise by £1.5 billion by 2007–08 compared to 2004–05, taking the Government's total expenditure on post-16 (excluding Higher Education (HE) to £11 billion.

This is a substantial overall investment, building on the increases in funding in the three years up to 2005–06, which will allow the sector to meet growth in 16–19 participation and enable progress to be sustained on two key agendas: delivering success for all to continue to drive up quality, and reshaping the sector to become more demand led as set out in the Skills Strategy.

We will provide greater freedom for colleges and training providers through a new delivery structure. This will be based on autonomy and independence for good colleges and providers, backed up by a risk-based approach to lighter touch inspection but tougher sanctions on poor quality.

This will enable colleges to engage more effectively with employers by offering the training that they need, and to increase employer and individual co-financing of training in line with the benefits they receive. This is important for the sustainability of the sector and future expansion. We want all colleges to be put on a secure financial footing to deliver the important challenges that we have set out in our five-year strategy. Under the new delivery arrangements, successful colleges will be able to grow and prosper.

The settlement includes funding to continue the development of a transformed 14–19 phase of education, in the light of the commitments made in the Department's five-year strategy. The working group on 14–19 reform, chaired by Mike Tomlinson, will issue its final report this autumn making proposals for a radical reshaping of the 14–19 phase. The Government have set out the five tests that will shape its response to the proposals, but whatever the response, the direction of travel is clear. We are therefore allocating funds to build on the work over the last few years to improve this phase of education, including workforce training and spreading good practice from the 14–19 pathfinders.

We must support colleges in making the transition to a more demand-led approach in which greater funding comes from employers and individuals, because the training they get is designed and delivered in a way that better meets their needs. We will be looking carefully at how we can best do that. As set out in the five-year strategy, we are committed to incorporating the principles of the employer training pilots within mainstream funding for adults, as a way of promoting a more demand-led approach. We will also continue to use the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) annual business cycle to allocate public funds in a way that better matches our national skills priorities, including through the new Level 2 entitlement.

We will continue our drive to upgrade facilities in further education and training with an increase of 31 per cent. in capital funding between 2004–05 and 2007–08. We will also bring local decision-making and allocations for 16–19 capital provision into alignment. Working with the Department and other partners, the LSC will establish a single capital budget for new 16–19 provision across schools and FE.

The achievements of learners depend on the quality of the teaching and learning they receive, and the way in which their teachers and trainers are themselves trained, managed and supported. We will increase by £70 million by 2007–08 our investment in initial training and continuous professional development, for teachers, trainers, leaders and managers in colleges, work-based learning and adult and community learning.

Higher Education (HE)

Government expenditure on higher education will increase by around £2 billion between 2004–05 and 2007–08, taking total investment to almost £9.5 billion. This builds on the significant increases from 2002 spending review, and it confirms our commitment to stand by HE in future spending reviews, made in the White Paper and repeated during the discussions on the HE Bill.

We will increase the HEFCE grant to allow for further increases in student numbers while maintaining the level of student funding per head in real terms.

HE institutions will also benefit from increases in research funding: DfES recurrent funding for research will increase from £1.236 billion in 2005–06 to over £1.4 billion in 2007–08—around 9 per cent., in real terms. Our contribution to total UK science spending, together with the contribution from the Office of Science and Technology, will exceed £5 billion by 2007–08.

On top of all this, HE institutions will receive in full the extra income they generate from charging variable fees—in steady state (ie by 2010) this will be around £1.2 billion extra.

HE institutions will start to receive this extra income in academic year 2006–07. We expect the first tranche to be paid in two instalments—one half in early 2007, and the other before the end of the academic year.

Full time students will benefit from an enhanced student support package:

An HE grant of up to £2,700 for the poorest new students;

Enhanced bursaries, paid from HEIs' new fee income stream;

Fee loans from 2006, both for existing and new students;

A maintenance loan increased to the level of average student expenditure on essential items, both for existing and new students;

Affordable repayments for student loans—9 per cent. of salary above £15,000, for all students after April 2005. So students will make a contribution towards the cost of their higher education, but only when they can afford to do so;

And for new students, a loan write off after 25 years-that will particularly help those graduates who choose low paid work.

Part time students will also benefit from an enhanced package from this autumn. Grants for will replace loans, and a new statutory fee grant will replace the old discretionary scheme. The poorest students will get £825 in grants for fees and course costs.

Overall, this spending review will help to put excellence in HE on a sustainable footing and will secure world-class standards through:

increased teaching funding;

increased research funding;

increased fee income; and

better support for students.

This will enable us to make a significant impact on the funding gap we know exists, and to continue expansion on a sensible, properly funded basis.

Value for money and efficiency

The total investment in education and training is much larger than the figures presented here. Families have always invested and will continue to invest in their children's care and development. Employers invest in the training and development of their workforce. Support for education-in cash and in kind-is growing. We expect co-funding to grow over the spending review period, as individuals and employers become readier to invest in better education and training that meets their needs.

We must ensure that we get maximum value from every pound of additional investment for children and learners. Enabling people across the children, education and skills system to get better value for money from our investment in public services is our aim in the Efficiency Review. We have identified ways to achieve gains in value for money of £4.3 billion over the Spending Review period. For example, we will

reduce the number of civil service posts in the DfES and OFSTED by 1,960;

enable front-line profesionals in schools, colleges and higher education institutions to use their time more productively, enabling institutions to achieve more with their resources; for example through workforce reform, investment in ICT and reducing administrative burdens;

improve procurement of goods, services and new school building, using a new Procurement Centre of Excellence to strengthen procurement practice across the education and children's services sectors;

streamline the delivery system for each sector through improvements in policy, funding and regulation, such as the lighter touch process for OFSTED inspection, streamlined data collection and reduced reporting and monitoring requirements introduced in the New Relationship with Schools.

In conclusion, this statement sets out how we will use the additional resources for children and learners over the next three years to deliver the ambitious programme set out in the five-year strategy. I will be vigilant in ensuring that they are used efficiently and effectively. If resources are not being used to best effect. I will not hesitate to ensure they are switched to where they are most needed, and I will inform Parliament of any significant movements.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Fast Track Asylum and Detention Policy

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): A key element in the Government's strategy to speed up the processing of asylum claims has been the introduction of the fast track asylum processes operated initially at the Oakington reception centre and now also at Harmondsworth removal centre and other locations. The use of detention to fast track suitable claims under these processes is necessary to achieve the objective of delivering decisions quickly. This ensures, among other things, that those whose claims can be quickly decided can be removed as quickly as possible in the event that the claim is unsuccessful.

The lawfulness of detaining asylum claimants for the sole purpose of deciding their claims quickly was upheld by the Court of Appeal and by the House of Lords in the case of Saadi.

When we began the fast track process we said that it was our intention to detain asylum claimants suitable for a quick decision for a period of about seven to 10 days. If we could not decide the claim within that time scale, the claimant would be released or moved to another place of detention with the facilities to support people detained for longer periods. In the vast majority of cases, we have been able to do exactly that. However, the need to ensure a really sharp focus on quality decision making, including for example in non-suspensive appeal (NSA) cases the need for a second pair of eyes, means we cannot always make decisions and serve them on claimants within the original seven to 10 target time scale. While we are able to do this in over 95 per cent. of non-NSA Oakington claims, our experience has shown us that NSA claims take slightly longer, with the majority of decisions being made and served within 14 days. The purpose of this announcement is to set out our revised fast track process detention policy.

The fast track process has scheduled days set aside for specific activities (interviewing, serving the decision etc. but we intend this to be a guide as to how the process will generally operate. There will always be occasions when for operational or other reasons it is not possible to undertake certain activities. This may be because the claimant is temporarily unwell, there is an interpreter problem, the claimant requires longer to obtain further evidence or wishes to submit late representations for example. The process must be flexible enough to accommodate such circumstances. We would not necessarily release people from detention or from the process or move them to another place of detention simply because the timetable cannot be adhered to, if the indications are that we can make and serve a decision within a reasonable time-scale. However, the period of detention for making a quick decision will not be allowed to continue for longer than is reasonable in all the circumstances. We will aim to make decisions within 10 to 14 days, but there will be occasions where it is quicker—for example, at Harmondsworth or a non-NSA decision at Oakington. However, we will continue to detain for the purpose of deciding the claim quickly, even beyond the 10 to 14 day time scale, unless the length of time before a decision can be made looks like it will be longer than is reasonable in all the circumstances. Continued detention may also be merited in some cases irrespective of decision time scale, where our general detention criteria apply. We may also detain claimants after we have made and served a decision in accordance with our general detention criteria.

Applicants with dependants may be detained for the purposes of making a quick decision on their claim, but there may be operational constraints on who can be detained from time to time. For example, the acceptance of families or pregnant females into Oakington may be halted temporarily if there is an illness circulating which might be harmful to them—chicken pox for example. The criteria for acceptance are applied equally to those entering the Oakington and Harmondsworth processes. The principal difference is that at Oakington, individuals with dependants on their asylum claims can be detained at the centre and at Harmondsworth they cannot. Separating dependants on a claim from the claimant can present operational difficulties and for that reason and the fact that it has no female or family accommodation, Harmondsworth will, in general, only accept male claimants who have no dependants on their claims. That is not to say that, at Oakington or Harmondsworth or any other location where fast tracking is carried out, we will never detain a claimant who has dependants on their claim, even where it is not possible to detain the dependants with the claimant. There may be occasions when we believe it is necessary and right so to do.

When deciding whom to accept into fast track processes, account is taken of any particular individual circumstances known to us, which might make the claim particularly complex, or unlikely to be resolved in the time scales, however flexibly applied. The existence of UK based family ties—such as a spouse, partner or child—would not automatically exclude a claimant

from the process as some issues, such as article 8 family life ones, can be relatively easy to decide quickly given the case law and the individual's actual circumstances.

We will continually review how our fast track processes are operating, the criteria for acceptance into them and the indicative process time scales we aim for. This will apply equally to those we are presently operating and to any we may seek to introduce as part of our overall strategy of speeding up the asylum process and making it more effective.

Joseph Scoles

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): The coroner for the mid and north division of the county of Shropshire wrote to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, on 5 May, recommending a public inquiry into certain issues arising from the inquest into the death of John Peter Joseph Scoles (known as Joseph) at Stoke Heath young offenders institution on 24 March, 2002.

The Treasury solicitors wrote to the legal representatives for Joseph's family to seek their comments on what the coroner had recommended. Having received and considered their comments, together with the coroner's recommendation, I am now able to announce the measures I have taken and am taking to ensure that the matters arising from Joseph's tragic death and the coroner's recommendations are properly considered.

The issues fall into three broad categories. They are: the appropriateness of the sentence Joseph received; the effectiveness of relevant operational procedures in identifying, placing and safeguarding vulnerable young people in custody; and whether the juvenile secure estate has adequate accommodation to meet the needs of vulnerable young people.

The steps I am taking to deal with these are as follows:

I have referred the circumstances in which Joseph received a custodial sentence on three counts of attempted robbery to the Sentencing Guidelines Council, requesting it to take this case into account in its current work to draw up guidelines on sentencing for robbery;

I have appointed David Lambert, a former Assistant Chief Inspector of the Social Services Inspectorate, to examine the operational issues raised by this case, including through the coroner's inquest. I have also asked him to provide a summary account of all investigations that have been conducted into Joseph's death;

I have asked the Youth Justice Board, which is preparing proposals for its vision for the future juvenile custodial estate, to take full account of the points made by the coroner on the adequacy of custodial provision for vulnerable young offenders.

I consider that the above measures are the most effective means of addressing the matters the coroner has drawn to the Home Secretary's attention and what lessons should be learned from Joseph's death. I am grateful to the coroner, and to Joseph's family, for highlighting the issues that are of concern to them. Nothing can bring Joseph back, but I do want to ensure that everything is done to prevent the repetition of such a tragic event.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): The chief electoral officer for Northern Ireland, Mr Denis Stanley, is responsible for all aspects of electoral administration in Northern Ireland, including the conduct of all elections and referendums; and for electoral registration. In accordance with section 14 of the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962, the chief electoral officer is required to submit an annual report to the Secretary of State.

I am pleased to announce that the annual report of the chief electoral officer for Northern Ireland for the year 2003–04 has been laid before Parliament. Copies are available in the Library.

Compensation Agency

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): The compensation agency will publish today its corporate plan for 2004–07 and business plan for 2004–05. I have set the agency the following key performance targets for 2004–05:

Claims under the Criminal Damage (Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1977

1. Maintain average time taken to reach decisions at 18 weeks for claims received from 1 April 2004.

2. Reduce by 85 per cent. the number of claims in hand at 31st March 2004 on which no decision has been reached; and

3.* Process claims under the Criminal Damage and Terrorism Act schemes at a combined average unit cost of £310.

Claims under the Terrorism Act 2000

4. Reach decisions on claims in 70 days for claims received from 1st April 2004;

5. Reduce by 90 per cent. the number of claims in hand at 31st March 2004 on which no decision has been reached; and

3.* Process claims under the Criminal Damage and Terrorism Act schemes at the combined average unit cost of £310.

* This unit cost target relates to claims under the Criminal Damage and Terrorism Act schemes. The work involved in processing these claims is carried out in a single organisational unit within the agency so the efficiency of this element of the agency's operations is measured by reference to a combined unit cost target.

Claims under Criminal Injuries (Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1988

6. Reduce by 45 per cent. the number of claims in hand at 31st March 2004.

Claims under the Criminal Injuries Compensation (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (Tariff)

7. Decide 50 per cent. of all applications within twelve months of receiving the application.

8. Reach decisions on applications at an average unit cost of £280.

Compliance with Legislation/Standards of Adjudication—All Schemes

9. The agency's standards of adjudication are appropriate, which will be confirmed by the Department's internal audit branch through random sampling of claims.

Value for Money—All Schemes

10. Manage the workload in 2004–05 within a running costs budget (to cover salaries and administrative expenditure) to financial limits agreed with the Department (including in-year adjustments).

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Green Belt Statistics

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): On 29 March this year I announced the release of new statistics on the change in the amount of green belt in England between 1997 and 2003. This showed an increase of around 25,000 hectares in the amount of green belt identified in adopted local and unitary development plans.

It was subsequently pointed out to me that the published figures contained errors, notably a significant transcription error effecting Bolsover's figure for 2003 and minor errors for three other authorities. Correcting for these errors meant that the correct figure for the increase in Green Belt in England between 1997 and 2003 should have been around 19,000 hectares and not the 25,000 figure published in March.

I apologised to the House for these errors during the town planning debate on 26 May and said that I had publicised the 19,000 hectares figure in my reply on 10 May to a parliamentary question from the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). However, I assured the House during the Town Planning debate that further work was being carried out on checking the figures to ensure that they are robust. This involved an independent internal audit of how the statistics were compiled and confirmation by local authorities that the change recorded for their areas was correct.

I am pleased to tell the house that the internal audit did not find any further errors and that only minor revisions have been made as a consequence of consulting with local authorities. The statistical release with the corrected figures has been reissued today and copies are available in the Libraries of both Houses. The re-issued statistics confirm the earlier estimate of a net increase of around 19,000 hectares in the extent of green belt in England between 1997 and 2003.

I apologise to the House for the errors in the first place and on the length of time it has taken to re-issue the correct statistics.

Planning Fees Consultation

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): In my statement to the House of Commons on 20 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 55WS, on publication of "The Planning Service: Costs and Fees", I said that that research would be followed up with full consultation on bringing further resource into the planning service.

I have today issued a consultation document, "Changes to the System of Planning Fees in England". This sets out in detail our proposals to improve the resourcing of planning so that it can deliver better services to the community and to business.

The proposals include raising planning fees by an average of 17 per cent. This is intended to help authorities recover more of the costs of handling planning applications. In many cases, especially for the larger applications, the current fee falls far short of the handling costs.

The increases are designed to fall differentially on applicants. For example a small business which acquired a new property and needed to apply for a change of use permission would see a fee increase from £220 to £240. Major developers and larger applicants will be asked to pay more—the maximum fee for a major development will rise from £11,000 to £28,000.

I am also consulting on the introduction of a performance relationship, the first time this has happened in relation to fees increases. Those authorities that meet Government targets for handling major applications will be allowed to increase the application fee they charge by up to 10 per cent. to help them meet more of the costs of handling these large and often complex applications. This will encourage authorities to work harder to meet our targets. Authorities that offer the facility for applications to be made online will also have the option to reduce those fees to encourage the submission of online applications and greater efficiency in the system.

In all, the proposed increases are expected to raise around £30 million for the planning service. Next year we will also be considering the need to look at widening the scope of planning fees, and the need for further regular increases in fees to ensure that costs in providing a planning service are being fully covered. In the meantime, I consider that the rises proposed are a sensible increase, which together with the continuing planning delivery grant, is helping to provide sustained and much-needed resource to improve planning services.

The document is available on the ODPM website copies are also available in the Libraries of both Houses. The consultation period ends on 6 December.

Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders and Elected Regional Assemblies

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): The Government intend to pass responsibility for housing market renewal pathfinders to elected regional assemblies, in those regions that vote for them. The first region to hold a referendum over an elected regional assembly will be the north-east and the referendum will be on 4 November 2004. Housing market renewal pathfinders are responsible for tackling low housing demand and we think that this responsibility would sit well with elected assemblies' strategic housing powers. My right hon. Friend Lord Rooker will be writing shortly to the Chairs of the housing market renewal pathfinders so that we can take into account their views.

DEFENCE

Suez Canal Zone Medal/Ministry of Defence Medal Office

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): During defence questions on 19 July 2004, I gave an undertaking to the House to

make a statement about progress made during the summer in the issuing of the Canal zone medal to Suez veterans.

As at the week ending 10 September 2004, 41,314 applications had been received and acknowledged, and 14,761 medals dispatched. The Royal Navy is now assessing applications as they are received (5 February 2004 as at 19 July 2004), the Royal Air Force is assessing applications received on 30 December 2003 (26 November as at 19 July), and although the army medal office is still assessing applications from 31 October 2003, this is due to some 4,300 applications being received during that week. This peak in applications, which occurred following my statement to the House on 23 October, is nearly cleared and the assessment of applications received during November will begin very shortly.

While this significant army backlog remains, a number of measures implemented by the joint personnel administration team responsible for setting up the MOD medal office at RAF Innsworth are already bringing tangible benefits. A new medal laser engraving facility has recently been installed at Innsworth. This is currently being used solely to engrave Iraq medals and over 6,000 have been produced during its first four weeks of operation. This has allowed the engraving facility at the army medal office to concentrate its efforts on the Suez Canal zone medal and as a result, the engraving backlog of some 1,800 medals has been cleared during the last month. Improvements to the information systems used by the army medal office, the facility to work overtime and the diversion of staff to Suez Canal zone medal processing are helping to improve matters further. These measures, coupled with the concerted efforts of army medal office staff have brought about an increase of approximately 30 per cent. in the army assessment rate during recent weeks.

This increase in output has resulted in an average of some one hundred and twenty more applications per week being assessed since July.

I can also announce that with effect from 1 October 2004 the armed forces personnel administration agency will assume full responsibility for the management of medal output, target setting and performance monitoring. This will allow many of the benefits of a single MOD medal office, such as common procedures based on single Service best practice, to be introduced prior to its actual formation date next spring.

Following these initial changes, I now anticipate that the backlog should be cleared by January 2006 and I hope this can continue to be improved upon. I should like to pay tribute to the staff of the single service medal offices for their part in bringing about this improvement.

End-to-End Business Process Review of Disposal Activity in the MOD

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I have today agreed that the Ministry of Defence should retain its in-house disposal expertise and that the two in-house disposal organisations, the Disposal Services Agency and Head of Specialisation (Disposal and Sales) of the Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO), should merge under the ownership of the DLO with effect from 1 April 2005, retaining agency status and where appropriate relocating. The relocation will form part of the Ministry of Defence's contribution to the Government's Independent Review of Public Sector Rationalisation, the "Lyons Review". I have directed work to begin on implementing the review's recommendations, and I will make arrangements to place a copy of the review in the Library of the House.

End-to-End Logistics Implementation: Air Depth Support

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Following extensive work to identify the best way forward for military aircraft support, I am announcing today my preferred option, subject to trades union consultation.

In 2003 the Ministry of Defence undertook an end-to-end review of the logistics process from the front line to industry. This review, the results of which I announced on 10 September 2003, concluded that there was a need, and substantial scope, for improvement in all areas of military air systems support—in industry, the Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO) and the services front line commands alike.

The review recommended that on-aircraft depth support—deep repair, scheduled maintenance and modification of aircraft—could best be rationalised by concentrating at main operating bases (MOBs), and that this conclusion should be tested in an investment appraisal.

The investment appraisal identified three broad options—to concentrate forward support of certain air platforms to MOBs, to concentrate backwards the same platforms to Defence Aviation Repair Agency (DARA) sites and where appropriate industry sites, or a hybrid solution with some platforms concentrated forward and others back.

In order not to prejudice the in-service date of the upgraded Harrier GR9 of 2006, I have already announced that Harrier support will concentrate forward to the MOB at RAF Cottesmore.

The wider investment appraisal and subsequent affordability analysis has demonstrated that concentrating support of the Tornado GR4 aircraft forward at the MOB at RAF Marham would provide best value for money compared with the alternative of concentrating backward on the DARA site at St. Athan.

Conversely, the work has demonstrated that it would not be cost-effective to concentrate the Tornado F3 aircraft either forward or back, given that it will soon be replaced by Typhoon. The work has also shown that it would provide better value for money to concentrate depth support for Lynx, Chinook and Sea King back to DARA Fleetlands.

My preferred way ahead is consistent with the announcement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 21 July this year, which set out the need for the armed forces and their associated support functions to evolve in order to meet the demands of a changing world.

The streamlining of our logistic and support functions, such as those which flow from the end-to-end logistics review, will help the Department meet its targets under the efficiency review. In conjunction with

the £3.7 billion increase to the defence budget, it will enable us to continue to modernise our armed forces, tailoring our military capability to meet the challenges of the future.

Our preferred way forward has implications for our military and civilian work-force, as well as for our partners in industry who undertake depth support of military aircraft.

Concentrating support for rotary aircraft at DARA Fleetlands offers the opportunity to exploit fully the economies of scale that may be achieved by collocating these platforms at a single centre. Sufficient defence work would remain at DARA St. Athan to enable continued operations there until 2008–09.

We will explore with other Government Departments alternative options for St. Athan after 2009, although the migration of work and the withdrawal from service of some platforms means that 500 redundancies would be needed there in 2005. In the longer term, failure to win alternative work would result in the closure of St. Athan.

The application of end-to-end principles will ensure that the MOD works smarter and will improve efficiency by adopting modern best practice in supporting our military aircraft. It will lead to reductions of some 1,500 RAF uniformed personnel, which form part of the overall reductions of 7,500 set out in the 21 July announcement on force structure changes and defence change and modernisation programmes.

There would also be modest reductions in MOD civilian posts and contractor staff posts at RAF Lossiemouth, RAF St. Mawgan and Wattisham and RNAS Yeovilton. Other service personnel would be transferred to the new depth support locations.

A formal consultation period of 30 working days will now begin with the trades unions. Once a final decision has been taken detailed consultation on the implementation of it will follow.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Rural Post Offices

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): The performance and innovation unit report on modernising the post office network, published in June 2000, recommended that the Government should support the rural network in the first instance to 2006. It also recommended that the postal services commission, Postcomm, should advise the Government on options for the rural network after 2006. I have received that advice and have considered it very carefully.

The Government are fully committed to supporting the Post Office's strategy for creating a viable and vibrant post office network that meets changing customer needs, providing reasonable access to services in rural communities.

My hon. Friend the then Minister of State for Energy, E-Commerce and Postal Services announced in the House on 2 December 2002 the Government's decision to make £450 million available to support the rural post office network through from 2003 to 2006. That three-year package was intended as a transitional measure, designed to help rural post offices through the changes in the network's business between 2003 and 2006.

At this point in the transition rural post offices continue to face real challenges and a large part of the rural network continues to be unsustainable commercially. For many post offices the number of customers they serve is simply too small to make the business attractive or sustainable. With the prospect of customer numbers continuing to fall as people access services in different ways it is clear that there are challenges ahead and that new ways to deliver services more efficiently and effectively are needed.

How and where people access services is changing. It is not clear that the present network best meets those changing needs, or whether because of that the current shape and scale of the rural network is a viable long-term prospect. A solution for the longer-term will need to take these changes fully into account.

Against this background Postcomm has advised the Government to review the reasons for and nature of our support of the rural network in the longer term. They advise that the nature of that support may need to change substantially.

Postcomm's advice recognises that such changes must be well informed and that further work will be necessary. Pilot activity by the Post Office, funded by the Government, to test new ways of ensuring access to post office services in rural areas is under-way. The lessons that will emerge from these trials over the next 12 to 18 months will be crucial in informing longer-term decisions about the future shape of the rural post office network. At this stage it is simply too early to draw conclusions.

The Government have, therefore, concluded that now is not the right time to take decisions about the long-term future of the rural network.

It is, however, vital that we continue to support the network through this continuing difficult period. The Government are committed to ensuring reasonable access for rural communities to postal and other services. It is also clear from Postcomm's advice to us that without Government funding much of the current rural network would face closure.

I am, therefore, pleased to announce that the Government have decided, subject to securing any further necessary state aid clearance from the European Commission, to extend its transitional financial facility for rural post offices for two further years from 2006 until 2008.

The Government will make available up to a maximum of £150 million a year until 2008 to enable Post Office Ltd. to continue to meet the cost of maintaining the non-commercial part of the rural post office network and to pilot new ways of delivering services. Pilot activity is a key element of the current funding package—we have already allocated £25 million to fund pilots. Our intention is that this will continue to be a key element of the package going forward.

The funding will ensure that Post Office Ltd. will have money to test new ways of delivering services and will not be forced to close unprofitable rural post offices because of a lack of funding.

Current funding is from the gilts—Government money previously received as dividends from the company and made available back to the company for certain specific uses—and it is our intention that the further funding to April 2008 will also come from these gilts. The detailed mechanism, sums of money and timing of payments will be subject to further detailed discussion with the company, as well as being subject to state aid clearance.

The PIU report recommended that the Post Office should be required to prevent avoidable closures of rural post offices, in the first instance to 2006. Postcomm has advised us that it is concerned that this policy can lead to post offices being saved or reopened where it is clear that customer numbers have dwindled to levels far below what is sustainable. Furthermore they have recommended that this policy should not be extended beyond April 2006.

The Government's direction to Post Office Ltd. to maintain the network and do all they can to prevent avoidable closures remains in place. There is no question of them being able to initiate the closure of offices. However, in response to Postcomm's immediate concern I propose to amend the definition of what is unavoidable so that when Post Office Ltd. is responding to a closure—for example when a sub-postmaster decides to retire—it takes into account circumstances where there is no prospect of a viable future for a post office because of a collapse in demand for services in a particular location. The intention will be to ensure that Post Office Ltd. is focused on maintaining access to services in rural areas fully taking into account local circumstances. These changes, yet to be worked up in detail, will be published.

I believe that we will be better placed to take a decision on the longer-term future of the rural network, including whether the current policy on avoidable closures should continue beyond April 2006, when we have feedback from the pilot activity now being undertaken by the Post Office.

I propose therefore to ask Post Office Ltd. for a full report on pilot activity and its implications for future access to post office services by the end of 2005. I will then review the policy on avoidable closures beyond April 2006 at that point.

Coal Investment Aid

The Minister for Energy and E-Commerce (Mr. Mike O'Brien): Following the acceptance of awards worth £41 million in the first of three planned CIA application periods, up to £19 million was available when bids in the second application period were invited in April 2004.

When the deadline for applications passed on 1 June, 12 applications had been received for a total of £94.6 million. All but one were for projects at mines which are already eligible for support following awards in Period 1.

On review, the one new application was found to be incomplete. The applicant was given an opportunity to submit additional information but was unable to do so. This application therefore could not be considered for an award.

Two further applications were for further support for projects which had already received substantial awards in Period 1 and for which further awards could not be justified on value for money grounds.

The nine remaining applications have been assessed and awarded further support worth a total of £16.42 million. Most of this is expected to be drawn down by 31 March 2006. These offers leave a balance of around £2.5 million for further awards and to meet CIA administration costs.

A summary of the Period 2 awards is given below. More details will be published shortly on the DTI Energy Group website.

Applicant/Production Unit	*Project Description*	*Period 1 Award*	*Period 2 CIA Sought*	*Period 2 Award*	*Tonnes Secured Mt*	*Jobs Secured/ Created*
Eckington Colliery Partnerships, S Yorks	Extension of main drift to access two new areas of reserves; acquisition of coal handling and other equipment	£0.063m	£0.014m	£0.014m	0.3	25/6
Energybuild, Aberpergwm, S Glamorgan	Recovery of cross-measure drifts to access reserves through fault; upgrade of coal preparation plant & surface/admin facilities. Purchase of rail head.	£1.1m	£2.76m	£2.42m	20.0	78/100
Hatfield Colliery, S Yorks	Develop access to Barnsley Main seam	[1]£15.0m	£33.28m	£0.0m	100	
Tower Colliery, Mid Glamorgan	Development of replacement panels	£2.2m	£3.5m	£0.0m	3.5	420/0
UK Coal plc, Ellington, Northumberland	Development of replacement panels, purchase of new face equipment	£2.1m	£2.9m	£0.0m	2.1	360/0
UK Coal plc, Daw Mill, W Midlands	Strategic development to access reserves in Warwickshire Thick seam; coal face mechanisation programme including purchase of set of powered roof supports; 3D surface seismic survey & surface boreholes	£9.6m	£2.72m	£1.26m	32.8	543/0
UK Coal plc, Harworth, S Yorks	Development driveage to access 2 areas of Deep Soft reserves; purchase of new face equipment	£4.6m	£4.8m	£1.72m	10.4	511/0
UK Coal plc, Kellingley, N Yorks	Strategic driveage to access the Silkstone seam to the south of current workings and Beeston seam to the east; purchase of new face equipment; upgrade of No. 2					

Applicant/Production Unit	*Project Description*	*Period 1 Award*	*Period 2 CIA Sought*	*Period 2 Award*	*Tonnes Secured Mt*	*Jobs Secured/ Created*
	winders	£7.2m	£8.0m	£2.27m	19.15	630/0
UK Coal plc, Maltby, S Yorks	Strategic driveage to access reserves in Parkgate seam; provision of development & face machinery	£2.4m	£7.53m	£2.71m	9.03	528/0
UK Coal plc, Rossington, S Yorks	Strategic driveage to access reserves in Barnsley/Dunsil seam to the east of current workings; infrastructure improvements; 3D surface seismic survey	£3.2m	£3.54m	£1.39m	15.6	386/0
UK Coal plc, Thoresby, Notts	Development driveage to access reserves in Parkgate seam; purchase of new face and heading machinery and conveyor system.	£2.9m	[2]£15.0m	£2.09m	16.5	509/0
UK Coal plc, Welbeck, Notts	Development driveage to access reserves in Deep Soft seam; infrastructure improvements; upgrade of ROM handling plant	£5.2m	£10.66	£2.54m	8.0	528/0
	Total	£40.7m	£94.6m	£16.42m	131.8	3738/106

[1] Award was not taken up.
[2] Included revision of project covered by Period 1 award.
NB .No Period 2 application was received from J Flack & Sons Ltd for Hay Royds Colliery, W Yorks, which received an award of £140,000 in Period 1.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Hurricane Ivan

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): On 14 September 2004, I provided the House with an oral statement on the impact that Hurricane Ivan was having on a number of islands in the Caribbean. I would like to update the House today, in advance of the recess, on the latest situation and the international relief effort being undertaken. I will provide a further written statement following the return of the House.

Hurricane Ivan has now passed through the Caribbean and is in the gulf of Mexico. It was downgraded to a category four hurricane and made landfall along the United States coast on 15 September. It took one week, from 7 to 14 September, for the hurricane to travel from Grenada, to Jamaica, the Cayman Islands and finally western Cuba, causing over 60 deaths and severe damage along its way.

The situation in Grenada continues to be serious. The latest reports from the island indicate that 37 people died and over 300 were injured as a result of the hurricane. Two thirds of the population (60,000 people) are reportedly affected and it is estimated that between 4,000 and 8,000 people are living in shelters. The range of figures reflects that many of these shelters are private houses of which there are up to 200. Electricity supply continues to be a problem and piped water is only available to about a third of households across the island. In the meantime water tankers are operating, but fuel is in short supply. This is hampering both transport and emergency electricity generation. The main hospital is working and sustained only minor damage. Drugs are in short supply as the main stock was destroyed. Other hospitals on the island suffered more extensive damage. There is a dawn to dusk curfew following the looting that occurred immediately after the hurricane had hit the island.

The relief operation is scaling up quickly but continues to face problems with coordination and communications. The emergency operation centre building was destroyed in the immediate aftermath of the hurricane but was brought back into operation by the efforts of HMS Richmond. It is now fully operational with assistance from the regional Caribbean disaster emergency response agency and a recently arrived United Nations disaster assessment and coordination team. Roads and airports are now open. Distribution of food and other relief items is proceeding slowly, in part due to fuel shortage and in part due to the scale of properly assessing where need is greatest. The United Nations team will help in prioritising the delivery of supplies. Communicating with the population is also a constraint. There are only FM broadcasts operational, and these do not reach the whole island. The two dependencies of Carriacou and Petit Martinique have yet to be assessed.

As I reported to the House on 14 September, the Department for International Development delivered plastic sheeting for 1,400 families and water containers for 11,000 people on 11 September and made an immediate contribution of some £83,000 to the Pan American Health Organisation. We have since made a contribution of £132,000 to the preliminary appeal for Grenada of the International Federation of the Red Cross. The Pan American Health Organisation and the International Federation of the Red Cross are both active in Grenada. The Pan American Health Organisation has deployed medical personnel and vaccines. The International Federation of the Red Cross has sent a number of relief flights with basic relief items, including shelter materials. The Department for International Development are continuing to monitor the situation closely, in particular the level of medical supplies on the island, and will consider providing further relief assistance as needs become clearer. We are in daily contact with the Pan American Health Organisation concerning health needs.

The United States Agency for International Development has provided plastic sheeting for 25,000 people and other relief items in Grenada. The Canadian International Development Agency have approved support of £211,100 and the European Community's humanitarian office have approved an allocation of £1.03 million for Grenada. The bulk of this allocation will go towards the Red Cross operation and Oxfam who are assisting with emergency water and sanitation work. The United Kingdom's share of this European Community support is about £200,000.

The two-person humanitarian assessment team sent to the region by the Department for International Development arrived in Kingston, Jamaica on 13 September. On 14 September, they met with representatives from the Government of Jamaica, national and international organizations, and other donors. They report good coordination between the Government's Office for Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management, the Jamaican Red Cross, the Salvation Army and the United Nations disaster assistance and coordination team. Joint rapid assessments are underway with several areas of the island already identified as the most severely affected. These areas include Westmoreland, Claredon, Morant Bay, May Penn and the northeast Blue Mountains. It is not thought that there is widespread devastation but there are a number of pockets of devastation.

Until the assessments are completed, exact figures are difficult to come by but there are reported to be 200 to 245 shelters open, serving between 4,000 to 13,000 residents across the island. Water is the key issue in many of the hardest hit communities. Food stocks in the Blue Mountain region were reported as running low. Heavy flooding in the surrounding area is delaying assessments. As an interim measure, the Government of Jamaica through its defence forces has airlifted an initial stock of food to the region. The Red Cross has also delivered relief supplies. Although most of the hospitals are operational, they report a lack of power and water supplies with much of the ground water contaminated. The Pan American Health Organization is working with the Ministry of Health to identify specific needs in the health sector and resolve these problems. A number of non-governmental organisations have undertaken preliminary assessments to address short-term relief needs. The Department for International Development has received requests for funding support from Save the Children, Oxfam and ADRA. These proposals are being urgently considered.

The Department for International Development assessment team arrived on the Cayman Islands, from Jamaica on 15 September. They are assisting the Government in undertaking urgent humanitarian needs assessments, which will determine what further urgent supplies are required. Initial estimates indicate 15–20 per cent. of residential houses completely destroyed and 20 per cent. with major damage. The Department for International Development had already responded to an earlier request for assistance by procuring 3 million water purification tablets, 50 chainsaws, 500 camp cots for children and 5,000 pieces of plastic sheeting. These supplies are on their way to the island, with our first relief flight arriving today. The International Federation of the Red Cross is also planning a relief flight.

The Governor is concerned about maintaining security on the islands and is looking to obtain additional security support. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is considering the request. The Governor is not aware of medical supply problems but the assessment being undertaken will confirm these and other needs. The main concern appears to be water supply and the need to deliver water purification tablets, which the Department for International Development is supplying. A water trucking system is being set up. HMS Richmond sent a 17-person party on shore on 14 September. They have repaired generators, attended to damaged buildings and have been providing food distributions. Of a population of 42,000, approximately 3,000 people remain in shelters. Food supplies are being delivered to all shelters. The airport on the island is now fully operational and busy with both passenger and cargo aircraft. This has enabled 30 dialysis patients needing emergency dialysis and ongoing care to be airlifted to the United States by Cayman Airways. Shops have reopened. The Caribbean Utilities Company will support restoration of power supplies.

Ivan swung past the western edge of Cuba late on 13 September as a category five hurricane. One and a half million people had been evacuated from the area by the Cuban authorities, with 300,000 people placed in shelters. The western area of Cuba is sparsely populated and there have been no immediate reports of deaths, injuries or serious damage to buildings. It is mainly a tobacco growing area but planting does not begin till next month so limited damage is expected on tobacco crops. Its impact on agricultural installations and housing in coastal areas is to be reported. Airports have reopened and children are expected to return to school this week.

The Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation are forming an assessment team to inform the Government of needs. Cuba prepared itself well ahead of the hurricane and fortunately appears to have been spared the full force of the hurricane, and national emergency services have mobilised rapidly to distribute food and non-food items to displaced people.

Whilst Hurricane Ivan has passed out of the Caribbean, hurricane warnings remain in place for the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico. Residents and tourists have been evacuated from areas likely to be affected by strong winds and waves. No reports are yet available on the impact on the Yucatan peninsula but damage is likely to be contained.

Further information on the continuing relief effort to affected islands will be made available via the Department for International Development website http://www.dfid.gov.uk/.

This will include details of how concerned members of the public could help via relief agencies.

Iraq (Reconstruction)

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I visited Baghdad and Basra from 31 August to 1 September to learn for myself about progress with reconstruction on the ground. I met Prime Minister Allawi, development Ministers, representatives from the United Nations, civil society and the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, and representatives from local government.

The interim Iraqi Government is now clearly in charge, although recent events in Najaf have dominated its first months in power. The difficult security situation has inevitably slowed down the reconstruction effort of not just the UK, but also of other donors and the multilateral agencies. However, it was clear that progress is still being made. Some 45 km of water pipes have been laid in Basra since my last visit in February and electricity distribution is now more equitable across the national grid. Partially due to these efforts, the riots that happened in Basra last summer because of the lack of basic services have not reoccurred this year.

While in Iraq I announced a number of new UK bilateral projects, focusing on building the capacity of the Iraqi Administration, and promoting employment creation, in southern Iraq. These projects mark an important step forward in our reconstruction efforts in southern Iraq as we move from meeting short-term humanitarian and immediate infrastructure rehabilitation needs towards addressing longer-term development challenges. Southern Iraq should receive massive reconstruction funds over next two to three years from a range of sources, including the USA, Japan and the World Bank and UN trust funds. One of DFID's aims is to help the Iraqi administration to ensure that this money is spent quickly and well, and that the benefits of reconstruction are widely shared across the population. We are investing £20.5 million in strengthening local management, planning and financial capacity in the four southern governorates of Basra, Muthanna, Dhi Qar and Maysan, including £15 million for projects developed by the Governorates. We have also started a new £16.5 million programme to finance employment programmes and further emergency infrastructure repairs.

DFID has committed £331 million to humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Iraq since March 2003. Of this total £78 million has been allocated to bilateral reconstruction projects in southern Iraq; £19 million to support for the new interim Iraqi Government, the justice sector, independent media, civil society and political participation; and £28 million for consultants and secondments to the Coalition Provisional Authority while it was in office up to 28 June. £70 million has been paid into the trust funds managed by the United Nations and the World Bank, to be spent primarily on health, education, water and sanitation projects, assistance for refugees and strengthening governance; and nearly £12 million has been committed to IMF and international finance corporation programmes for economic governance support and small business development. Updates on DFID's programmes can be found on the internet at www.dfid.gov.uk, as well as in the House Library.

As on my previous two visits to Iraq, I was impressed by the extraordinary courage and commitment of all the people, both international and Iraqi, who are working to help the new Iraqi Government and the people of Iraq to build the better future that they deserve.

Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Together with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for Defence, I wish to inform Parliament of the Government's intention to improve the United Kingdom's capacity to deal with immediate post conflict stabilisation, including by integrating civilian and military policy, planning and operations. In recent years, the United Kingdom, with the international community, has been increasingly involved in helping countries to stabilise after conflict. We need to deal better with conflict and instability, learn lessons and improve our capability to respond. Within this broader context, there is particular scope to improve the way in which we deal with immediate post conflict situations, especially those which include military and civilian components. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence and Department for International Development are working closely to develop the capabilities that are needed. The Foreign Secretary will chair a new Cabinet sub-committee on post conflict reconstruction. My right hon. Friends and I expect to be in a position formally to establish an inter-departmental post conflict reconstruction unit later this year to lead this work. It will have a policy and operational role. In spring 2005 we anticipate being able to inform Parliament about its initial capabilities. Meanwhile, my right hon. Friends and I have placed a note in the House of Commons library which provides more detail about the Government's aims and plans.

Pakistan

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Gareth Thomas): On 15 September 2004, the Secretary of State for International Development wrote to Shaukat Aziz, Pakistan Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, to notify him that DFID has now cancelled Pakistan's ex-CDC debt amounting to £19 million.

The outstanding loans made by the former Commonwealth Development Corporation to public sector bodies in developing countries were removed from the newly formed CDC Capital Partners balance sheet on 31 August 2000 and transferred to DFID. In the case of Pakistan, the loan concerned was to the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board.

The only other inter-governmental debt between the UK and Pakistan relates to export credit guarantees. Following the Paris Club Agreement, this debt was rescheduled and is now valued at only £9 million.

In 2001 DFID agreed to cancel the ex-CDC debt, subject to Pakistan completing the second review of the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF) with the International Monetary Fund. In the interim, the debt was suspended with no interest payments required from Pakistan to DFID. On 23 June 2004 the IMF Executive Board successfully completed the second annual review of Pakistan's PRGF, implying the ex-CDC debt can now be cancelled.

The Pakistan programme continues to be a high priority for DFID. As announced to the House in March 2003, during 2003 DFID provided Pakistan with £55 million to cancel debt held with the Asian Development Bank, World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Over the next two years (2004–05 and 2005–06), DFID's assistance to Pakistan will be £70 and £74 million respectively. This will support the

Government of Pakistan achieve the millennium development goals through the implementation of their poverty reduction strategy (published in December 2003). Priorities for DFD3 are increasing the incomes of poor people, improving service delivery to poor people and increasing accountability of the state to poor people.

HEALTH

Continuing Care

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): I am reporting on progress with investigations into cases where individuals may have been inappropriately denied fully funded National Health Service care since 1996. These cases relate only to matters of past financial injustice and all claimants had access to care services and NHS treatment.

The majority of strategic health authorities (SHAs) have made considerable progress since December in the process of remedying any consequent financial injustice to patients (or the estates of such patients) who had wrongly been made to pay for the cost of their continuing care. In December, just over 22 per cent. of cases received had been completed. Between December and March a substantial number of additional cases had been reported and by the end of March 57 per cent. of cases had been completed. A percentage completion rate of pre-March 31 cases of more than 85 per cent. in July reflects the amount of work undertaken by all NHS and local authority personnel involved.

The NHS has stressed the importance of all cases being investigated thoroughly and accurately and as such is committed to reviewing each application on its own merits. The process involved in undertaking an in-depth review involves contact with many health and social care organisations and bodies, and as such there have been considerable delays in obtaining all the relevant records and patient data. In some cases data and information from aged cases has been lost and, wherever possible, it must be gathered from alternative sources.

Delays should not automatically be attributed to the SHAs involved in particular cases; occasionally it is the claimant themselves who are responsible for the delay. Many SHAs are now exceeding 95 per cent. completion. In some cases, however, progress has been unsatisfactory, and the Department will take up the matter directly with those SHAs.

In total, almost 20 per cent. of cases have been granted recompense. As stated previously, the NHS expects to pay a total of £180 million when all the cases received by the end of March 2004 have been completed.

Approximately 1,600 cases remain outstanding, which is unacceptable. However, I am assured that all cases relating to living people have been prioritised, and that new applications for NHS continuing care are being dealt with in a timely fashion. My Department will be liaising with all SHAs to ensure appropriate procedures are now in place and that outstanding cases are resolved as quickly as possible.

The proportion of completed cases by SHA is shown in the table.

Figures for progress with restitution cases in continuing care

Strategic health authority (SHA) name	*At Dec 03 Number of cases*	*At Dec 03 Percentage completed*	*At March 04 Number of cases*	*At March 04 Percentage completed*	*At July 04 Percentage completed**	*At July 04 Cases eligible for payment***
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	512	2.3	651	43.2	91.8	72
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	216	13.0	212	48.1	59.5	38
Essex SHA	6	0.0	172	84.9	97.7	15
North West London SHA	146	28.8	372	48.7	98.0	108
North Central London SHA	121	5.0	125	51.2	74.8	14
North East London SHA	148	3.4	180	93.9	98.8	19
South East London SHA	30	0.0	273	67.0	91.4	165
South West London SHA	190	6.8	215	90.2	96.1	69
Northumberland, Tyne & Wear SHA	275	2.9	298	42.3	73.7	113
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	226	7.5	226	21.3	96.0	79
North & East Yorkshire & North Lincs SHA	286	44.4	359	74.1	96.3	52
West Yorkshire SHA	156	28.9	349	37.3	79.7	59
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	250	14.4	340	45.3	88.2	41
Greater Manchester SHA	292	22.3	342	29.8	74.1	63
Cheshire & Merseyside SHA	400	0.0	1,196	64.7	97.7	130
Thames Valley SHA	299	52.2	383	47.3	63.9	44
Hampshire and Isle of Wight SHA	387	59.2	507	76.1	97.7	40
Kent and Medway SHA	277	49.1	230	80.9	94.8	36
Surrey and Sussex SHA	964	13.7	875	1.7	37.7	69
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	698	45.4	961	63.7	100.0	131
South West Peninsula SHA	458	10.9	553	78.3	95.8	144
Dorset and Somerset SHA	425	27.8	915	49.0	95.4	49
South Yorkshire SHA	138	38.4	241	67.6	96.9	43
Trent SHA	400	0.0	315	74.9	86.2	23
Leics, Northants and Rutland SHA	38	21.1	224	90.2	89.6	30
Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	406	39.7	431	95.6	99.1	40
Birmingham and the Black Country SHA	157	14.7	286	74.5	85.7	77
West Midlands South SHA	193	21.2	424	55.9	98.9	33
Total	8,094	22.6	11,655	57.0	86.1	1,796

Note:

* The percentage of cases completed at July refers only to cases received up to and including 31 March 2004.

** The cases eligible for payment at July refers to all cases investigated up to and including 31 July 2004.

Health Committee's Report

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Miss Melanie Johnson): The Government's response to the Health Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2003–04 on palliative care, Cm 6327, has been published today. Copies have been placed in the Library.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate Phase 10 Work Programme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the benefit fraud inspectorate (BFI) has today announced its phase 10 work programme.

BFI will be undertaking shorter inspections focused on the areas of poor local authority performance in the administration of housing benefits. Inspections focusing on the time taken to process benefit claims will be undertaken at Mid-Suffolk district council and Flintshire county council. Inspections focusing on the adequacy of councils' counter-fraud arrangements will be undertaken at a number of authorities including Gravesham borough council, south Buckinghamshire district council and south Cambridge district council.

BFI will undertake full inspections on four local authorities whose benefits administration has been identified as poor or fair under the comprehensive performance assessment regime. These include Castle Point borough council, Mansfield district council and south Northamptonshire council. A full inspection of Bromsgrove district council's benefits service will be made with the agreement of a Government monitoring board which has been set up by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

BFI will also undertake a full inspection of Newport city council whose benefits service performance has been identified as a significant risk following assessment under the Wales programme for improvement.

BFI is an independent unit within the Department for Work and Pensions that inspects and reports directly to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the standard of benefits administration and counter-fraud activity in local authorities and the Department itself.

Liverpool City Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the benefit fraud inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Liverpool city council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The "Performance Standards for Housing Benefits" allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002–03, Liverpool city council administered some £237.1 million in housing benefits, 21.69 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

BFI inspected Liverpool city council in July 2000 and identified significant weaknesses in its provision and management of benefit and counter fraud services.

The second inspection report finds that since July 2000 the council had initiated a major business transformation programme to address the issues and recommendations in BFI's first report. These included the:

re-engineering of its business processes;

establishment of a joint venture with a major private contractor to provide essential business services to improve its benefits and counter fraud services, including a customer contact centre and one stop shops;

implementation of a document management system in January 2003;

full implementation of the verification framework in April 2003;

replacement of its benefits and council tax IT systems in October 2003.

The report finds that the council had a clear vision for its benefits service supported by policies covering the full range of benefit administration activities. However, IT problems led to a backlog of work and the council had consistently failed to meet best value performance indicators for speed of processing claims. Delays in processing claims were undermining most aspects of the benefits service. New claim customers had to wait an average of 143 days for a claim to be processed and delays in processing reported changes of circumstances had resulted in overpayments being incurred unnecessarily by the council, representing a loss of public funds.

BFI had serious concerns about the total level of overpayment debt at the council, and an estimated £3.5 million of outstanding debt had not been transferred from its old benefits IT system.

BFI commend internal audit for its support of the benefits management team in addressing areas of weakness identified.

The counter fraud service was very effective and made use of the full range of sanctions available. The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Departmental Efficiency

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Alan Johnson): On 29 June, following on from the announcements in the Budget, my predecessor gave an update to the House on the progress of the DWP efficiency programme which will reduce my Department's workforce by 30,000 by 2008.

The June statement highlighted that Jobcentre Plus was reviewing the scope to increase the efficiency of its benefits processing by reducing the number of sites in which this work is carried out. He also announced that, as part of their programme to modernise benefit processing and contact centre operations, Jobcentre Plus will take on six pensions centres.

I can today announce that:

Subject to further detailed planning benefit processing will be centralised in 81 sites by 2008. I would like to make it clear that 37 sites will cease to be viable and will close altogether as a direct consequence of centralisation. Not all jobs will go with many transferring elsewhere. In those sites not named for closure there is continued Jobcentre Plus activity and their future will be determined in the normal way as part of the rollout of the Jobcentre Plus network.

As part of the Jobcentre Plus roll-out strategy Jobcentre Plus Direct (which provides an initial telephone contact service for customers) will deliver services through 23 contact centres by 2006. This will involve moving work from a number of existing locations within the Jobcentre Plus network and will result in the closure of three sites where contact centre work is currently undertaken; Provan, Banbury and Milton Keynes.

In line with the Lyons Review, which recommended relocating some public sector activities away from London and the South East, Employer Services Direct will close two of its 11 Employer Direct sites, in Portsmouth and Bromley, by Summer 2005. Work will be moved to other sites.

Staff in all affected sites are being briefed by their managers today. We continue to consult with the trade unions. We have already outlined to them our policy proposals for handling these changes.

The changes I am announcing today are the latest component of our continuing modernisation programme that will lead to more efficient and effective services for our customers.

Benefits centralisation sites

Region	*Processing sites*	*Site closures*
East of England	Basildon, Great Oaks House Bury St. Edmunds, St Andrews House Luton, Cheviot House Norwich, Baltic House Peterborough, Clifton House Watford, Exchange House	Braintree, Panfield Lane Southend, Victoria House Stevenage, Brickdale House SSO
East Midlands	Chesterfield Jobcentre Derby, Becket Street Leicester, Wellington Street Lincoln, Orchard House SSO Mansfield SSO Nottingham Pension Centre Wellingborough SSO	Worksop, Crown House
North East	Newcastle, Cobalt House Stockton Pension Centre Sunderland, Wearview House	Bishop Auckland SSO
North West	Liverpool, Belle Vale Birkenhead, Horden House Blackpool, Marton Mere Bolton, Elizabeth House Burnley, Brun House Carlisle, Rufus House Chester, Chantry Chorlton Huyton, Edendale House Hyde, Beech House Oldham, Phoenix House Preston, Barry House St. Helens, Gregson House	Bury, Humphrey House SSO Kirkby, Webster House SSO Rochdale, Newgate House Salford, Aldine House SSO Salford, Baskerville House SSO
Scotland	Bathgate SSO Clydebank SSO Coatbridge SSO Glasgow (site tbc) Greenock Jobcentre Plus	Coatbridge Jobcentre Hamilton SSO Kircaldy SSO Perth SSO
	Inverness SSO Kilmarnock SSO Springburn SSO	
South East	Broadstairs Canterbury Cosham Dover Hastings Child Support Agency Centre Milton Keynes Newport (IoW) Ramsgate Totton SSO	Ashford, Kent House Jobcentre Chatham, Brook House Jobcentre Sittingbourne Jobcentre Tunbridge Wells SSO
South West	Bournemouth, Cotlands Road Bristol East, Lodge House Chippenham, St. Pauls Exeter, Clarendon House Gloucester, Cedar House Plymouth St. Austell, Carlyon House	Bath, Somerset Hall Jobcentre Bristol, St. Catherine's House SSO Cheltenham SSO Trowbridge SSO Weston Super Mare, Carlton House
Wales	Caerphilly, Crown Buildings Llanelli, Crown Buildings Myrthyr Tydfil, Block 3 Abermorlais Newport, Sovereign House Swansea, Oldway House Wrexham Pension Centre	Aberystwyth SSO Barry SSO Cardiff, Eastgate House Carmarthen, John Street SSO Neath, Percival House SSO Rhyl SSO Wrexham DMO
West Midlands	Cannock SSO Handsworth Hanley SSO Perry Barr SSO Ravenshurst SSO Wolverhampton Pension Centre Worcester	Dudley SSO Longton Jobcentre Northfield SSO Shrewsbury, Whitehall SSO Walsall, Glebe Street SSO Washwood Heath SSO West Bromwich SSO
Yorkshire & Humberside	Barnsley SSO Bradford East SSO Doncaster SSO Halifax, Crossfield House Hull, Oriel House Leeds, Eastgate House Sheffield, Hartshead Square York SSO	
London	Balham Belfast Benefit Centre Glasgow Benefit Centre Hackney Ilford Makerfield Benefit Centre Stratford	

Notes
SSO—Social Security Office.
DMO—District Management Office.

Pension Protection Fund/Pension Regulator

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): Improving member protection is a Government priority. The Pension Protection Fund and the Pensions Regulator form the basis of providing such protection and successful introduction of both organisations is a priority of this Government.

As the Pensions Bill is continuing its passage through the House there has been cross-party support for the principles behind both the Pension Protection Fund and the Pensions Regulator and the desire to provide protection for individuals as soon as possible.

The intention, subject to parliamentary approval, is to achieve successful introduction of both organisations by April 2005. This timetable is very challenging and in

order to make this date a reality it is necessary for the Department for Work and Pensions to carry out essential activities in advance of the legislation receiving Royal Assent.

Therefore, Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £477,000 for these new services will be sought in a supplementary estimate for the Department for Work and Pensions as soon as legislation is passed. Pending that approval, this urgent expenditure will be met by repayable cash advances from the contingency fund.

In addition, although no cash advance is required, the Department for Work and Pensions will be agreeing to contractual and lease arrangements in respect of accommodation in Croydon, where the staff of the Pension Protection Fund will be located. These negotiations are ongoing, however the Department will endeavour to keep resource consequences to a minimum. When these costs are known the Department will inform the House.

Croydon was chosen as it met the three key criteria, essential to ensure that the Pension Protection Fund can operate with optimum effectiveness and efficiency, within the required deadline. These key criteria are: achieving successful implementation—which includes direct links and proximity to both the Pension Regulator in Brighton and key stakeholders in London; ability to recruit the right staff and value for money.

London Borough of Enfield

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on London Borough of Enfield Council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The "Performance Standards for Housing Benefits" allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002-03, London Borough of Enfield Council administered nearly £123 million in housing benefits, representing some 17.5 per cent of its gross revenue expenditure.

The report concludes that the council had made sustained improvements in some important areas since the initial inspection of the benefits service in September 2002.

Between September 2002 and March 2004 it had reduced its backlog of work of some 6,800 items to 1,882 and made significant improvements in processing new benefit claims, reducing the time taken to determine claims from 67 days on average in 2002-03 to 41 days by February 2004.

The council had made organisational changes to strengthen its stand against benefit fraud. It had increased the number of investigators, leading to improvements in the quality of investigative work and the number of sanctions being applied to fraudsters.

However the council needs to improve the identification, classification and recovery of benefit overpayments.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Teesdale District Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Teesdale district council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The "Performance Standards for Housing Benefits" allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002-03, Teesdale district council administered nearly £4.56 million in housing benefits, about 43.3 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

BFI's report identifies a number of significant concerns. Some strategic management policies were lacking and this meant that managers and staff did not have a clear understanding of what was essential to deliver a high quality service.

Below this, a lack of procedural guidance hindered benefits administration and counter-fraud work. Processes were based on custom and practice, which meant that staff had no reference materials and there was no assurance safeguards for new staff. Despite the lack of documented policies and procedures, the standard of work in many areas was generally good and the report notes the improvement in claims processing times which were just outside the upper quartile performance for all local authorities in the United Kingdom.

Particular weaknesses were found, however, in customer services. A best value benefits satisfaction survey that was due in 2003 had not been undertaken. There had been no measurement of customer waiting times or assessment of the telephone service provided.

No formal take-up strategy was in place and BFI concluded that the council was not providing adequate information to current or potential customers.

The report found that informal working relationships between departments in the council had resulted in poor communications that were detrimental to benefits service customers. The housing unit had sent repossession notices to council tenants with rent arrears even when the arrears were due to benefit claims not having been processed.

The report raises concern that there had been little work undertaken to recover overpayments. This had resulted in an accruing debt and consequential loss of available funds to the council. Although it was still to achieve its first successful prosecution, the application of other sanctions was an encouraging sign that the council was establishing an effective counter-fraud operation.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Inspection Report of the Benefit Fraud inspectorate in Respect of Swindon Borough Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Swindon Borough Council was published today and copies of the report have been placed in the Library. Following the housing Green Paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The "Performance Standards for Housing Benefits" allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

In 2002–03, Swindon Borough Council administered some £34 million in housing benefits, about 13 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

The report concludes that the council had made sustained improvements in some important areas since the current contractor took responsibility for the Benefits service in August 2002.

Between August 2002 and January 2003 it had cleared its backlog of work of some 9,400 cases and made significant improvements in processing new benefit claims, reducing the time taken to determine claims from 89 days on average in 2002–03 to 59 days in 2003–04.

It had also carried out a number of good quality fraud investigations, prosecuting eight benefit fraudsters during 2003–04.

However, the council needs to develop a strategic manágement infrastructure to enable effective management and monitoring of the benefit service. This will also provide senior managers and elected Members with assurance that recommendations from auditors and other regulators are implemented.

The council also needs to do more to process claims accurately, prevent and deter benefit fraud and recover the £2.58 million of housing benefit debt outstanding.

The council have asked for help from the BFI's performance improvement action team.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Housing Benefit Quarterly Performance Statistics

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions I am announcing the publication of performance statistics for local authority administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit (HB and CTB) for the first quarter of 2004–05. A copy of the quarterly statistics for all local authorities in Great Britain has been placed in the Library and has been published on the Department for Work and Pensions website at: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/other_stats.html.

Publishing these statistics is part our strategy for reforming housing benefit and for ensuring that local authorities are accountable for their performance in administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit.

Housing benefit and council tax benefit performance statistics show that in the first quarter of 2004–05, authorities that returned data reported that:

- new claims were processed in an average of 50 days, compared to 52 days in the first quarter of 2003–04
- some 146 authorities had met the performance standard for processing new claims, compared to 103 in the same quarter of 2003–04
- change of circumstances were processed in an average of 14 days, compared with 16 days in the first quarter of 2003–04
- some 40 authorities met the performance standard for processing change of circumstances, compared to 113 in the same quarter of 2003–04.

The statistics are un-audited and are provided quarterly by local authorities to my Department.

The most recent audited Best Value performance information for English local authorities for 2002–03 was published by my right hon. Friend the Deputy

Prime Minister on 18 December 2003 on the Best Value Performance Indicators website at: http://www.bvpi.gov.uk/home.asp. A copy is available in the Library.

The most recent corresponding data for local authorities in Wales is also for 2002–03. This is published on the Audit Commission website at http://www.lgdu-wales.gov.uk/eng/Project.asp?id = SX99AI-A77F4BA8. A paper copy of the relevant extract from this site is available in the Library.

The most recent corresponding data for local authorities in Scotland are also for 2002–03 and are in the Accounts Commission publication "Performance Indicators 2002–03: Benefits, Finance and Corporate Issues", a copy of which is available in the Library.

Pension Credit

The Minister for Pensions (Malcolm Wicks): I can now provide the latest monthly progress report on the take-up of pension credit, which became payable on 6 October 2003.

There are now 2.61 million pensioner households (3.17 million individuals) being paid pension credit, an increase of 25,000 households (31,000 individuals) during August. As at 31 August, there are 1.94 million households (2.36 million individuals) now receiving more money as a result of the introduction of Pension Credit, gaining by an average £16.33 a week. The average pension credit award is £41.71 per week.

There is plenty of time for pensioners to apply for pension credit. To ensure that people do not lose out, customers whose applications are successful in the period up to October 2004 will have their payment backdated to 6 October 2003 (or to the date of entitlement if this is later). The 2004 Budget statement confirmed that backdating arrangements will continue beyond October 2004. This means that anyone eligible applying after October 2004 will see their payment backdated by up to 12 months.

I am placing in the Library a report showing progress so far, including regional breakdowns of the number of pension credit households and accompanied by tables showing the numbers of pension credit awards in Parliamentary constituencies in Great Britain. Copies of the report and the tables are also available for hon. Members in the Vote Office.

PRIME MINISTER

House of Lords Appointments Commission

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I have today placed the House of Lords Appointments Commission annual report for 2003–04 in the Libraries of the House.

I am grateful to the members of the commission for the report and the work that has gone into preparing it.

Official Histories of Privatisation and the D-Notice System

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I have appointed Professor David Parker, Professor of Business Economics and Strategy at Cranfield University, to write "The Official History of Privatisation". I have also appointed Rear Admiral Nick Wilkinson, who will shortly be succeeded as Secretary of the Defence, Press and Broadcasting Advisory Committee, to write "The Official History of the D-Notice System".

Chief Surveillance Commissioner/Surveillance Commissioner

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I am pleased to announce that I have approved the re-appointment of the right hon. Sir Andrew Legatt as chief surveillance commissioner and the appointment of the noble Lord Coulsfield as a surveillance commissioner under the terms of section 91 of the Police Act 1997.

Both appointments commenced on 1 July 2004 and are until 30 June 2007.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH

North Korea

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): I visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or north Korea) from 11 to 14 September. It was the first ever visit by a British Minister. I undertook the trip because the north Koreans had agreed, for the first time, to substantive discussions on the nuclear issue and human rights. I met Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun, Chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly Chae Thae Bok, Human Rights Minister Choe Su Hon and Kim Gye Gwan, head of the DPRK's delegation to the six-party talks on dismantling north Korea's nuclear programme.

I stressed to Foreign Minister Paek and Chief Negotiator Kim Gye Gwan the importance which the UK and the international community attach to the continuation of the Six Party Talks. For some time, it has been clear that the north Koreans might not proceed with the scheduled fourth round of talks by the end of September. The Foreign Minister restated the DPRK's commitment to the talks process, but admitted the DPRK's reluctance to meet again in September. I also impressed the need for the DPRK to admit its Uranium Enrichment Programme, and encouraged the regime to look to the example of Libya.

Before my visit the FCO delegation consulted on the human rights situation with three leading NGOs—Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Christian Solidarity World-wide. Armed with detailed information on individual cases, I was able to hand to Human Rights Minister Choe Su Hon a list of 18 named individuals, and asked for a full written response. In particular, I raised the cases of two south Korean pastors reportedly abducted to the DPRK from China whose details we learned about from Christian Solidarity World-wide. I handed over satellite photographs of what appear to be a number of large prison camps in the DPRK and asked for both an explanation and for access to them by diplomats resident in Pyongyang. I also pressed for the north Koreans to allow visits, so far barred, by the recently appointed UN Special Rapporteur for human rights in

the DPRK and by other thematic UN human rights Special Rapporteurs; and further visits by Foreign Office Human Rights experts. I hope to hear more about this at the UN General Assembly next week when I will meet Choe Su Hon again to continue our discussions. I repeatedly made the points that blanket denials by the north Koreans of alleged human rights violations were simply not credible.

My visit coincided with reports of a large explosion in the north of the country. Having asked for an explanation, Foreign Minister Peak said it was a planned explosion of a mountain for theconstruction of a hydro-electric power plant. He agreed to my request that diplomats might visit to see for themselves. The arrangements are now in hand. The British Ambassador visited the blast site today; I have asked for an urgent report on the visit.

SOLICITOR GENERAL

Treasury Solicitor

The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman): The Treasury Solicitor's annual report and accounts 2003–04 have today been published and laid before Parliament.

Copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 19 July 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

British/Spanish Fishing Fleets

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the size of the *(a)* British and *(b)* Spanish fishing fleet (i) is and (ii) was in 1997; and what estimate she has made of the size of each fleet in 2006. [183340]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information available is given in the table. No estimate has been made of the anticipated size of the UK fleet in 2006, and an estimate for the Spanish fleet is also not available.

	Number of vessels	*Gross tonnage (tonnes)* [3]	*Engine power (Kw)*
UK fleet [1]:			
As at 31 December 1996	8,667	274,532	1,054,927
As at 31 December 2003	7,271	234,037	918,258
Spanish fleet [2]:			
As at 31 December 1996	18,244	603,249	1,537,453
As at 31 December 2003	14,579	489,002	1,200,712

[1] Data for the UK fishing fleet incorporate estimates for the fleets of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.
[2] Analysis of EC Fishing Vessel Register data provided by EUROSTAT.
[3] Tonnage data for the UK fleet incorporate the effect of the remeasurement of vessels onto a Gross Tonnage basis from other methodologies.

Departmental Costs

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of refurbishments to the fabric of the Department's buildings in each year since May 1997. [184379]

Alun Michael: Expenditure on fabric refurbishment each year since the Department's creation in 2001 was:

	£
2001–2002	850,000
2002–2003	3,525,000
2003–2004	2,464,799

Diagnostic Techniques and Equipment

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she is taking to reverse the amendments to EU Regulation 1774–2002 which prevent the import of by-products for use in development of diagnostic techniques and equipment. [183348]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government fully supports the intention of EU Regulation 1774–2002 to provide effective control on the use and importation of animal by-products. However, we recognise that in the case of certain products of particular importance to the development of diagnostic techniques and equipment, the rules on import may not be fully justified by the risk to animal or public health presented by the products.

Following a meeting with industry representatives on 1 July, we have written to the European Commission asking them to reconsider the application of the current import requirements to these products. Officials attending the meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 14 July will also raise the issue.

We are keeping industry contacts informed of progress.

English Nature

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications for judicial review were made against English Nature in the High Court in each year between 1997 and 2003 by *(a)* individuals, *(b)* non-governmental organisations and *(c)* corporate entities. [181514]

Mr. Bradshaw: There were no applications for judicial review made against English Nature between 1997 and 2000. Details of applications made between 2001 and 2003 are as follows:

	Individuals	*Non-governmental organisations*	*Corporate entities*
High court			
2001	1	None	[1]1
2002	1	None	None
2003	None	None	[1]1

[1] English Nature were co-defendants with the Secretary of State

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many judicial reviews brought against English Nature in the *(a)* High Court and *(b)* Court of Appeal between 1997 and 2003 (i) were successful and (ii) resulted in an order for costs being made against the applicant; and what costs were awarded in each case. [181522]

Mr. Bradshaw: English Nature has been successful in all proceedings brought between 1997 and 2003. Details are as follows:

One application for Judicial Review was made to the High Court, against English Nature, by an individual (2001). This was unsuccessful and no costs were awarded against that individual.

One Judicial Review heard by the High Court, brought by a company against English Nature as co-defendant with the Secretary of State, was successfully defended (2001). English Nature were awarded £117,500 (inc VAT) for their part of the costs. There was no appeal made to the Court of Appeal.

Two further cases have been heard in the High Court:

One was brought by an individual against English Nature. The action was successfully defended. However the individual concerned appealed to the Court of Appeal. The appeal was granted in 2003, but the case was not heard until 2004. English Nature won that case. English Nature incurred costs of £250,000 (ex VAT). In reaching its decision the Court awarded costs to English Nature. It is still possible for the aggrieved to petition the House of Lords.

The other was brought by a company against the Secretary of State and English Nature in 2003. The action was successfully defended. The company concerned has now appealed to the Court of Appeal and the case will be heard later this year. Costs are, therefore, still accruing and the outcome of the case will determine the costs issue.

Fishing Families

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to assist fishing families suffering hardship. [183353]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have taken substantial measures in recent years to address the issues facing those affected by the state of the fishing industry. £85 million of grant has been available to the UK industry in 2001–04 under the Structural Funds programme plus further amounts for specific schemes in various parts of the UK. This has included funds to promote increased competitiveness in the industry and enable vessel owners to leave the industry by decommissioning their vessels.

The Prime Minister commissioned his Strategy Unit to recommend action to create a stable future both for the industry and for the communities which depend upon it. We are now preparing to draw up an action plan with stakeholders to take forward the recommendations in the Unit's report "Net Benefits: A sustainable and profitable future for UK fishing".

Regional Development Agencies, local Business Links, Learning and Skills Councils and Job Centre Plus provide expert support to communities affected by the depletion of fish stocks.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many non-departmental public bodies for which her Department is responsible have been *(a)* established and *(b)* abolished since 1997. [182950]

Alun Michael: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was established in June 2001, at which time Defra was responsible for 57 NDPBs[1]. Since then the number of NDPBs established and abolished are as follows:

	NDPBs established	*NDPBs abolished*
June 2001–March 2002[2]	1	3
April 2002–March 2003	2	2
April 2003–March 2004	3	3

[1] Number includes 2 public corporations

[2] These figures are sourced from "Public Bodies". In "Public Bodies 2001" a DTI sponsored NDPB was included in Defra's return and our two public corporations were listed as an Executive NDPB and a Nationalised Industry. These were printer's errors and the figures above are correct even though they do not directly correlate with "Public Bodies".

Rural Proofing

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she proposes to strengthen rural proofing at regional level. [183913]

Alun Michael: The application of rural proofing principles at all levels of government, both in policy formulation and delivery, makes an essential contribution to our aim of building sustainable rural communities. The rural teams in all the non-London Government Offices play a leading role, as the latest Countryside Agency's Rural Proofing Report makes clear and will continue to bring rural proofing into all major policy workstreams at regional and sub-regional levels, including those of the Regional Development Agencies. Joint publications by the Regional Development Agencies show how they are approaching their work with a clear focus on Sustainable Development.

The Regional White Paper 'Your Region, Your Choice' makes rural policy one of the functions of the proposed Elected Regional Assemblies, and Regional Housing Boards are required to rural proof their policies.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Iraq

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many hospitals there are in Iraq; and at what capacity they are running. [184272]

Hilary Benn: According to the May 2004 Iraq Humanitarian Assistance Report, there are 240 hospitals and 1,200 primary health care clinics employing over 100,000 health workers. There are no statistics available showing what capacity these hospitals are running at. Preliminary indicators that are available show a doctor to population ratio at five per 10,000, which is satisfactory, but a severe shortage of nurses with only an estimated total of 12,000 active in the health sector.

There are many challenges facing the health sector in Iraq. DFID's main support to date has been to help ensure that the Ministry of Health can call on expertise to help them restore essential services. DFID has provided £5 million to the World Health Organisation to enable them to work with the Iraqis on these issues. Additional DFID support is being channelled through the multi-donor World Bank and United Nations trust funds, to which DFID has made an initial contribution of £70 million.

EU Development Spending

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much and what percentage of the UK aid budget was committed to EU development spending in each year since 1990. [184772]

Hilary Benn: The following table provides the information from financial year 1990–91 to 2002–03, the latest year for which figures are available.

Percentage of UK aid budget to the European Commission (EC)

£ million

	European Commission	*EC percentage of total DFID programme*
1990–91	317	19
1991–92	413	21
1992–93	464	22
1993–94	516	23

Percentage of UK aid budget to the European Commission (EC)

£ million

	European Commission	*EC percentage of total DFID programme*
1994–95	599	26
1995–96	677	30
1996–97	620	29
1997–98	543	26
1998–99	735	31
1999–2000	739	29
2000–01	700	25
2001–02	724	25
2002–03	851	26

Source:
Statistics on International Development. Prepared by: SRSG 14/07/04.

International Aid (UN Target)

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list those countries which meet the UN target of spending 0.7 per cent. of gross domestic product on international aid; if he will list those countries which have set a date by which they will do so; and if he will make a statement. [184135]

Hilary Benn: Countries that already meet the UN target of spending 0.7 per cent. of gross national income on official development assistance are:

Denmark
Luxembourg
Netherlands
Norway
Sweden

Other countries that have set a date by which they will reach the 0.7 per cent. target are:

Belgium
Finland
France
Ireland
Spain

On Monday 12 July, as part of the 2004 Spending Review, the Chancellor announced that UK ODA would reach nearly £6.5 billion a year by 2007–08. Total UK ODA as a proportion of GNI will rise from 0.34 per cent. (provisionally) in 2003 to 0.39 per cent. next year, 0.42 per cent. in 2006–07 and to 0.47 per cent. in 2007–08. The Government wishes to maintain these rates of growth in the overseas aid ratio which on this timetable would rise beyond 0.5 per cent. after 2008 and reach 0.7 per cent. by 2013.

The Chancellor's proposal to establish the International Financing Facility provides an additional means of significantly increasing investment in international development to address the funding gap. If the International Finance Facility (IFF) succeeds, total UK aid flows based on estimated disbursements from the IFF, excluding the debt service elements, could achieve the equivalent of 0.7 per cent. ODA/GNI earlier, by 2008–09.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183893]

Hilary Benn: The figures reflect domestic and overseas travel. All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules contained in DFID's staff handbook, which reflects the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code. Figures for earlier years are not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Figures for travel costs within administration costs budgets for years for which information is readily available are as follows.

£

	Amount
2001–02	2,358,000
2002–03	2,645,000

In 2003–04 DFID introduced new procedures to capture administration costs, which had previously been recorded on the programme budget. This included travel expenditure, previously incurred by overseas offices, which constitutes the bulk of official travel. These changes will increase transparency and enable DFID to manage administrative costs more effectively, but means that 2003–04 figures are not comparable with earlier years.

£

	Amount
2003–04[1]	10,715,000

[1] Provisional

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Affordable Housing

Mr. Gray: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to meet regional planning guidance targets for affordable housing provision in the South West; and why the Housing Corporation is planning to fund fewer new homes per year for 2004 to 2006 in the South West than the 2001 Regional Planning Guidance target. [185181]

Keith Hill: The policy of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister—as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3)—is not to set region-wide targets or quotas for affordable housing. Targets are more appropriately set at the local level as they are, necessarily, derived from local circumstances and assessments. The figures set out in Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) are, therefore, not a target but an indicator against which the provision of affordable housing can be monitored. Although better quality information than currently available is needed to assess how we are progressing against this indicator, we do know that we are not yet providing sufficient affordable homes. That is why the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has accepted Kate Barker's recommendation that there should be a step-change in housing supply. Over the coming months, we will be consulting on a package of proposals designed to

achieve this, including the provision of independent advice to the Regions, which should improve significantly our ability to deliver and monitor the provision of affordable homes.

The office of the Deputy Prime Minister is also committing more resources to the delivery of affordable homes—the 2004 Spending Review will allow us to increase new social house building by 50 per cent. The Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme (ADP) for the financial years 2004–05 and 2005–06 is worth £188.2 million and will deliver approximately 6,000 affordable homes in the South West. However, the ADP is not the only means available to deliver affordable housing. The planning system also provides local authorities with other tools to deliver affordable homes.

PPG3 requires that Local Planning authorities should plan to meet the housing requirements of the whole community, including those in need of affordable and special needs housing. The provision of affordable housing is a local authority responsibility and should be made on the basis of robust local assessments of needs. Where need is clearly demonstrated for affordable housing, this should be taken into account in formulating development plan policies and in deciding planning applications involving housing.

Coalfield Enterprise Fund

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress is being made in the take-up of the Coalfield Enterprise Fund, with particular reference to south Yorkshire. [184109]

Phil Hope: The Coalfields Enterprise Fund is a venture capital fund aimed at investing in small and medium-sized companies with growth potential in the former coalfields. The Deputy Prime Minster announced the Fund on 26 March this year.

The fund manager has embarked upon a comprehensive marketing and promotional programme to establish the fund across the former coalfield areas including south Yorkshire.

As at the 13 July 2004 the Fund Manager had received a total of 27 applications for investment, of which 12 are in the former Yorkshire coalfield areas. Of these, four have been rejected as not fulfilling the Fund's investment criteria and eight are receiving further consideration.

Councillors' Allowances (London)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total amount paid in allowances to councillors was in each of the London boroughs in 2003–04. [184281]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The setting of local allowance levels is a matter for each local authority, taking into account its local circumstances and the views of its independent remuneration panel.

House Prices (Portsmouth)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the percentage change in house prices in Portsmouth was in each of the last five years. [184351]

Keith Hill: The annual percentage change in residential property prices in Portsmouth for each of the last five years is tabled as follows:

	Average price (all dwellings) (£)	*Percentage change over previous year*
1999	71,185	+8.9
2000	185 85	+20.0
2001	95.911	+12.3
2002	117.161	+22.2
2003	137,435	+17.3

Notes:
1. The figures exclude any transactions believed to be below market value;
2. Over the period 1999–2003 the average number of property sales included in the figures was about 5,400 per annum.

Source:
Land Registry

Housing (Right to Buy)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will make an assessment of the success of the Housing (Right to Buy) (Limits on Discount) (Amendment) Order 2003. [184609]

Keith Hill: Reliable information on the effect of the Housing (Right to Buy) (Limits on Discount) (Amendment) Order 2003 on Right to Buy sales is not yet available. Many sales in 2003–04 resulted from applications made by tenants before the order came into effect on 27 March 2003. The Government are keeping the question of maximum Right to Buy discounts under review.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to expand into new areas the Housing (Right to Buy) (Limits on Discount) (Amendment) Order 2003. [184610]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to lower the maximum discount available to tenants under the Right to Buy scheme in any other areas, but we are keeping the question under review.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received on the Housing (Right to Buy) (Limits on Discount) (Amendment) Order 2003. [184611]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received a number of representations on this order, from individual tenants, social landlords, and other organisations. Some have criticised the Government's decision to lower the maximum amount of discount available to tenants under the Right to Buy scheme in 41 areas under the greatest housing pressure, while others have supported it.

Housing Investment

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Treasury on boosting affordable housing investment in the South West in the Comprehensive Spending Review 2004. [183991]

Keith Hill: I refer my hon. Friend to the Deputy Prime Minister's statement to the House on 13 July. By 2008, we will have more than doubled spending on new affordable housing in England since 1997, reaching £2.25 billion in 2008. This will be funded through direct investment, the private finance initiative programme and efficiencies in procurement.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be looking carefully at how the funds for direct investment, including the additional funding for 2006–07 and 2007–08 for high demand areas, are split between regions. This needs to reflect the pattern of needs between regions and the Government's national priorities and targets. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is looking to complete this work by the end of the year.

Housing

Llew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much additional brownfield land he expects to be used for home building as a result of his announcement of 13 July. [184827]

Keith Hill: Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" sets a national target that by 2008, 60 per cent. of additional housing should be provided on previously-developed land and through conversions of existing, buildings. In the Spending Review statement published in the House on 12 July 2004, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer reaffirmed the Government's commitment to the 60 per cent. target. The provisional estimate for 2003 is 66 per cent.

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many lettings have been made by *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* housing associations in Northampton in each of the last five years, broken down by category. [184843]

Keith Hill: Information on the number of lettings to new tenants made by local authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in the Northampton area, broken down by category excluding any transfers and mutual exchanges, is tabled as follows:

Number of local authority new lettings made in Northampton area

Type of tenancy	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*[1]
New secure	1,316	1,186	1,295	1,218	1,080	—
Introductory	0	0	0	0	0	—
Other (e.g. licence)	12	14	13	8	2	—
Total	1,328	1,200	1,308	1,226	1,082	—

[1] Data not yet available for 2003–04.

Number of RSL new lettings made in Northampton area

Type of tenancy	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Fair rent (incl. secure)	1	1	0	0	0	0
Assured	222	184	239	208	176	192
Other	41	13	13	5	9	1
Assured shorthold	11	15	0	0	0	0
Licence agreement	1	8	25	3	0	0
Starter tenancy	0	0	2	14	12	23
Total	276	221	279	230	197	216

Source:
ODPM's Housing Investment Programme returns and Housing Corporations CORE return

Housing Waiting Lists

Mr. Gray: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the reasons for the change in housing waiting lists in the South West Region in the last year; and how he intends to reduce the waiting lists. [185184]

Keith Hill: Social housing waiting lists and the reasons for changes in them are a key part of the evidence considered by local housing authorities while carrying out assessments of local housing need. These assessments are used by the authorities in developing their housing strategies and should also influence local planning policies for the provision of affordable housing.

The provision of new affordable housing is the number one priority of the South West Housing Body who will be investing £188 million in the financial years 2004–05 and 2005–06 to deliver approximately 6,000 affordable homes within the South West.

Key Workers (Housing)

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many key workers have received *(a)* equity loans, *(b)* higher value loans, *(c)* help with shared ownership and *(d)* help with intermediate renting in (i) each scheme zone and (ii) each English region from the Key Worker Living scheme, broken down by key worker group. [184141]

Keith Hill: The following table sets out details of the equity loans paid under the Key Worker Living (KWL) scheme between it going live on 1 April and the end of June. No transactions involving higher value equity loans have been finalised at this stage. The shared ownership and intermediate renting schemes available through KWL are on newly built properties and will be coming on stream gradually during the life of the programme.

Zone	Region	Key worker group			
		NHS	Teacher	Police	Other
Essex	East	2	2	1	—
South East Consortium	South East	18	25	3	[1]1
East London	London	2	—	1	—
North London	London	2	—	1	—
South East London	London	5	2	3	—
South West London	London	—	—	1	—
West London	London	1	1	1	—
Total		30	30	11	1

[1] Social worker.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* budget, *(b)* funding from his Department and *(c)* funding from other Government Departments is for the Key Worker Living scheme in the current financial year. [184142]

Keith Hill: £690 million (including Zone Agent administration costs) will be spent through Key Worker Living, of which around £25 million is being contributed by participating employers. Discussions are also ongoing with employers and other Government Departments about additional land contributions and access to accommodation on the NHS Estate.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been *(a)* budgeted for and *(b)* spent on (i) administration and (ii) consultants' fees by each of the zone agents in the Key Worker Living scheme. [184143]

Keith Hill: Four products are available under the Key Worker Living programme: market purchase 'Homebuy'; new build 'Homebuy'; new build shared ownership and, intermediate renting at subsidised levels. NHS owned units are also being made available more widely. The zone agents (ZAs) act as a one-stop shop by providing information for all such schemes as well as administering market purchase (MP) Homebuy. The ZA administration cost for each completed MP Homebuy case is expected to average £2,218.

Although directly linked to market purchase Homebuy, the fee covers on-costs incurred by zone agents e.g. consultancy, to operate the full one stop shop service, including directing key workers to new build schemes and rental accommodation.

Landfill (Expansion Areas)

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what consultation there is between his Department and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on landfill in expansion areas. [184751]

Keith Hill: There is close working across Government Departments on matters relating to the growth areas, including on the sustainable management of waste.

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps the Government will be taking to ensure the Review of Old Mineral Permissions is not used to co-locate landfill with development of 4,500 homes at the Wixams, formerly Elstow Garden Villages in Bedfordshire. [184750]

Keith Hill: Mineral planning authorities are required, under provisions in the Environment Act 1995, to undertake initial and periodic reviews of old mineral planning permissions in order to secure improved environmental and operating standards at mineral sites.

It is understood that Bedfordshire county council is currently considering an application for new planning conditions to apply to the restoration of former mineral workings at Elstow South. The hon. Member should make his views on the application known to the authority if he has not already done so.

Local Authorities' Performance Indicators

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place the unaudited data from the Best Value User Satisfaction Surveys 2003–04: General Survey Initial Topline Report for the 14 best value performance indicators for each of the 377 authorities available in the Library. [184975]

Mr. Raynsford: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to her previous question on 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 868W.

National Housing Federation

Mr. Gray: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the National Housing Federation's booklet The Evidence Update; and if he will take account of it in making future housing investment decisions about the South West region. [185183]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister welcomes the work that the National Housing Federation (NHF) have done for their recent reports on housing needs in the, South East and South West. The general picture on housing pressures and the affordability of home ownership is in line with our analysis which under-pinned discussions of funding for affordable housing in the 2004 Spending Review. Officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be meeting with the NHF shortly to discuss these reports.

The NHF South West is represented on the South West Housing Body Steering Group and as such they will play a key role in the development of the region's new Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) due for publication in early 2005. The RHS will reflect all relevant evidence from a variety of sources and will form the basis for the Housing Body's recommendations to Ministers on the distribution of housing resources within the region.

Regional Government (West Midlands)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will hold public meetings in Herefordshire to discuss proposals for a West Midlands Regional Assembly. [184018]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Ministers soundings about the interest in holding a referendum on whether to establish an elected regional assembly showed that the level of interest in the West Midlands is low. We therefore have no proposals to hold a referendum in the West Midlands during this Parliament and see no merit in holding public meetings in Herefordshire.

Social Housing

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* affordable homes and *(b)* homes for rent have been built in Portsmouth in each of the last five years. [184313]

Keith Hill: Figures for affordable homes built and homes for rent built are not available centrally.

Based on data reported by Portsmouth council and the National House-Building Council, the number of registered social landlord and council dwellings that have been built within Portsmouth in the last five financial years are as follows.

	Number
1999–2000	37
2000–01	92
2001–02	76
2002–03	88
2003–04	78

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many lettings have been made by *(a)* the local authority and *(b)* housing associations in Portsmouth in each of the last five years, broken down by category. [184314]

Keith Hill: Information on the number of lettings to new tenants made by Portsmouth city council, and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in the Portsmouth area; broken down by category excluding any transfers and mutual exchanges, is tabled as follows:

Number of local authority new lettings made by Portsmouth CC[1]

Type of tenancy	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*[2]
New secure	1,131	1,159	988	947	853	—
Introductory	0	0	0	0	0	—
Other (e.g. licence)	0	0	0	0	0	—
Total	1,131	1,159	988	947	853	—

[1] These figures include any lettings made to the 5,300 dwellings that Portsmouth CC own in Havant.
[2] Data not yet available for 2003–04

Number of RSL new lettings made in Portsmouth area

Type of tenancy	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Fair rent (incl. secure)	5	0	0	0	0	0
Assured	264	251	240	251	213	136
Other	0	2	38	5	6	9
Assured shorthold	31	34	0	0	0	0
Licence agreement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Starter tenancy	0	0	2	3	8	16
Total	300	287	280	259	227	161

Source:
ODPM's Housing Investment Programme returns and Housing Corporations CORE return

TRANSPORT

A21 Upgrade

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact on local communities of the delays in announcing his preferred route for the upgraded A21 at Hurst Green. [184652]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* No assessment has been made of the impact of delay in the announcement. I am aware of the local concern over the delays however, this section of the A21 is particularly sensitive and I have asked for further advice from the Highways Agency. When I have received their report I will make an announcement.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will announce his preferred route for the A21 at Hurst Green. [184653]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* I have asked the Highways Agency to carry out further work on this scheme including a review of alignment, road standard and value for money. When I receive their report later this summer I will make an announcement.

Airport Security Act 1982

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what arrangements are in place for the resolution of disputes between police forces and airports designated under the Airport Security Act 1982 regarding the costs to be included within the re-charge arrangements. [184900]

Mr. McNulty: Section 26(3) of the Aviation Security Act 1982 states that this is a matter for agreement between the manager of the designated airport and the police authority in question. Failing agreement, the Secretary of State for Transport will arbitrate. Following Sir John Wheeler's review of Aviation Security, this system is being reviewed with a view to

making appropriate use of the Multi-Agency Threat and Risk Assessments (MATRAs) currently being undertaken at airports as a basis for agreement and, where necessary, arbitration.

Airports

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will issue guidance to airport operators regarding the airport master plan referred to in paragraph 8.38 of the White Paper, The Future of Air Transport. [183762]

Mr. McNulty: Guidance on the Preparation of Airport Master Plans was published jointly by the Department for Transport, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department for Regional Development in Northern Ireland on 12 July. Copies have been placed in the House Library and can also be downloaded from the DfT website www.dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Congestion Charges

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the health impact of the implementation of traffic congestion charges in cities where there is experience of their operation. [184388]

Mr. Jamieson: The Mayor of London introduced a scheme to reduce congestion in central London in February 2003. Early indications suggest that congestion charging has resulted in a significant reduction in road traffic in central London. The First Annual Monitoring Report by Transport for London (TfL) considered the direct effect of the congestion charge on air quality would be relatively modest. TfL's Second Annual Report estimated small decreases in both PM_{10} particles and nitrogen oxides in the charging zone. It is too early, however, to assess fully the air quality changes and thus to calculate the implied impact on health. GLA/TfL estimated that congestion charging would result in between 150 and 250 fewer reported accidents, involving injury, per year within Greater London. TfL's Second Annual Report highlighted that the recent pattern of decreasing levels of accidents within the charging zone is continuing, and there is no evidence of detrimental change in road traffic accidents within or around the zone.

Dangerous Goods (Safety)

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures his Department *(a)* has put in place and *(b)* plans to put in place regarding the implementation of the Dangerous Goods Safety Advisors scheme throughout the transport industry. [184590]

Mr. Jamieson: The requirement for the appointment of Dangerous Goods Safety Advisers stemmed from EU Directives 96/35/EC (June 1996) and 2000/18/EC (April 2000). Statutory Instrument 1999 No. 257 implemented the requirement into national legislation—The Transport of Dangerous Goods (Safety Advisers) Regulations 1999 (as amended). The 1999 regulations were later subsumed into Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 586—The Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2004. This legislation implemented the requirements of the EU Framework Directives for Rail and Road, which required member states to align their national legislation with the international requirements for the transport of dangerous goods by rail and road. Similar legislation is in place in Northern Ireland.

The EU requirement to appoint safety advisers applied only to the transport modes of road, rail and inland waterways.

Diabetic Retinopathy (Driving Licences)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many diabetic retinopathy sufferers have had their driving licences revoked in each of the past three years; how many appealed against the decision; and how many had their licence subsequently returned. [184633]

Mr. Jamieson: Information on the total number of revocations over the last three years for drivers who have diabetic retinopathy is not available without incurring disproportionate costs. When a licence is revoked, the driver is always offered the opportunity to provide fresh evidence, which in such cases would normally be in the form of further visual field charts. If the new fields satisfy the standard, a licence will be re-issued. No information is readily available on how many drivers have their licences returned on this basis.

Since 2001, 18 drivers revoked because of diabetic retinopathy have formally appealed to a magistrates court in England and Wales or to a Sheriff Court in Scotland. Three went to a full hearing and of these two were dismissed and one was upheld and a new licence was issued. The other 15 appeals were withdrawn and eight have subsequently been issued with licences following the submission of fresh visual fields which met the required standard.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's policy is on driving and visual disorders as they relate to people with diabetes; and if he will make a statement. [184635]

Mr. Jamieson: The visual standards and assessment procedures applied in relation to drivers with diabetes are those to which all drivers are subject, regardless of their medical condition.

Fishermen (Working Time Directive)

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what exemptions or derogations are applicable to fishermen in respect of the Working Time Directive; whether they are *(a)* temporary and *(b)* permanent; and when those that are temporary will expire. [184717]

Mr. Jamieson: Under the Fishing Vessels (Working Time: Sea Fishermen) Regulations 2004, which comes into force on 16 August, the Secretary of State may grant exceptions from the limit on the maximum weekly working time and the minimum periods of daily and weekly rest for objective or technical reasons or reasons concerning the organisation of work, provided he has consulted those concerned and the exception is subject to such conditions and limitations as will protect

fishermen's health and safety. He may alter or cancel any exception on reasonable notice and after consultation with those affected.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Working Time Directive is in force in relation to its application to commercial sea fishing activity. [185196]

Mr. Jamieson: The Fishing Vessels (Working Time: Sea Fishermen) Regulations 2004 were laid in Parliament on 13 July 2004 and come into force on 16 August 2004. The Regulations implement the European Directives on working time in respect of workers engaged in sea fishing.

Heavy Goods Vehicles

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicles using the UK's roads were heavy goods vehicles in each of the last three years for which figures are available; how many road accidents involved HGVs in each year; how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured in such accidents; and what percentage these figures represent of the total in each case. [184302]

Mr. Jamieson: The latest available figures are for 2001 to 2003 when the number of UK-registered heavy goods vehicles on the roads was:

	Number of heavy goods vehicles
2001	449,000
2002	453,000
2003	456,000

In addition, it is estimated that between 50,000 and 70,000 foreign-registered HGVs use roads in Great Britain.

The information requested about road accidents involving HGVs in the UK, and casualties arising from these accidents is shown in the table.

	Road accidents involving HGVs		*People killed in road accidents involving HGVs*		*People injured in road accidents involving HGVs*	
	Number	*Percentage of all road accidents*	*Number*	*Percentage of all road fatalities*	*Number*	*Percentage of all injured road casualties*
2001	14,160	6	578	16	18,738	6
2002	12,894	6	532	15	17,058	5
2003	12,643	6	530	14	16,758	6

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many licensed heavy goods vehicles there were in the UK in each of the last 10 years. [184333]

Mr. Jamieson: The number of heavy goods vehicles licensed at the end of each of the last 10 years in the United Kingdom are as follows:

	Number of heavy goods vehicles
1994	430,500
1995	434,200
1996	438,000
1997	440,600
1998	439,500
1999	439,900
2000	443,300
2001	449,100
2002	453,000
2003	455,600

International Ship and Port Facility Security Code

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the training being given to ship security officers will train them in all 25 of the topics given in Part B of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. [184598]

Mr. Jamieson: The Maritime and Coastguard Agency approve training providers against the training specification for ship security officers which covers 23 of the 25 topics identified in Part B of the ISPS Code. Those concerning the layout of the individual ship are covered by the ship security officers' professional knowledge, and those concerning crowd management and control techniques are covered by other professional qualifications.

Motorcycles and Mopeds

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crashes involving motorcycles and mopeds resulting in death or serious injury there have been in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* East Sussex and *(c)* Eastbourne in each of the last 10 years. [184304]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Fatal and Serious road accidents involving TWMVs[1] by area: 1994 to 2003

	East Sussex	*Eastbourne*	*UK*
1994	82	4	7,029
1995	79	4	6,906
1996	95	5	6,434
1997	80	5	6,729
1998	91	9	6,721
1999	76	5	7,163
2000	77	3	7,711
2001	86	8	7,670
2002	98	7	7,835
2003	90	3	7,951

[1] Two wheeled motor vehicles, mopeds, motor scooters and motorcycles.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the laws and regulations affecting pillion passengers of less than 16 years of age on motorcycles and mopeds. [184305]

Mr. Jamieson: The following legislation affects all pillion passengers irrespective of age:

Only motorcyclists who have passed a motorcycle test can carry passengers. (Regulation 16 of the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999)

The machine must be equipped with suitable supports or rests for the feet of the pillion passenger. (Regulation 102 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986)

Pillion passengers must be capable of sitting astride a proper seat securely fixed to the motorcycle. This may require specific adaptations to accommodate young children. (Section 23(2) of the Road Traffic Act 1988)

A pillion passenger must wear a safety helmet. (Motor Cycles (Protective Helmets) Regulations 1998)

The decision to carry a passenger on a motorcycle remains with the rider, who is legally responsible for ensuring that the passenger is safely supported. (Section 23(3) of the Road Traffic Act 1988)

Any passenger must be carried in a manner so that no danger is caused, or likely to be caused, to any person on the vehicle or on the road. (Regulation 100 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986)

It is an offence to use a vehicle when the number of passengers, or the manner in which they are carried, is such that it involves a danger of injury to any person. (Section 8 of the Road Traffic Act 1991)

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pillion passengers on motorcycles and mopeds have been *(a)* killed and *(b)* seriously injured in each of the last 10 years in (i) the UK, (ii) East Sussex and (iii) Eastbourne. [184306]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Number of TWMV[1] passengers[2] killed or seriously injured: 1994 to 2003

Casualties

	East Sussex		*Eastbourne*		*UK*	
	Killed	*Serious*	*Killed*	*Serious*	*Killed*	*Serious*
1994	1	5	0	0	45	449
1995	0	9	0	1	30	505
1996	0	8	0	0	26	474
1997	1	9	0	0	33	465
1998	0	10	0	0	33	411
1999	0	2	0	1	24	449
2000	1	9	0	0	32	468
2001	0	5	0	0	29	403
2002	1	3	0	0	29	454
2003	3	4	0	0	30	428

[1] Two wheeled motor vehicles, mopeds, motor scooters and motorcycles.
[2] Includes casualties in motorcycle sidecars.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road accidents involving motorcycles and mopeds resulting in *(a)* death and *(b)* hospitalisation of (i) riders and (ii) pillion passengers there have been in (A) England, (B) Somerset, (C) Taunton Deane and (D) West Somerset in each of the last seven years. [184651]

Mr. Jamieson: The numbers of accidents involving a fatal of serious injury to a motorcycle/moped rider or passenger in the areas requested are given in the following table. "Serious" injuries are defined within the Departments road accident reporting system (STATS 19) as injuries for which a person is detained in hospital as an in-patient, plus injuries that may not lead to hospitalisation such as concussion, severe shock and severe cuts and lacerations.

	Severity	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
England	Fatal	437	433	486	539	501	532	598
	Serious	5,132	5,165	5,462	5,804	5,822	5,955	6,093
Somerset	Fatal	3	8	7	10	11	8	6
	Serious	61	47	43	59	44	56	57
Taunton Deane	Fatal	0	3	0	0	2	0	0
	Serious	14	10	8	8	5	16	12
West Somerset	Fatal	1	1	0	2	3	1	1
	Serious	3	1	4	1	7	6	5

Railways

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which organisations provided *(a)* legal, *(b)* financial and *(c)* auditing services valued at over £25,000 to the Strategic Rail Authority in each year since 2001; and what the value of these services was in each case. [180861]

Mr. McNulty: The information is shown in the following tables.

Expenditure on legal services

£ (approved invoices paid)

Organisation	*2000–01*[1]	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*[2]	*Total*
Allen and Overy	—	—	254,889.87	2,813,023.34	642,062.61	3,709,975.83
Bond Pearce	—	—	—	25,531.91	17,084.75	42,616.66
Brodies Solicitors	—	3,607.00	119,813.39	494,094.57	130,993.56	748,508.52
C. Hoare and Co.	—	—	400,000.00	—	—	400,000.00
Clifford Chance	—	5,947.58	227,927.19	689,106.64	201,937.34	1,128,928.75
CMS Cameron McKenna	—	—	—	16,117.60	21,612.55	37,730.15
Cobbetts	—	—	81,499.90	11,131.45	—	92,631.35
DLA	—	—	24,877.44	19,198.66	13,723.81	57,799.92
Evans Harding	—	—	—	764,578.16	—	764,578.16
Eversheds	308,160.40	1,133,044.33	2,135,651.04	3,344,576.60	349,041.47	7,270,473.85
Field Fisher Waterhouse	—	—	74,400.04	22,689.18	9,922.15	107,011.38
Freshfields	—	—	7,600.00	1,559,720.78	217,193.36	1,784,514.14

Expenditure on legal services

£ (approved invoices paid)

Organisation	2000-01[1]	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05[2]	Total
HM Paymaster General Lord Chancellor's Department	—	—	198,065.00	323.40	—	198,388.40
Holden and Co.	—	—	39,337.49	—	—	39,337.49
Hollingworth Bissell	5,135.00	82,524.29	61,085.00	103,266.09	12,626.71	264,637.08
Kennedy's Solicitors	—	—	101,135.74	13,061.59	1,378.72	115,576.05
K Legal Solicitors	—	105,133.31	12,340.79	—	—	117,474.10
Linklaters and Paines	253,362.39	3,019,692.08	8,000,840.23	164,555.06	751,698.89	12,190,148.65
Mills and Reeve Solicitors	—	—	106,611.28	—	—	106,611.28
Osborne Clarke	—	—	30,000.00	—	—	30,000.00
Rees and Freres	—	—	87,459.30	—	—	87,459.30
Thomas Eggar Church Adams	—	5,009.70	192,944.20	—	—	197,953.90
Vizards Solicitors	—	—	334,693.67	—	—	334,693.67
Total	566,657.79	4,354,958.29	12,491,181.57	10,040,975.05	2,369,275.94	29,823,048.63

Expenditure on financial services

£ (approved invoices paid)

Organisation	2000-01[3]	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05[4]	Total
Babcock and Brown	—	—	—	303,920.99	—	303,920.99
Capital Value Brokers Ltd.	—	—	—	24,679.00	5,585.00	30,264.01
HSBC Rail (UK) Ltd.	—	—	42,000.00	—	—	42,000.00
KPMG	438,648.52	6,181,816.35	8,809,144.19	6,822,884.65	682,923.84	22,935,417.55
L E K	—	—	610,521.29	2,497,441.36	387,374.02	3,495,336.67
Lazard Brothers and Co. Ltd.	—	2,832,562.82	7,064,667.22	1,738,431.57	450,372.57	12,086,034.18
Moody's Investors Services	—	—	—	48,081.79	—	48,081.79
Mott Macdonald	—	—	196,632.26	78,671.30	—	275,303.56
PKF	—	—	572,029.76	266,668.95	11,179.99	849,878.70
PricewaterhouseCoopers	—	67,520.00	361,159.96	764,694.51	44,250.00	1,237,624.47
Standard and Poores	—	30,000.00	20,000.00	40,000.00	—	90,000.00
Total	438,648.52	9,111,899.17	17,676,154.68	12,585,474.12	1,581,685.42	41,393,61.91

Expenditure on auditing services

£ (approved invoices paid)

Organisation	2000-01[3]	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05[4]	Total
National Audit Office	—	96,100.00	117,775.00	247,000.00	—	460,875.00
PricewaterhouseCoopers	40,000.00	85,535.00	52,100.00	112,334.99	28,175.00	318,144.99
Total	40,000.00	181,635.00	169,875.00	359,334.99	28,175.00	779,019.99

[1] Figures in this column show expenditure for the two months February 2001 (when the SRA was established) and March 2001.
[2] Figures in this column show expenditure for the three months April-June 2004.
[3] Figures in this column show expenditure for the two months February 2001 (when the SRA was established) and March 2001.
[4] Figures in this column show expenditure for the three months April-June 2004.

Road Traffic Accidents (Fatalities)

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fatalities there were from road traffic accidents in each local authority area in England and Wales in *(a)* 1998, *(b)* 1999, *(c)* 2000 and *(d)* 2001. [184766]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Strategic Rail Authority

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total value was of *(a)* technical and financial contracts, *(b)* technical consultants used on a call-off basis and *(c)* financial consultants used on a call-off basis by the Strategic Rail Authority in each year since 2001. [180893]

Mr. McNulty: The information is shown in the following table.

Approved invoices paid

£

Financial year	2000-01[1]	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05[2]	Total
Technical and financial expenditure (non-call-offs)	352,553.87	4,608,001.72	9,744,734.23	3,906,538.03	830,827.42	19,442,655.28
Technical consultant expenditure (call-off)	686,740.01	6,871,213.80	11,362,342.95	12,435,146.62	2,353,573.99	33,709,017.37
Financial consultant expenditure (call-off)	438,648.52	6,249,336.35	10,549,487.46	10,401,760.77	1,125,727.85	28,764,960.95
Total	1,477,942.40	17,728,551.87	31,656,564.64	26,743,445.43	4,310,129.26	81,916,633.60

[1] Figures in this column show expenditure for the two months February 2001 (when the SRA was established) and March 2001.
[2] Figures in this column show expenditure for the three months April to June 2004.

Transec

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how often the Director of Transec reports to him. [184601]

Mr. Jamieson: Frequently.

Transport Operator Identity Crime

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to put in place measures to counter transport operator identity crime. [184606]

Mr. Jamieson: Security measures in place to manage the terrorist threat to the transport system vary according to the mode of transport and the threat. Where appropriate, such measures include the security screening of transport operators and the checking of their identity on entry to a restricted zone.

Uninsured Driving

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he intends to publish the report commissioned by his Department into uninsured driving. [184768]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: We are carefully considering all the recommendations in the report by Professor Greenaway on uninsured driving, and will be publishing the report as soon as possible.

DEFENCE

Iraq

16. **Mr. Kevan Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Iraqi security forces will be at full operational level. [184484]

Mr. Hoon: The Iraqi Security Forces consist of the Iraqi Police Service, Iraqi Armed Forces, Iraqi National Guard, Iraqi Border Police, Facilities Protection Force, Iraqi Coastal Defence Force and Iraqi Riverine Patrol Service among others. Each of these is a separate organisation and has its own intensive programme of training and capability development. Some units of each are already operational locally. Further capability development will occur at different rates in each organisation. It is for the Iraqi Government to determine when the capability they seek is being delivered.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the time scale for the Iraqi security forces to reach full operational capacity. [184488]

Mr. Hoon: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave earlier today to my hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr. Jones).

21. **Kali Mountford:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what work his Department is doing with the *(a)* Department for International Development and *(b)* non-governmental organisations to assist the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. [184490]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence's main contribution to the reconstruction of Iraq is to help provide the security that allows reconstruction projects to take place. We also work with the Department for International Development on numerous reconstruction projects in the South under the auspices of the Emergency Infrastructure Programme, with United Kingdom soldiers rebuilding and offering advice. We work with DFID to ensure that our Quick Impact Project money, which brings about short-term improvements in living conditions, is disbursed wisely.

MOD coordinates closely with DFID on Iraq policy issues, including strategic communication, capacity building and use of funds from the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. NGOs concerned with reconstruction normally engage with DfID. Our close relationship with DfID ensures that our collective reconstruction effort can take account of concerns or proposals from NGOs.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British troops are in Iraq; and what British equipment is deployed there. [184268]

Mr. Ingram: As at the 13 July there are around 8,500 British troops deployed on Operation Telic in Iraq.

There are currently around 2,800 Army vehicles and other pieces of equipment ranging from challenger tanks and helicopters through to fuel tankers and forklift handling equipment, generators and Land Rovers. The RAF has a mixture of Combat, Air Transport, Refuelling and Maritime Surveillance aircraft involved in operations in the Gulf and the Royal Navy has some warships and support vessels.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the UK's defence budget has been devoted specifically to the armed forces in Iraq over the past 15 months. [184270]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence, in common with other Government Departments, publishes expenditure data on an annual basis in its Resource Accounts following audit by the National Audit Office. Details of costs of operations in Iraq for the Financial Year 2003-04 will be published in the MOD's Annual Report and Accounts following audit in September. Total costs are expected to be within the £1,539 million voted by Parliament which represents 3.6 per cent. of the total resource and capital expenditure limits voted to my Department in the Spring Supplementary Estimates.

Audited figures for the cost of operations in Iraq in this financial year will be published in the MOD's Resource Accounts in 2005. It is too early to provide any estimate for the total costs that will be incurred this year, but we will ask the House to vote the necessary funds in Supplementary Estimates in due course.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the incidents that have led to compensation being paid to Iraqi people in the sector occupied by British forces for *(a)* death, *(b)* injury and *(c)* destruction of property. [169408]

Mr. Ingram: As at 16 July, the following incidents have led to compensation being paid to Iraqi people in the sector occupied by British Forces.

		Number
Death	Road traffic accidents	6
	Gunshot wounds	3
	Bomb attack on British Army vehicle	1
	Death in detention	1
Injury	Road traffic accidents	14
	Gunshot wounds	3
	Sustained during arrest	11
	Resulting from property searches	2
Property damage	—	24
Vehicle damage	Road traffic accidents	57

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which private companies' services have been employed by his Department in Iraq; and how much has been paid to each. [175095]

Mr. Ingram: We employ contractors to undertake a wide variety of tasks such as support of equipment, construction and removal of camps, catering and translation. They are contracted by a number of separate military commands including in theatre.

A record of which private companies' services have been employed is not held centrally and could only be established at disproportionate cost; details of the respective contracts are commercial in confidence.

Recruitment (Regimental Attainment)

17. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what account he takes of the recruitment attainment by regiments when considering the future configuration of the Army. [184485]

Mr. Ingram: We continually monitor the ability of Regiments to recruit and retain personnel, their success in doing so would be one element taken into account in decisions on the future structure of the Army.

Scottish Regiments

18. **Mr. David Stewart:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to reorganise the structure and recruitment areas of the Scottish regiments. [184486]

Mr. Ingram: The armed forces are constantly evolving to reflect the strategic security environment in which they operate. The Defence White Paper published last December established the policy context for shaping the future structure of our armed forces. For the Army, it outlined the vision of a more balanced force that is flexible, rapidly deployable and sustainable for the variety of operational tasks that we envisage it undertaking.

Against this policy guideline, we have been working through the detailed implications for the Army's force structure. We anticipate being in a position to make announcements about the conclusions of this work shortly.

Service Personnel (Occupational Stress)

19. **Mr. Kidney:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department takes to assist service personnel in coping with the stresses of serving in war zones. [184487]

Mr. Caplin: Preparation for dealing with potentially stressful operational situations forms part of normal training for all Service personnel All Service personnel are given pre and post deployment briefings on dealing with the possibility of post traumatic stress, including guidance on who to consult if they experience problems. Trained mental health staff are also deployed to provide advice to personnel in theatre, supported by both Defence Medical Services and our Welfare Services all of whom play such an extremely important part in supporting our forces both regular and reserve.

Departmental Agencies (Relocation)

22. **Mr. Jim Cousins:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proposals he has for moving the headquarters of one of his Department's agencies to the north-east of England. [184491]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has no plans to relocate any Defence Agency Headquarters to the North East. However, we are conducting an examination of the Defence estate as part of our estate rationalisation strategy.

Afghanistan

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what action the Department is taking to improve the security situation in Afghanistan. [184479]

Mr. Hoon: The UK is making a major contribution to improving the security situation in Afghanistan. The transfer of control of our Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Mazar-e Sharif and Meymanek together with associated support forces, was a major step in implementing the first stage of ISAF's expansion across Afghanistan; a process we see as playing a vital role in helping the Afghans create a secure and stable country. Together with our forces in Kabul, we now contribute around 580 personnel to the ISAF, and are also engaged in providing wider support to security sector reform in Afghanistan. Looking ahead, and as my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced to the House on 30 June, we have offered to deploy the Headquarters of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps to lead ISAF in 2006. This is the clearest possible evidence of our commitment to ISAF and to Afghanistan.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the UK contribution to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. [184489]

Mr. Hoon: Of the 580 United Kingdom personnel serving with the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, 340 are deployed to Kabul where they are assisting the Afghan Transitional Authority to maintain security. The remainder are serving in the UK-led multinational Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Mazar-e Sharif and Meymaneh, and the associated Forward Support Base, in Northern Afghanistan.

RAF Bases (US Personnel)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, at what percentage of RAF bases RAF personnel are outnumbered by US personnel. [184492]

Mr. Ingram: There are 10 RAF bases where RAF personnel are outnumbered by the United States personnel, which is approximately 17 per cent. of the principal RAF bases in the United Kingdom.

Aircraft Carriers Programme

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the aircraft carriers programme. [184481]

Mr. Hoon: I refer my hon. Friend to the Written Statement made to the House earlier today.

Cadet Forces

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the training objectives of each of the cadet forces. [184156]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* The training objectives of each of the cadet forces are broadly similar, differing only to reflect the traditions and ethos of the parent Service. They support the key themes of the Government youth policies by providing training aimed at capacity building, maximising personal potential and social inclusion. Training is undertaken by cadets under two broad headings: military training and adventurous training in the approximate proportions of 60 per cent. and 40 per cent. respectively. The military training functions are as follows:

a. To provide the opportunity for young people to exercise responsibility and leadership, and to learn from the Services how they can be best developed.

b. To impart a basic knowledge and understanding of the role of the armed forces.

c. To encourage those who have an interest in the Services to be aware of the career opportunities the armed forces have to offer.

The adventurous training includes activities that are arduous and include an element of risk to test the courage and endurance of cadets and develop their qualities of character.

The military training syllabi contain such topics as turnout and drill, skill at arms, shooting, map and compass, fieldcraft, and first aid. Rock climbing, mountain walking, canoeing, caving, offshore sailing, sub aqua diving and parachuting are just some of the approved adventurous training activities undertaken by cadets with the view to making them better citizens.

Arms Trafficking

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his letter of 16 June to the US Defense Secretary; and what implications this has for future Government policy. [182390]

Mr. Hoon: We are working with the United States Administration to secure the necessary legislative approval to give effect to an exemption for the United Kingdom from the International Traffic in Arms Regulations as soon as possible. We remain in close contact with the Administration on this and look forward to its successful conclusion.

Hawk Aircraft

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how long he expects the current fleet of Red Arrows Hawk aircraft to remain in service; and what plans he has for their replacement. [180498]

Mr. Ingram: It is expected that the current fleet of Hawk Red Arrows will continue flying into the next decade. The management of the Red Arrows fleet beyond that time frame is a matter for periodic review.

EU Military Planning/Structures

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Government's commitment to the EU military planning cell is in terms of *(a)* civilian and uniformed personnel and *(b)* funding. [184903]

Mr. Hoon: Both the European Union cell at SHAPE and the new civil-military cell in the EU Military Staff will be funded out of the Council Secretariat budget. No decisions on the size or manning of these have yet been taken.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects the EU planning cell to stand up; and what its role will be. [184904]

Mr. Hoon: The European Union is setting up a cell at SHAPE to improve the strategic partnership between the EU and NATO and, in particular, the planning of "Berlin Plus" operations where the EU uses NATO's planning capability.

It is also establishing a civil-military cell within the EU Military Staff, which will improve coherence between the EU's civilian and military responses, develop expertise in managing the civilian-military interface, and undertake advance strategic planning for joint civil-military operations. This will also have the capacity to generate an ad hoc Operations Centre for an operation, in particular where a joint civil-military response is required, where no national headquarters is identified, and if agreed unanimously by EU member states.

The June European Council agreed that these cells should be established by the end of 2004, with the ability to set up an Operations Centre available by 1 January 2006.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the military agreements *(a)* in force and *(b)* in negotiation between EU members in respect of military structures outside NATO. [184905]

Mr. Hoon: The following table sets out the main multilateral military structures outside NATO which include European Union members. A number of these also include non-EU countries. In addition, there are many other bilateral military agreements between individual EU member states.

The United Kingdom is a party to military agreements in respect of four of these structures, as listed in the following table. Military agreements between other EU members are a matter for those member states' governments.

Structure	EU participants
EAG—European Air Group	Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, UK
European Airlift Centre	Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, UK
Sealift Co-ordination Centre (Eindhoven)	Netherlands, UK
European Amphibious Initiative (including the UK/Netherlands Amphibious Force)	France, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, UK
SHIRBRIG—Stand-by High Readiness Brigade	Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden. (Observers: Czech Republic, Hungary)
SEEBRIG—South-Eastern Europe Brigade	Greece, Italy, Slovenia
NORDCAPS—Nordic Co-ordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support	Finland, Sweden, Denmark
EUROCORPS	Germany, Belgium, Spain, France, Luxembourg
EUROFOR	France, Italy, Portugal, Spain
EUROMARFOR	France, Italy, Portugal, Spain

Lance-Corporal William Graham

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 644W, on Lance Corporal William Graham, what exceptional reasons were laid before the Director of Manning to make desirable the retention of Lance Corporal William Graham in the Army. [182733]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding the details in accordance with Exemption 12 (Privacy of an individual) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Management Groups

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the responsibilities of the *(a)* Command Field Army, *(b)* Command Regional Forces, *(c)* Defence Supply Chain HQ, *(d)* Primary Health Care, *(e)* QVS, *(f)* DYRMS, *(g)* Defence Academy, *(h)* Defence Medical Services Department and *(i)* Defence Medical Education and Training Agency management groups. [181748]

Mr. Caplin: The responsibilities of the management groupings requested are listed as follows:

(a) Exercising operational command of the field Army and training designated forces for war and other operations in order to provide military capability in the right place, at the right time in the most cost effective manner.

(b) The Commander Regional Forces maintains, and where possible, enhances the provision of the military capability and infrastructure support required to meet CinC Land's operational requirements.

(c) The Defence Supply Chain provides a range of support functions to enable the British armed forces to carry out operations. These include storing and distributing all the supplies needed by the forces, such as equipment, mail, medical supplies, fuel, clothing, food and ammunition, as well as transporting personnel and freight anywhere in the world.

(d) Primary health care comes under the responsibility of the single services except in Germany (responsibility lies with British Forces Germany Health Care) and on operations (responsibility lies with PJHQ). It covers, general practice, occupational health, public health and environmental medicine as well as rehabilitation services and, to a degree, mental health care. These services are available to all armed forces personnel, and entitled civilians ie dependants of service personnel on overseas postings and UK civilians overseas. The standard of healthcare is at least equal to primary health care available on the NHS.

(e) The role of the Queen Victoria School is to provide, in accordance with the provision of the Royal Warrant and within a stable boarding environment, education in keeping with the curriculum and standards of the Scottish education system so as to enable pupils admitted to the school to proceed to university or other higher or further education institutions, or to enter directly into the armed services, professions, commerce or industry.

(f) The Duke of York's Royal Military School's role is to provide, in accordance with the provisions of the Royal Warrant, secondary education within a stable environment for those admitted to the school so as to enable them to proceed to university or other higher education institutions, or to enter directly into the armed services, professions, commerce or industry.

(g) The Defence Academy is a national and international centre of excellence, providing military and civilian personnel with high quality training and education, primarily at the postgraduate level, and conducts research in fields related to defence. The teaching and research it provides are at all times coherent and responsive both to Defence customer needs and to developing national and international circumstances.

(h) DMSD is responsible for the delivering the required Deployable Medical Operational Capability and a health and healthcare system that maximises the number of service personnel 'fit for task'. The Defence Medical Services provide the armed forces with a comprehensive medical service in peace, war and operations other than war to standards at least equal to the national health service (NHS).

(i) DMETA delivers medical training to specified standards for personnel of the Defence Medical Services to meet the operational requirement. The agency also makes trained personnel available to front line commanders for training, operations and deployment.

Further information on individual defence agencies is available in the Library of the House.

Means-tested Benefits

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the means-tested benefits available through his Department and the agencies for which it is responsible *(a)* in May 1997 and *(b)* now. [182568]

Mr. Caplin: Under the rules of the War Pension Scheme, the Veterans Agency takes into account claimants' means when assessing the level of certain benefits and allowances paid to those affected by death or injury as a result of service in the armed forces. Specifically:

In 1997, the War Widowers pension was means tested, but this is no longer the case.

In 1997, and now, a claimant's income is one of the factors taken into consideration when determining entitlement to the following additional allowances: additional allowance for unemployability supplement, allowance for lower standard of occupation and rent allowance.

Medical Services

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Department provides a single seamless health service to British servicemen and women and their families serving in Germany; and if he will make a statement. [183258]

Mr. Caplin: The British Forces Germany (BFG) health service is responsible for the provision of health care for the Army, and the few remaining RAF personnel in Germany. It aims to provide a seamless service to its patients, which include civilian staff and families, and standards of service at least comparable to those of the national health service.

The BFG health service brings together military personnel, Guy's and St. Thomas' National Health Trust and the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA) into a co-operative military/civilian and public/private working partnership backed by open-book financial arrangements and close collaboration at every management level.

Primary care is provided by medical centres located in each of the Garrisons and run by military and civilian medical staff employed by the Defence Medical Service supported by SSAFA.

Hospital-based care is provided, through Guy's and St. Thomas' as prime contractor, at five German hospitals selected to serve the areas where British forces are based in Germany.

In the German hospitals, Guy's and St. Thomas' liaison staff provide on-site support to patients. British style menus are available as well as English language television and newspapers.

Services are continually monitored to ensure that standards are maintained and as part of this process regular patient satisfaction surveys are conducted.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what duty he has to provide medical services to Service personnel; and if he will make a statement; [183259]

(2) whether he has a duty to provide medical services for Servicemen and women and their families equivalent to the duty of the Secretary of State under the Health Act 1977; and if he will make a statement. [183257]

Mr. Caplin: The main activity of the Ministry of Defence is to deliver security for the people of the United Kingdom and the Overseas Territories by defending their security, including against terrorism, and so to act as a force for good by strengthening international peace and stability. In doing so, it has a responsibility as an employer, to take care of all its personnel. However, this responsibility is not equivalent to that of the Secretary of State for Health who, under the Health Act 1977 has a duty to:

"continue the promotion in England and Wales of a comprehensive health service."

As part of its responsibility to take care of all its personnel the Ministry of Defence, through the Defence Medical Services, provides comprehensive medical services, to standards at least equal to the NHS, to Servicemen and women in peace, war and operations other than war in order to maintain military capability. In the main, primary care is delivered by the single Services. Secondary care for Service personnel is usually provided through routine treatment within the NHS unless there are operational reasons to do otherwise. In the UK, medical services for families of Servicemen and women are usually provided within the NHS. Overseas, the Ministry of Defence is committed to providing medical services for families accompanying Service personnel which are comparable to those provided by the NHS.

Orange Parades

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost was of providing assistance to the Police Service of Northern Ireland in policing the 1 July parade organised by Ballymacarrett District Loyal Orange Lodge No. 6. [182853]

Mr. Ingram: There were no additional Army manpower costs in providing public order support to the Police Service of Northern Ireland in connection with the 1 July parade organised by the Ballymacarrett Loyal Orange Lodge District No. 6 in East Belfast. It is not possible to provide the additional equipment usage and fuel costs except at disproportionate cost.

Trident Replacement

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress has been made in assessing options for the replacement of the Trident missile system. [184480]

Mr. Hoon: Work on a range of options for maintaining a nuclear deterrent capability is in hand in accordance with the policy set out in last December's Defence White Paper. As that White paper made clear, decisions on whether to replace Trident are not needed this Parliament but are likely to be required in the next one.

PRIME MINISTER

Arms Trafficking

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Prime Minister on how many occasions he has raised British exemption from the US International Traffic in Arms Regulation with the US Administration; and when he expects the exemption to be granted. [185171]

The Prime Minister: We are working closely with the US Administration to secure the necessary legislative approval to give effect to an exemption for the United Kingdom from the International Traffic in Arms Regulations as soon as possible.

Butler Report

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister which Ministers were provided with an advance copy of the Butler Committee Report. [184825]

The Prime Minister: The Butler Review provided the Government with the final version of its report on 13 July.

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister if he will establish an inquiry into the leaks to the media of parts of the report of the Butler Committee on the review of intelligence on weapons of mass destruction prior to its publication. [185188]

The Prime Minister: The Government have no plans to establish an inquiry.

Correspondence

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Prime Minister when he will answer the letter to him of 30 June from the hon. Member for Faversham and Mid-Kent about the Iraq Oil for Food programme. [185160]

The Prime Minister: My Office received the letter on 5 July. I shall reply to the hon. Member shortly.

G8 Presidency (Priorities)

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what the Government's priorities were when the UK last held the G8 presidency; and what priorities will be set for the next presidency. [184222]

The Prime Minister: The priorities of the G7 summit held in Birmingham in 1998 were increasing employment, the environment and crime, particularly drugs and money laundering. We also sought to take steps forward on debt relief, which led to the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative.

The main priorities for the UK presidency of the G8 in 2005 will be Africa and climate change. The work of the Commission for Africa and taking forward the Kyoto Protocol will be major parts of our agenda.

We will also take forward issues from this year's G8 meeting in the United States including reform in the Middle East, counter-terrorism, non-proliferation and trade.

Iraq

Clare Short: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his statement of 14 July on the Butler report, what information caused him to decide on 15 March 2003 that it was his unequivocal view that Iraq was in further material breach of Resolution 1441; what account he took of Dr. Hans Blix's recent report on increased co-operation from the Iraqi authorities and his request for more time for inspections; and if he will make a statement. [185082]

The Prime Minister: Iraq was in further material breach under Operative Paragraph 4 of UNSCR 1441 because of

> "false statements or omissions in the declarations submitted by Iraq pursuant to this resolution and failure by Iraq to comply with, and cooperate fully in the implementation of this resolution."

As Lord Butler said in his report

> "We have been told that, in coming to this view, the Prime Minister took account both of the overall intelligence picture and of information from a wide range of other sources, including especially UNMOVIC information." (paragraph 385, HC 898)

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister whether following publication of the Butler Committee report he is able to reveal whether GCHQ provided any information on alleged attempts by Iraq to obtain uranium from Niger. [185567]

The Prime Minister: As Lord Butler made clear in his report

> "The British Government had intelligence from several different sources indicating that this visit was for the purpose of acquiring uranium" (paragraph 503 *(b)* HC 898).

Ministerial Committee on Public Health

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Prime Minister when the Ministerial Committee on Public Health (MISC27) was established. [184567]

The Prime Minister: I announced the establishment of the Ministerial Committee on Public Health (MISC27) to Parliament on Thursday 27 May 2004.

Radioactive Waste (Italy)

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister whether he discussed with President Berlusconi, during his meeting on 13 July, the future timetable for the return of radioactive waste to Italy arising from the contracted reprocessing of Italian spent nuclear fuel at Sellafield. [184826]

The Prime Minister: My discussions with Prime Minister Berlusconi focused on international and European issues. As with previous administrations, it is not the practice of this Government to make public all the details of discussions with foreign Governments.

Terrorism

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what plans he has to publish further Joint Intelligence Committee assessments to assist public understanding of the threats from terrorism and proliferation, to which he made special reference in his statement to the House on 14 July. [185187]

The Prime Minister: The Government have no current plans to publish Joint Intelligence Committee assessments. However, as the Butler report recognises in paragraph 342 (HC 898), there are likely to be demands in the future on Government to put intelligence into the public domain. The Government fully accepts the conclusions of the Butler report, including those relating to the public use of intelligence.

TREASURY

Annual Income (Taxpayers)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many taxpayers have *(a)* total annual income and *(b)* earned annual income in excess of (i) £100,000, (ii) £250,000 and (iii) £1 million. [185166]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is given in the following table:

	Number of taxpayers (thousand)	
Income range	*(a) By range of annual income*	*(b) By range of earned income*
(i) £100,000 or more	329	278
(ii) £250,000 or more	63	51
(iii) £1,000,000 or more	5	4

Note:
The estimates are based on the Survey of Personal Incomes 2001–02.

Art Prizes (Taxation)

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the amount of revenue raised from taxation of prizes awarded for art, in each of the last three years. [184446]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue does not have central records of the amount of revenue raised from taxation of prizes awarded for art. These sort of data are not shown separately on tax returns and to ask taxpayers to provide it would be an extra burden. If a prize is received by an individual in the course of a trade, vocation or profession, then the prize will normally be taxable.

Central European Fund

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the United Kingdom contributed to the Central European Fund in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 1999, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* 2004; and what the contributions made by other European member states were for those years. [184259]

Ruth Kelly: I am unaware of the Central European Fund. However, Government figures for the UK's gross contribution, abatement, public sector receipts and net contribution to the EC Budget for the years 1999, 2001 together with a forecast for 2004 can be found in Table 3 of the 2004 European Community Finances White Paper (Cm 6134). Details for 1997 can be found in Table 3 of the 2003 European Community Finances White Paper (Cm 5800).

Details, as published by the European Commission, of Member States, including the UK, gross contributions, after taking account of the UK abatement, to the EC Budget for the years 1999 and 2001 can be, found in Tables 2 and 2A of the 2004 European Community Finances White Paper (Cm 6134). Details for 1997 can be found in Tables 2 and 2A of the 2003 European Community Finances White Paper (Cm 5800). The following table provides the latest EC Budget estimates of these contributions for 2004.

	2004 € million
Belgium	3,749
Denmark	2,061
Germany	21,878
Greece	1,738
Spain	8,202
France	16,801
Ireland	1,266
Italy	13,674
Luxembourg	218
Netherlands	5,459
Austria	2,216
Portugal	1,440
Finland	1,490
Sweden	2,686
UK	12,857
Czech Republic	545
Estonia	57
Cyprus	89
Latvia	67
Lithuania	126
Hungary	560
Malta	35
Poland	1,345
Slovenia	191
Slovakia	240

Source:
Amending Budget No. 5/2004.

The figures shown for the 10 new member states represent contributions for two thirds of the year, following enlargement on 1 May 2004.

Civil Contingencies

Llew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what additional resources he plans to make available for emergency planning officers in local authorities to deal with planning for civil contingencies arising from terrorist attacks *(a)* on nuclear installations and *(b)* using dirty radiological bombs. [184391]

Mr. Boateng: As my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in his statement of 12 July, the Government will double the contribution previously allocated to the Civil Defence Grant from £20 million to £40 million from 2005–06. This will further enhance the capacity of local authorities to carry out emergency planning in response to a wide range of civil contingencies. The funding will be provided through an increase to Formula Spending Share for local authorities through the EPCS (Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services) block.

Civil Service Staff

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the *(a)* gross and *(b)* net reduction in the number of civil service posts and the number of posts which will be outsourced by 2008 in (i) the UK administration and (ii) the devolved Administrations. [184874]

Mr. Boateng *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* As announced in the Spending Review there will be a gross reduction of 84,150 posts by 2008, and after redeployment to the frontline there will be a net reduction of 70,600 posts.

Any future outsourcing changes will be made by Departments in line with their business need. The devolved Administrations will announce their spending plans for devolved areas in the autumn in the normal way.

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of reductions in staff numbers due to efficiency savings within the civil service for civil servants working in Northampton. [184841]

Mr. Boateng: There will be an overall gross reduction in posts of 84,150 by 2008 and departments will pursue these reductions in line with business needs.

It is for individual Departments to finalise specific plans.

Tourism (Clacton-on-Sea)

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Clacton-on-Sea on the latest date for which figures are available. [184993]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Ivan Henderson, dated 19 July 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Clacton-on-Sea. (184993)

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of employee jobs in tourism related industries in Clacton-on-Sea was 1,400. This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels

restaurants

bars

activities of travel agencies

library, archives and museums etc.

sporting activities

other recreational activities.

Departmental Electricity Use

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies of the Department came from renewable sources in each year since 1997. [181844]

Ruth Kelly: The following information and tables provide the information required in the form in which the Chancellors Departments and Agencies have been able to compile it without having to incur disproportionate costs. The proportion of electricity used by buildings in the Chancellors' Department and its agencies that came from renewable sources in each year since 1997 is given as follows:

Office for National Statistics

	Percentage
1997–01	0
2001 (To date)	10

Royal Mint

None of the electricity used by Royal Mint came from renewable sources.

HM Customs and Excise Inland Revenue and the Valuation Office Agency

Information prior to 2001–02 could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

	Percentage
2001–02	13
2002–03	10
2003–04	10

Debt Management Office and National Savings and Investments

Information on the sustainability of electricity is not held by DMO and NS&I for any years.

Government Actuary's Department

Data is not available prior to July 2003. Since then none of the electricity used by GAD came from renewable sources.

Office of Government Commerce

None of the electricity used by OGC came from renewable sources. OGC Buying Solutions (set up in 2001) used the following:

	Percentage
2001–02	0
2002–03	100
2003–04	[1]100

[1] 100 per cent. six months 60 per cent. six months: variation due to relocation

HM Treasury

The percentage from renewable sources from July 2003 for HM Treasury to date is 57 per cent. Although some supplies before this date had been from renewable sources, it has not been possible to quantify them.

Departmental Publications (Storage)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183874]

Ruth Kelly: The majority of requests for publications are met by the Treasury's website, www.hm-treasury.gov.uk.

Approximately 15 copies of each recent Treasury publication are held centrally to fulfil requests from members of the public without internet access, with larger quantities held for documents that are likely to attract considerable interest. Materials to help UK businesses deal with the euro as a foreign currency are held by an outside distributor in Manchester.

Treasury teams also hold some stocks of publications for their own use.

EU Funding

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the construction projects in each region of the UK which have received whole or partial funding from the EU in each of the last five years, broken down by local authority area; and what the value of the EU funding was *(a)* per project and *(b)* as a percentage of the total cost. [184520]

Mr. Boateng: Information on UK receipts from the EC budget can be found in Table 3.3 of the 2004 European Community Finances White Paper (Cmd 6134). Detailed information on individual projects is not held centrally, and the question could only be answered at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the total value of funding received by each region of the UK from the European Union in each of the last five years, broken down by type of funding; and what the value of matching UK funding is in each case. [184521]

Mr. Boateng: The UK is eligible for EU spending through Structural Funds, which is managed by DTI, the Common Agricultural Policy, which is managed by DEFRA, and internal policies, which are managed by DTI, DfES, DWP, DCMS, the Department of Health, the Department for Transport, and the Home Office. Information on UK receipts from the EC budget can be found in Table 3.3 of the 2004 European Community Finances White Paper (Cmd 6134).

Detailed information on individual projects is not held centrally, and so the actual funding received in each year by region, broken down by type of funding, and the value of matching UK funding, could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Euro (Pension Liabilities)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the implications of British membership of the Euro for the UK's liability to share in the unfunded pension liabilities of other Eurozone countries; and if he will make a statement. [185068]

Ruth Kelly: Article 103 of the EC Treaty explicitly rules out adoption of liabilities of one member state by others or by the EU as a whole. EMU membership would not change this.

KF Concept

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with the Financial Services Authority on its investigations into the KF concept. [183216]

Ruth Kelly: I understand that there have been no discussions between the Treasury and the Financial Services Authority concerning its investigations into the KF Concept and the activities of Mr. Kevin Foster and his associates. The FSA has issued public statements on its website www.fsa.gov.uk about the progress of its investigation and it would be inappropriate to comment further. Anyone with relevant information about or who has suffered detriment because of the KF Concept should contact the FSA.

MRSA (Frimley Park Hospital)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have died in the past three years at Frimley Park Hospital where the cause of death has been wholly or partly attributable to MRSA; and if he will make a statement. [184668]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Andrew Mackinlay, dated 19 July 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many people have died at Frimley Park Hospital where the cause of death has been wholly or partly attributable to MRSA. (184668)

The total number of deaths in Frimley Park Hospital where the cause of death was wholly or partly attributable to MRSA[1] in the years 2000 to 2002, the latest year for which figures are available, was seven.

[1] Identified using the methodology described in Griffiths C, Lamagni TL, Crowcroft NS, Duckworth G and Rooney C (2004) Trends in MRSA in England and Wales: analysis of morbidity and mortality data for 1993–2002. Health Statistics Quarterly 21, 15–22.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Llew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new employees of non-departmental public bodies will be created as a result of the announcements made in the Comprehensive Spending Review. [184383]

Mr. Boateng: All areas of the public service are committed to achieving efficiency gains of 2.5 per cent. per year over the Spending Review period. How these savings are delivered within non-departmental bodies (NDPBs) and the resulting changes to workforce number will be decided by the Department and their respective NDPBs.

Postal Services (Dangerous Goods)

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on his assessment of the possible security threats posed by the importation of firearms, drugs and other dangerous goods into the UK by post. [183498]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise are responsible for the detection of prohibited and restricted goods into the United Kingdom. With other agencies, they keep possible security threats under constant review and align their deployment of resources according to the level of assessed risk.

Public Sector Employees

Mr. Collins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what roles education employees counted in the Office for National Statistics survey of public sector employees published in May fulfilled, broken down by *(a)* job title and *(b)* salary. [183155]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Tim Collins, dated 19 July 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about public sector employees. (183155)

The estimates of public sector employees in the UK published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) are based on survey sources that do not capture information on job title or salary, and so the ONS is unable to provide the data requested. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) publishes information on the school workforce in England, and provisional data for January 2004 were published in a DfES statistical First Release on 29 April 2004. The ONS and DfES data sets are not directly comparable due to differences in geographical coverage,

and the fact that ONS estimates are headcounts while DfES estimates are calculated in terms of full-time equivalents. Additionally, DfES publishes information on teachers' pay, for both England and Wales, in a document "School Workforce in England". Information on teachers' pay is given in tables 32 to 38 in the most recent edition, which relates to 2003. It can be accessed via the DfES website at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000443/index.shtml.

Information on the school workforces in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is published by the relevant devolved administration.

Public Service Agreements

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many of the public service agreements negotiated for the current spending review period are on course for all targets contained in them to be met in their original form; how many have seen targets set in them amended since the original agreement; and in the case of how many he does not expect all targets originally set within them to be achieved during the spending review period. [184200]

Mr. Boateng: Departments' performance against the PSA targets agreed in the 2002 Spending Review is reported in Departmental Reports, Autumn Performance Reports and on the PSA performance website. Departments will continue to report their performance against these targets until the targets have reached their outturn dates.

The full details of how PSA targets have evolved between the 2002 and 2004 Spending Reviews will be published on the HM Treasury website on 31 July 2004.

State Pension/Average Weekly Earnings

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the *(a)* state pension for a single person and *(b)* average weekly earnings were in each year from 1974 to 2003. [184495]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Alan Hurst, dated 19 July 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how much the *(a)* state pension for a single person and *(b)* the average weekly wage earnings were in each year from 1974 to 2003. (184495)

Average earnings are estimated from the New Earnings Survey (NES) and are provided for full-time employees on adult rates of pay whose pay was unaffected by absence during the pay period, by their place of work. This is the standard definition used for NES tables. The NES does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work.

The attached table shows the average gross weekly wage and basic pension for a single person from 1974 to 2003.

The NES, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in Great Britain. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes, but because of its sampling frame, it has difficulty capturing data on people with very low pay. It is therefore likely to under-represent relatively low paid staff earning below the tax threshold.

Average gross weekly earnings, and the basic state pension for a single person, Great Britain, 1974 to 2003

£

	Average gross weekly earnings	Basic state pension
1974	41.7	10.0
1975	54.0	[1]11.6
		[2]13.3
1976	64.2	15.3
1977	70.2	17.5
1978	79.1	19.5
1979	89.6	23.3
1980	110.2	27.2
1981	124.9	29.6
1982	136.5	32.9
1983	147.4	34.1
1984	159.3	35.8
1985	171.0	38.3
1986	184.7	38.7
1987	198.9	39.5
1988	218.4	41.2
1989	239.7	43.6
1990	263.1	46.9
1991	284.7	52.0
1992	304.8	54.2
1993	317.3	56.1
1994	325.7	57.6
1995	337.6	58.9
1996	351.6	61.2
1997	367.6	62.5
1998	385.8	64.7
1999	401.5	66.8
2000	419.7	67.5
2001	444.2	72.5
2002	464.7	75.5
2003	475.8	77.5

Notes:

1. Average gross weekly earnings are for adult full-time employees whose pay for the survey period was unaffected by absence. For the years 1974 to 1982 the estimates shown are for men aged 21 and over, and women aged 18 and over.
2. The basic state pension was increased in the following months
1974—July
1975—[1] April and [2] November
1976—1985 November
1986—July
1987—2003 April.

Source:
ONS New Earnings Survey.

STEPS Agreement

Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 835W, on the STEPS agreement, in respect of what costs were the payments in excess of the annual charge of £170 million made to Mapeley STEPS Ltd. in each year to April *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004. [184334]

Dawn Primarolo: The £170 million, mentioned within the NAO report, relates to Facility price only and is an estimated annual charge only. The difference in the actual Facility Price payments and the total payments to Mapeley STEPS Contractor are for services and pass through costs provided for in the contract such as major works, minor works and utilities.

The data for years to April 2002 and 2003 have been routinely archived and therefore cannot be obtained without disproportionate cost. However, for the year to April 2004 the data are available for the Inland

Revenue. The amounts that account for contract expenditure in addition to the Facility Prices are as follows:

2003–04

	Amount (£000)
Major works	25,378
Utilities	12,728
Minor works and services	12,536
VAT on rent	10,163
New services for existing facilities	2,244
Total	63,049

Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 15 June, *Official Report*, column 835W, on the STEPS agreement, what his present estimate is of the total payments over the 20 years' contract that will be paid to Mapeley STEPS Ltd. for the Chancellor's departments. [184339]

Dawn Primarolo: In their report on the STEPS deal, the NAO estimated that the Departments would pay Mapeley STEPS Contractor Ltd. some £1,500 million over the 20 years of the contract. This relates to the major contract price element (the facility price) for serviced accommodation. The NAO noted that this cost reflected the Departments anticipated requirements which may vary over time.

Taking this uncertainty into account, the figure contained in the NAOs report remains a reasonable estimate of the likely total Facility Price payments due to Mapeley over 20 years.

In addition to this the contract provides a flexible framework in which we are able to transact with Mapeley to provide a range of services including, utilities, business rates, and major and minor building works. Under the contract the cost of these additional services are charged on to the departments separately and will vary according to demand.

Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 835W, on the STEPS agreement, whether the payments made to Mapeley STEPS Ltd. in each year to April *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004 were provided for in the contract which commenced on 2 April 2001. [184340]

Dawn Primarolo: The Departments made payments that were provided for in the contract and due to Mapeley STEPS Contractor Ltd. in each of the years 2002, 2003 and 2004. By its nature any serviced accommodation contract provides a flexible framework for provision of a variety of services. In the case of the STEPS contract the Departments are able to transact with Mapeley to call off services including the provision of Major and Minor change works and the payment of Utilities. These are in addition to the fixed facility payment element due under the contract for serviced accommodation.

Tax Credits

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the cost in this financial year of disregarding maintenance payments for the purposes of calculating working tax credit and child tax credit. [180985]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 28 June 2004]:* Maintenance payments are disregarded from income for the purposes of calculating tax credit awards. The cost of the child and working tax credit is given in tabled C8 and C11 of the Financial Statement and Budget Report 2004 (HC 301).

Tax Credits (Civil Partnerships Bill)

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what savings on tax credits he anticipates making once the Civil Partnership Bill is introduced for, and the living together test is extended to, same-sex couples. [184729]

Dawn Primarolo: The Civil Partnerships Bill is expected to have a negligible effect on the cost of tax credits.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183906]

Ruth Kelly: The figures are presented in the following table. All travel is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Ministerial Code.

£000

Departments/Agencies	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
HM Treasury[1]	1,069	1,455	1,619	1,718	1,340	1,839	1,944
Debt Management Office[1, 2]	—	9	26	9	17	25	36
Office of Government Commerce[3]	—	—	—	1,110	1,106	1,047	1,171
OGCBuying. Solutions[4]	—	—	—	—	413	494	644
Valuation Office Agency[1]	3,700	3,320	3,580	3,530	3,300	3,550	3,750
HM Customs and Excise[5]	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	4,005	5,002	6,200
Inland Revenue[1]	14,509	17,506	26,489	28,077	31,941	35,230	37,335
Royal Mint[1]	456	380	455	503	490	466	536
National Savings and Investments	805	755	191	259	295	311	273
Office of National Statistics	1,671	1,784	2,425	2,661	2,550	2,846	3,314
Government Actuary's Department	80	71	95	89	88	97	92

[1] Figures include subsistence, as travel could only be disaggregated at disproportionate cost.
[2] The DMO did not exist as a separate body prior to 1998–99.
[3] OGC have provided figures from their date of inception—2000.
[4] OGCBuying.Solutions have provided figures from their date of inception—2001.
[5] Figures between 1997–2000 show approximate spend on Rail, Air and Ferry prior to external Contract. Other figures reflect spend on Contract, as off-Contract spend or business mileage could be disaggregated only at disproportionate cost.

Unemployment Rates (Havering)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were unemployed in Havering in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 1999, *(c)* 2001 and *(d)* 2003. [184253]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Andrew Rosindell, dated 19 July 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment in Havering. I am replying in his absence. (184253)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

The attached Table 1 gives the LFS estimates of the number of people unemployed in the Havering Local Authority area in the twelve months ending in February of the years 1997, 1999,2001 and 2003.

As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas. The attached Table 2 gives the annual average number of JSA claimants who are resident in the Havering Local Authority area for the years 1997, 1999, 2001 and 2003.

Table 1: Number of unemployed people, Havering local authority, years as shown

Year[1]	*Thousand*
1997	7
1999[2]	5
2001	2
2003	3

[1] 12-month period ending in February of the year shown.
[2] Figures not yet adjusted to take account of 2001 Census data.
Sources:
1. ONS Labour Force Survey.
2. Local Area Datasets.

Table 2: Annual average number of jobseekers' allowance (JSA) claimants, Havering local authority, years as shown

	Number
1997	4,286
1999	3,329
2001	2,315
2003	2,518

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Advertising

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money was spent on advertising and promotional literature for her Department's initiatives, broken down by year since 1997. [183806]

Mr. Caborn: The Department has not spent any money on promotional advertising in this period. The spend on departmental publications and events since 1997 broken down by year is as follows:

	Amount (£)
1997–98	252,766
1998–99	345,800
1999–2000	522,399
2000–01	532,609
2001–02	324,768
2002–03	392,963
2003–04	[1]537,743

[1] Provisional pending final annual accounts

Ancient Monument Damage

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate the Department has made of the number of scheduled ancient monuments that have been damaged by *(a)* illicit metal-detecting and *(b)* looting in each of the last five years. [184647]

Estelle Morris: The DCMS does not keep statistics of this nature centrally. However, English Heritage is in the process of designing a system that will compile and record this type of information.

Archaeological Thefts

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many prosecutions there have been for theft of artefacts from archaeological sites in each of the last five years. [184646]

Estelle Morris: This information is not currently available. English Heritage, however, is in the process of designing a data system that will compile and record these statistics centrally.

Departmental Administration Costs

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost was of printing her Department's headed notepaper in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available. [184373]

Mr. Caborn: A record of expenditure at this level of detail within the overall stationery budget for 1997–98 is no longer available. The expenditure on headed notepaper in 2003–04, the last full year for which information is available, was £3,500.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many copies of her Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183877]

Mr. Caborn: The costs relating to DCMS annual reports since 1997 are set out in the table. Sales revenues are a matter for TSO and do not fall to the Department.

£

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Design, typesetting and pdfs etc.	n/a	38,664	46,142	40,212	45,144	56,105	45,524	40,813
Print (buy back copies from TSO)	n/a	16,800	25,000	18,310	24,648	24,774	[1]18,140	[1]16,187

£

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Number of copies sold	n/a	687	592	531	576	483	700	500
Number of copies printed	n/a	1,600	1,600	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,500	1,500
Total	—	55,464	71,142	59,170	70,325	[2]81,449	63,744	57,000

[1] DCMS was responsible for the print for the 2003 and 2004 annual reports as this was found to be a more cost effective option than using TSO.
[2] The costs for the 2002 annual report included the development of a new design template which the Department has followed for three years.

Departmental Publications (Storage)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183865]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS does not hold any publications in storage. Departmental policy is to print sufficient copies for the identified audience for each publication in order to be as cost effective as possible. Wherever possible we also refer people to the DCMS website where all publications are available free.

The retention and storage of any DCMS publications produced by TSO are a matter for the publisher.

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many cases against her Department, the agencies for which it is responsible and its predecessor organisations have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181470]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Royal Parks Agency have had a total of eight claims issued against them since 1997. Three of these claims were withdrawn before the case was heard by an employment tribunal. There were no costs awarded against (i) respondents or (ii) applicants. Details of the nature of each claim are set out in the table. The total legal costs incurred by the Department and agency of contesting the claims were £166,714.13. Claims brought by one applicant were settled, but the amount of the settlement has been withheld under Exemption 4 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

	Nature of claim
1997	Unfair dismissal
1997	Race discrimination
2000	Sex discrimination
2000	Race discrimination
2001	Victimisation (contrary to the Race Relations Act)
2001	Sex discrimination/victimisation
2002	Sex discrimination
2002	Victimisation (contrary to the Sex Discrimination Act)

Government Art Collection

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will publish the latest valuation of the Government's art collection. [184375]

Estelle Morris: It is not possible to give an accurate estimate of the value of the Government art collection, which has no current market valuation. The current monetary value of a work of art can be accurately assessed only at the time of purchase or sale or by professional valuation. In the former case, the collection is not actively traded; in the latter, it would not be justifiable expenditure of public funds to have the whole collection valued professionally.

Healthy Eating in Schools

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list Lottery-funded projects which promote healthy eating in schools. [184447]

Estelle Morris: National Lottery funding has been made available through The School Fruit Pilot Programme to support the promotion of healthy eating in schools. This £42 million New Opportunities Fund programme has been rolled out to five regions. The aim of the programme is to help improve the diet of children and to reduce their risk of heart disease and cancer later in life.

Heritage Bodies

Ann Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has had with heritage organisations on their educational programmes and initiatives. [183435]

Estelle Morris: DCMS has been working on a range of different projects with various Heritage organisations in order to embed core policies at the heart of their activity to increase access and engagement, especially to children and young people, and to those who feel excluded from enjoying the historic environment.

English Heritage's (EH's) educational programmes and initiatives are included within its Funding Agreement with DCMS, which includes agreement to:

- implement a new Education, Events and Outreach Strategy
- increase the number of educational visits to EH sites from 478.5k to 508k per annum
- increase the resources available to schools and to independent learners
- assess the extent of informal learning currently achieved and inform future activity
- initiate with others the national coordination of traditional building skills training

EH has set up a new outreach team to engage audiences who have traditionally felt excluded from visiting the historic environment. This will include working with the Civic Trust to develop Heritage Open Days.

In August 2003 DCMS/DfES set up a Joint Advisory Committee on Built Environment Education (JACBEE) to improve the profile and use of the built environment as a learning resource for all. JACBEE will be making its recommendations to Ministers later this summer.

The Department has also supported the Attingham Trust's project to assess the provision of learning opportunities in the historic environment sector. The report titled Opening Doors: Learning in the Historic Environment was published in June and surveys education and interpretation in historic buildings and sites today in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

In partnership with DfES we have also been developing a new Museums and Galleries Strategy to unlock the full potential of museums and galleries to support education and learning. This process has involved discussion and consultation with the museums and galleries sector on the content and priorities for the strategy. The strategy is due to be published later this year.

On 25 March 2004 we hosted a World Heritage Site Education Conference at Kew Gardens to provide a forum for site managers and education officers at UK World Heritage Sites to share best practice and experiences. We are currently developing an action plan for an overall World Heritage Site Education programme.

Licence Holders Database

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to introduce a national electronic database for individual pub licence holders. [184735]

Mr. Caborn: The Licensing Act 2003 requires each licensing authority to keep a register containing, among other things, a record of each personal licence, club premises certificate and premises licence issued by it and each temporary event notice received by it. The Act allows the Secretary of State to arrange for these duties conferred on licensing authorities to be discharged by means of one or more central registers. Officials are currently working with local authorities and their representatives to examine ways in which a central register might be developed.

Metal-detecting

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate her Department has made of the extent of illicit metal-detecting; and if she will make a statement. [185186]

Estelle Morris: The DCMS does not keep statistics like this centrally. However, through the excellent work of both the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the Treasure Valuation Committee, metal detectorists and archaeologists are working more closely together than ever before.

Ministerial Travel

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in the Department in the latest year for which figures are available. [184532]

Mr. Caborn: Departmental expenditure on air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain for the financial year 2003–04 was *(a)* £683 for Ministers and *(b)* £3,269 for officials.

Museums/Heritage Bodies Review

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to undertake a review of heritage and museum organisations reporting to her Department; and if she will make a statement. [183282]

Estelle Morris: We have no current plans to review museum organisations, but we are planning to consult the museum sector later this year on a range of museum policy issues.

On heritage organisations, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 897–98W, by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

National Lottery

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of total National Lottery income has been distributed to good causes in each year of the Lottery's existence. [184228]

Estelle Morris: The information requested is as follows.

	Total good cause income (£000)	*Total annual good drawdown (£000)*	*Drawdown as a percentage of good cause income*
1994–95	298,580	6,238	2.09
1995–96	1,535,966	165,212	10.76
1996–97	1,587,759	527,387	33.22
1997–98	1,952,219	1,087,067	55.68
1998–99	1,918,906	1,830,548	95.40
1999–2000	1,766,394	1,908,458	108.04
2000–01	1,772,839	1,855,091	104.64
2001–02	1,842,233	1,709,559	92.80
2002–03	1,591,781	1,892,798	118.91
2003–04[1]	1,390,236	1,910,472	137.42
2004–05[1,2]	195,327	309,263	158.33

[1] These figures have not been subject to final audit.
[2] YTD

The figure for total income includes income from the Lottery games and also investment returns on balances held.

Policies (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185109]

Estelle Morris: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Regional Cultural Consortiums

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the *(a)* running costs and *(b)* total expenditure of each regional cultural consortium has been in each year since its creation. [184981]

Mr. Caborn: The total annual expenditure from DCMS funds of each regional cultural consortium since their creation is given in the table. These advisory non-departmental public bodies do not at present directly employ any staff and the Department does not currently distinguish between running costs and other expenditure. Most consortium expenditure is allocated on research and projects designed to enhance cultural co-operation and services in the regions. Consortiums may also receive some support from other regional cultural partners.

Regional cultural consortiums annual expenditure, from DCMS funds

£

Regional cultural consortium	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*[2]
Eastern	388	26,358	31,621	110,150	180,641
East Midlands	857	34,366	15,927	108,880	141,267
North East	1,355	41,855	32,415	92,952	197,326
North West	230	21,995	32,890	93,686	207,915
South East	968	20,229	36,929	30,242	204,862
South West	4,823	33,609	22,043	152,725	205,988
West Midlands	1,613	31,089	6,097	120,100	223,217
Yorkshire	829	29,800	17,326	131,450	208,324

[1] The regional cultural consortiums were established in October 1999
[2] latest available figures with some amounts still to accrue

Subtitling

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans her Department has to increase the number of television channels which are regulated for subtitling. [184465]

Estelle Morris: None. Section 303 of the Communications Act 2003 establishes a duty on Ofcom to draw up a code relating to the provision for deaf and visually impaired people. Section 303 applies to all digital terrestrial, digital satellite and digital cable channels except the BBC, which is instead brought within the scope of the code by way of the BBC Agreement. Exclusions from the application of the code are a matter for Ofcom, taking into account in particular certain matters specified in the Act designed to balance the costs and difficulty of provision with the extent of the benefit to those with sensory impairments. Ofcom have consulted on their code, including proposed exemptions, and I understand that they propose to announce their conclusions shortly.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the yearly interim targets are for subtitling for the coming years that have been set by the Office of Communications. [184466]

Estelle Morris: The matter raised is the responsibility of Ofcom, as independent regulator. Accordingly, DCMS officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Tourism

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much revenue she estimates tourism has generated for *(a)* Somerset and *(b)* the South West region in the last five years for which figures are available. [184649]

Mr. Caborn: The information is as follows.

(a) The available figures for tourism expenditure in Somerset are shown in the table. Figures for tourism day trips are only available at regional level.

Tourism expenditure in Somerset by year[1]

£ million

Type of tourism	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Overnight stays by overseas residents	113	125	108	113	87
Overnight stays by domestic residents	[2]n/a	293	416	357	nya
Tourism day trips by domestic residents	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a = not available
nya = not yet available
[1] Sample sizes at this level of detail will be small which means that the estimates will be subject to a high margin of error. Particular caution should therefore be exercised when comparing any two of the estimates.
[2] Figures for overnight stays by domestic tourists are taken from the UK Tourism Survey. Comparable figures at regional level prior to 2000 are not available due to a major change in survey methodology.
Sources:
International Passenger Survey
UK Tourism Survey.

(b) The available figures for tourism expenditure in the South West region are shown in the second table.

Tourism expenditure in the South West region by year[1]

£ million

Type of tourism	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Overnight stays by overseas residents	694	734	634	741	663
Overnight stays by domestic residents	[2]n/a	3,122	3,291	3,901	nya
Tourism day trips by domestic residents	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,100	n/a
Total	n/a	n/a	n/a	6,742	n/a

n/a = not available
nya = not yet available
[1] Sample sizes at this level of detail will be small which means that the estimates will be subject to a high margin of error. Particular caution should therefore be exercised when comparing any two of the estimates.
[2] Figures for overnight stays by domestic tourists are taken from the UK Tourism Survey. Comparable figures at regional level prior to 2000 are not available due to a major change in survey methodology.
Sources:
International Passenger Survey
UK Tourism Survey
GB Leisure Day Visits Survey.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Fireworks Act

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made introducing the provisions contained in the Fireworks Act 2003; and what the time scale is for introduction of the outstanding provisions. [184793]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Following the close of the consultation on 2 July 2004, Regulations were laid before Parliament on 16 July 2004 and introduce, with some minor amendments, the Regulations that were originally proposed in the consultation document.

The Regulations will come into force on 7 August 2004—with the exception of regulation 9 (licensing of suppliers) and regulation 11 (importation of fireworks). These latter two measures will come into force on 1 January 2005 to allow time for enforcement bodies to set up an effective system of administration and enforcement.

Nuclear Power

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the reasons for the difficulties encountered by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security in security clearing United States nationals brought over by British Nuclear Fuels; and what steps have been taken to ameliorate the problem. [184404]

Mr. Timms: There is no central agency in the United States to which the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS) can turn to establish if an individual has security clearance. British Nuclear Fuels are aware that the devolved administrative arrangements in the US can make the verification process difficult and time-consuming.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183848]

Ms Hewitt: The information required is not held in the format requested and could be answered only at disproportionate cost.

Retread Tyre Industry

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on recent discussions her Department has had with the retread tyre industry. [184857]

Mr. Timms: Officials regularly meet representatives of the retread tyre industry at which a broad range of issues are discussed, both specific to that industry and in respect of used tyre disposal and recovery more generally.

Earlier this year, a study commissioned and funded by DTI, and taken forward in partnership with the Retread Manufacturers Association, was completed. This examined market barriers for key stakeholders in retread tyre markets, and is intended to provide a tool that retreaders can draw on to help promote their product. I will arrange for a copy to be sent to the hon. Member and for a copy to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Small Business

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent steps her Department has taken to help people start their own business. [184518]

Nigel Griffiths: The Government Action Plan for Small Business published in January 2004 sets out a series of actions government is taking to help people start their own businesses. This builds upon the provision from the Business Link network of high quality information advice and support. The Business Link Network assisted 170,000 people last year (in England) to start businesses. New actions being taken include:

A programme of Enterprise Show activities: The objective is to encourage higher levels of entrepreneurship particularly among under-represented groups and people from disadvantaged areas. These activities taking place across England are being co-ordinated by the Regional Development Agencies.

The establishment of the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship. This has been established to raise the profile of entrepreneurship and starting a business as a viable career option for graduates. The objective is to increase the number of graduates who consider starting their own businesses.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183898]

Ms Hewitt: The costs of travel and travel related expenditure for civil servants in the Department of Trade and Industry and its Agencies were as follows:

Financial Year	*Core Department (£000s)*	*Agencies (£000s)*
1998–99	10,498	3,588
1999–00	10,201	3,926
2000–01	11,466	3,762
2001–02	10,526	4,305
2002–03	11,815	4,806
2003–04 (provisional)	12,135	4,884

All travel complied with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code. Data for 1997–98 are archived and so are only available at disproportionate cost.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Afghan Government on stopping violence against women registering to vote in their country's elections; and what military assistance the UK is providing to help prevent violence. [184053]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It is important to the UK and the rest of the international community to support the Afghan Government's efforts to provide security so both men and women can freely exercise their vote. To date over six million people have registered to vote, out of some nine million who are eligible. Around 38 per cent. of those registered are women. The provision of adequate security to enable women to exercise their political, social and economic rights is an important component of the FCO-DFID Gender Strategy for Afghanistan, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is assisting the voter registration process and will provide enhanced support to the Afghan authorities in providing security during the election period. The UK provides around 320 personnel to ISAF in Kabul. The two UK-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams and associated Forward Support Base in northern Afghanistan transferred to ISAF authority on 1 July 2004. This will bring a further 260 UK troops into ISAF. UK troops serving with ISAF are also involved in training the new Afghan National Army, units of which will be used to provide election security.

Brazil

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans the Government have to host events with the aim of promoting bilateral relations with Brazil. [184180]

Mr. Rammell: In the course of our frequent exchanges with Brazil, we become involved in a range of events, both in the UK and in Brazil, which promote the bilateral relationship. A recent such event was the joint visit to London on 17 and 18 March of the Brazilian Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Finance. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer met their Brazilian counterparts on this occasion for talks, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry represented the Government at a dinner for the visitors offered by the Brazilian Chamber of Commerce. We fully expect beneficial events such as these to continue regularly and in many different forms.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans there are for senior members of *(a)* the Government and *(b)* the Royal family to visit Brazil in the near future. [184181]

Mr. Rammell: Foreign engagements for my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and other Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers are kept under constant review. It is not our practice to announce such visits until they are firm. Because of the unpredictable nature of world events, final decisions on overseas visits are often not possible until very shortly before the day of travel and occasionally not until they are under way.

There are currently no plans for a senior member of the Royal family to visit Brazil.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the Government have had with the Brazilian Government about ways to preserve the remaining parts of the Amazon rainforest. [184182]

Mr. Rammell: We follow closely the issue of environmental protection in Brazil, and discuss it regularly with the Brazilian Government. I met the Brazilian Environment Minister in December 2002 during my first visit to Brazil. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office also supports a number of practical projects in Brazil totalling over £350,000 aimed specifically at preserving the Amazon rainforest and which enjoy the full support of the Brazilian Government.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what precautions the Government take to reduce illegal imports from Brazil into the UK. [184184]

Mr. Rammell: We work closely with the Brazilian Government to combat all forms of illegal trafficking. As part of this effort, we have two Drug Liaison Officers based permanently in Brazil and have also provided equipment and training for Brazilian law enforcement from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Drugs and Crime Fund.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what level of military co-operation there is between the UK and Brazil. [184186]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

We engage in a series of armed forces visits, exchanges, joint training and defence staff talks within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation on Defence Matters, signed by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence in September 2000, and the Joint Action Plan, signed in 1997 by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and the President of Brazil.

Chagos Islands

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what consultation took place prior to the announcement of the two Orders in Council on 10 June 2004, announced in the written statement of 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 32–4WS, with *(a)* Chagossians resident in the United Kingdom and *(b)* Chagossians resident in Mauritius; and what response he has had from Chagossians following the Orders in Council being made. [184387]

Mr. Rammell: Before the British Indian Ocean Territory (Constitution) Order 2004 and the British Indian Ocean Territory (Immigration) Order 2004 were submitted to Her Majesty the Queen in Council, I and my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave very careful consideration to all relevant interests and concerns. There was no prior consultation with Chagossians resident in the United Kingdom or Mauritius.

A petition by a number of Chagossians in the United Kingdom, raising various points including their wish to resettle in the Chagos islands, was handed in to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 6 July 2004, and a petition by Chagossians resident in Mauritius was handed in to the British High Commission in Port Louis on 13 July 2004.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what rights Ilois islanders have to visit Diego Garcia to care for the graves of their ancestors; and what financial support is provided to help their passage from Mauritius for such visits. [184382]

Mr. Rammell: Following the restoration of full immigration control over the whole of the British Indian Ocean Territory, the Chagossians would need a permit in order to visit any part of the Territory. We have made clear that we remain prepared, as we always have been, to assist and finance a visit by a party of Chagossians to the outer islands of the Territory to enable them to visit the graves there of their parents and grandparents. We have further made clear that if there is a request that the itinerary of any such visit should also include the graves on Diego Garcia, we are prepared to make representations to the US authorities about that.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether there is a prison or controlled area for holding detainees on Diego Garcia. [184390]

Mr. Rammell: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave to the right hon. and learned Member for North-East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell) on 21 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1221W.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what requirement has been placed upon the United States military as a result of the leasing agreement for Diego Garcia, to ensure the land and aquatic environment of Diego Garcia and other Chagos islands are not damaged by the military activities of the United States; what arrangements are in place to remove military and commercial wastes from the islands; and what consultation he has had with the United States Administration over the adequacy of emergency plans to clean up pollution. [184394]

Mr. Rammell: There is no leasing agreement in respect of Diego Garcia but, under the relevant treaties concluded with the US Government, the whole of the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) is set aside for the defence purposes of the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and the US Government is entitled to establish and maintain a defence facility on Diego Garcia. The BIOT Government and the US authorities collaborate on all aspects of the conservation and protection of the natural environment of Diego Garcia and, where appropriate, of the outer islands of the Territory. In this context, the US authorities on Diego Garcia have established a Natural Resources Management Plan and they expend considerable resources on environmental conservation. The UK Government attaches considerable importance to the conservation of the natural environment of the Chagos islands and the BIOT Government have ensured that the necessary legislation for this purpose is in place and is enforced, and that relevant international conventions are observed.

Chechnya

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on the situation in Chechnya. [184243]

Mr. Rammell: We continue to be concerned by the situation in Chechnya. The assassination of Chechen President Kadyrov in May, and the 21 June raids into neighbouring Ingushetia underline the fragility of the situation in the Russian North Caucasus.

We recognise the genuine security problems Russia faces in Chechnya and the North Caucasus. We support Russia's territorial integrity. Separatist forces carry out many human rights abuses in Chechnya. We have been clear in our condemnation of the appalling terrorist attacks across Russia, which have killed many innocent victims.

However, these problems can only be resolved through a political rather than military solution. Continuing human rights abuses in Chechnya by federal and local forces can only undermine attempts to advance a genuine political process and reconciliation. Our policy is to regularly raise our concerns over Chechnya with the Russian authorities. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary did so recently with Foreign Minister Lavrov, during his visit to Moscow on

6–7 July. I raised similar concerns during my visit to Russia on 6–7 April. In addition, we raise these concerns multilaterally through the EU, OSCE, Council of Europe and UN. We also give significant funding to international organisations and NGOs that provide humanitarian aid in the region.

The new Chechen presidential elections planned for August will be a fresh opportunity to build up the political process and aid efforts to bring stability to the Republic. We therefore hope the election will be genuinely open and inclusive, a hope we have expressed repeatedly to the Russians.

China

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he has taken to improve the UK's relationship with China. [184240]

Mr. Rammell: We currently enjoy good relations with China.

A Task Force was set up in September 2003 under my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's leadership to make firm recommendations for action to increase practical co-operation. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister met Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in London in May. They issued a joint statement afterwards setting out plans for developing co-operation between the two countries on areas including trade, education, science and technology and the environment. The joint statement also included a commitment to annual summits between the two countries.

The strength of our relationship allows us to raise sensitive issues of concern, such as human rights, with the Chinese authorities.

I plan to visit Beijing later this month.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made to the Chinese Government on the police treatment of Christians in custody. [184319]

Mr. Rammell: We are very concerned about religious freedom in China. We made clear at the last round of the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in May that the prohibition of some religious/spiritual groups, and the legal restrictions placed upon members of others, are tantamount to a denial of their members' freedom of religious belief.

We also raised our concerns about torture by the Police and prison authorities at the same dialogue round.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister raised human rights issues with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao during his visit to the UK in May and I raised human rights issues with the Vice-Minister of the International Department of the Chinese Communist Party, Zhang Zhijun during his visit to the UK in March. We will continue to raise human rights issues with the Chinese Government at every appropriate opportunity.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government has made to the Chinese Government on *(a)* the detention of house church leader Xu Shaungfu and *(b)* the recent beating to death by Chinese police of two Christians, Gu Xianggao and Jiang Zongxiu; and if he will make a statement. [184320]

Mr. Rammell: We are aware of reports of the detention of Xu Shaungfu and the deaths in custody of Gu Xianggao and Jiang Zongxiu. We are monitoring the situation and note reports that the Chinese authorities are investigating the death of Jiang Zongxiu.

We are very concerned about religious freedom in China. We made clear at the last round of the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in May that the prohibition of some religious/spiritual groups, and the legal restrictions placed upon members of others, are tantamount to a denial of their members' freedom of religious belief. We also raised our concerns about torture and the treatment of prisoners at the same dialogue round.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister raised human rights issues with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao during his visit to the UK in May and I raised human rights issues with the Vice-Minister of the International Department of the Chinese Communist Party, Zhang Zhijun during his visit to the UK in March.

Cyprus

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of how the proposed EU package of trade and air links to northern Cyprus will assist in achieving a settlement. [185157]

Mr. MacShane: The EU package of measures for northern Cyprus is designed to put an end to the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community by facilitating economic growth. We believe that enabling direct trade between northern Cyprus and the rest of the EU is an essential element of that strategy. Furthermore, direct trade will reduce the economic disparity between the north and south of the island and will help to bring the Turkish Cypriots in to line with the EU acquis. Narrowing the economic divide between the north and south will remove a major obstacle to a future settlement to the Cyprus problem.

Direct air links with northern Cyprus are not covered by the Commission proposals. We are actively looking at this issue.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement about his recent discussions with Mr. Talat, leader of the Turkish Cypriots and Mr. Iakovou, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Cyprus. [185158]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I met Mr. Talat on 1 July. We discussed a number of Cyprus related issues and encouraged Mr. Talat to continue to pursue a pro-EU policy. Mr. Talat assured us that he would continue to work for a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus problem.

I met the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Cyprus at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 12 July. I briefed him on the recent debates on Cyprus in this House. We also discussed Mr. Talat's recent visit to the UK.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the exclusion of the Democratic Republic of the Congo from the Kimberley process. [184225]

Mr. Rammell: The expulsion of the Republic of Congo from the Kimberley Process followed a report by a visiting team drawn from others in the Process on the discrepancy between the Republic of Congo's substantial exports of rough diamonds and its limited production. The report concluded that the Republic of Congo failed to meet agreed minimum common standards and was therefore undermining the credibility of the Kimberley Process. We support the decision to expel and stand ready to consider any request from the Republic of Congo for technical assistance to help it meet the standard required and thereby eventually re-join the Process.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many copies of his Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183885]

Mr. Straw: Production of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Departmental Report 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 cost the Department £24,453. Due to new printing arrangements, these costs to the Department are 25 per cent. lower than for the 2003 Report. Other costs are met by the publisher, The Stationery Office Ltd. (TSO).

1,900 copies of this year's report were printed of which 1,350 are distributed internally at a price which covers printing costs and 550 copies are retained by TSO. The report is also available free of charge on the FCO website: www.fco.gov.uk. I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb) on 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1731W, for further details.

TSO does not divulge its sales revenues, which depend on the extent to which it chooses to sell copies at a discount. Nor does TSO provide the total number of copies printed in previous years. However, the number of copies sold by TSO, and the number supplied to the FCO for internal use, is listed in the table. Statistics for the 1997 edition are not available.

Edition	*Copies sold by TSO*	*Copies supplied to FCO*
1998	626	1,682
1999	542	1,527
2000	513	1,438
2001	564	1,447
2002	525	1,412
2003	426	1,340
2004	[1]315	1,350

[1] Interim figure. The sales profile for previous years indicates that TSO can expect to sell a further 95 copies, bringing the total for the year to approximately 410.

EU-Israel Association Agreement

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect of a suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement on *(a)* the Israeli and *(b)* the Palestinian economy. [184057]

Mr. MacShane: The Government do not believe that suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement would help bring Israel and the Palestinians nearer to a just and lasting negotiated settlement. The Government have therefore made no detailed assessment of the implications of a suspension of the Agreement.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the EU concerning suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement. [184058]

Mr. MacShane: The Government do not believe that suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement would help bring Israel and the Palestinians nearer to a just and lasting negotiated settlement. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has therefore had no recent discussions with his EU counterparts concerning the suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the value in euros of the EU-Israel Association Agreement to the economies of *(a)* the EU, *(b)* UK, *(c)* Israel and *(d)* Palestine in the last year for which figures are available. [184059]

Mr. MacShane: The Government do not have estimates of the monetary value of the EU/Israel Association Agreement to any of its parties. A large part of the Agreement's benefit to Israel lies in the confidence and sense of normality it provides to domestic business and foreign workers. In other circumstances the economic benefit the Agreement brings to Israel would also benefit the Palestinian economy. At present, the effects of the conflict more than nullify that benefit.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with members of the Quartet concerning the effects of suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement. [184061]

Mr. MacShane: The Government supports the work of the Quartet (UN, US, Russia, EU) in supporting Israel and the Palestinians to return to a political process in order to reach a just and lasting negotiated settlement. We do not believe that suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement would help in this regard. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has therefore not discussed the effects of suspension of the EU/Israel Association Agreement with other Quartet members.

Hong Kong

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his policy on universal suffrage for the people of Hong Kong. [184027]

Mr. Rammell: We have consistently said that we would hope to see early progress towards the Basic Law's ultimate aim of universal suffrage for the election

of the Chief Executive and Legislative Council at a pace in line with the wishes of the people of Hong Kong. We have made this position clear on many occasions to the Chinese authorities and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government.

Iran

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made to the Government of Iran on the imprisonment of Ebrahim Khodabandeh and Jamil Bassam who had previously been granted asylum in the UK. [184316]

Mr. Rammell: We have raised the imprisonment of Ebrahim Khodabandeh and Jamil Bassam with the Iranian Government many times, on human rights grounds. We have urged the Iranian authorities to ensure that the men are well treated and, if charged, given a fair and open trial with recourse to proper legal representation. We have no right of consular access to the two men, who are not British nationals. But we have encouraged the Iranian authorities to allow international monitoring visits.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the bounty payment in respect of the capture of Saddam Hussein; what the source of the bounty money was; what advice Coalition partners received about the legality of the bounty; and if he will make a statement. [183437]

Mr. Rammell: The US Government offered a reward for information leading to the capture of Saddam Hussein under the State Department Rewards for Justice programme. Details of this programme are on the US State Department website: www.state.gov. The legal basis of these rewards is a matter for the US Government.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions the United Kingdom's representative in Iraq has had about the bounty for the capture of the Jordanian militant, Zarqawi; what the sources of the money for the bounty is; what advice was taken by Coalition partners about the legality of any such bounty; and if he will make a statement. [183439]

Mr. Rammell: The US Government offered rewards for information leading to the capture of Saddam and Zarqawi under the State Department's Rewards for Justice programme. Details of this programme are on the US State Department website: www.state.gov. The legal basis of these rewards is a matter for the US Government. Our ambassador to Iraq regularly discusses a wide range of issues on Iraq with his interlocutors.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on terrorist attacks in Iraq. [184123]

Mr. Rammell: Terrorism has not derailed the transition of power to the new Iraqi Interim Government which took office on 28 June, although attacks have continued. The most significant of these in recent days was on 14 July when a terrorist car bomb killed nine Iraqis queuing to enter the international zone, and there has also been an increase in terrorist activity in Samarra. Internal security is now the responsibility of the IIG supported by the Multinational *Force (MNF) in accordance with UNSCR 1546. The* IIG is determined to tackle terrorism, and Iraqi security forces have been engaged in a number of successful operations in Baghdad and elsewhere. The Iraqi authorities are also committed to building up its counter-terrorist and counter-insurgency forces. We continue to be engaged in supporting these efforts.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the projected daily output of Iraqi oil is *(a)* for the rest of 2004 and *(b)* for 2005. [184266]

Mr. Rammell: The Iraqi authorities have responsibility for setting their own oil production targets. Iraq has a target of increasing its daily output of oil to 2.8–3.0 million barrels by the end of 2004. The Iraqi authorities will aim to ensure sustainable increases in production for 2005 and for subsequent years, to a level that is commensurate with their economic and other developmental needs.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what Iraq's latest daily oil output is. [184267]

Mr. Rammell: Over the period 2–8 July, the most recent for which data is available, Iraq's daily average oil production was 2.122 million barrels per day.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the current size is of the Iraqi army; and what the forecast size is for July 2005. [184273]

Mr. Rammell: According to statistics provided by the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) the projected strength for the Iraqi Army is 36,000 personnel. At present, it numbers 7,116 with a further 2,638 currently under training. The aim is for the army to reach full operational capability by January 2005.

These figures do not include the Iraqi National Guard (ING), formerly the Iraq Civil Defence Corps. It currently numbers 38,000 and is due to reach 50,000 by December 2004. The ING has officially been subsumed into the Iraqi armed forces but is a distinct entity from the regular army.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress is being made in negotiations with other countries to which Iraq owes money on the Iraqi debt. [184338]

Mr. Rammell: The UK's objective is a fair and sustainable solution to Iraq's debt problems. The G7 is united in agreeing that Iraq's debt is unsustainable and that Iraq needs substantial debt reduction. Many other creditors have associated themselves with this analysis. The Government are continuing to discuss this issue with creditors, including with those in the Paris Club.

Iraq Survey Group

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements he is putting in place *(a)* to make available paper copies of the final report of the Iraq Survey Group on its publication and *(b)* to place the text on a Government website; and what plans he has to publicise its publication. [184392]

Mr. Rammell: There is no set timetable for reporting by the Iraq Survey Group, nor is there any deadline for the completion of the Group's task.

At present, the Government have not drawn up any plans for publication of the Group's final report but, as with the Group's interim reports, the Government intend to publish as much of the final report as is consistent with the need to protect any operationally-sensitive material.

Israel/Palestine

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning *(a)* the killing of Dr. Khaled Saled and his son and *(b)* the destruction by shelling of a residential block in Nablus on 6 July. [184054]

Mr. Rammell: Israel is entitled to take steps to protect itself from terrorist attack, but these should be within international law and neither disproportionate nor excessive. Actions which result in the death or injury of civilians and the demolition of Palestinian homes and property are deeply disturbing. We have frequently called on the Israeli government to stop such action. We have made representations to the Israeli Government at every level about its actions in the occupied territories. We have not made specific representations concerning the killing of Dr Saled and his son, or the 6 July shelling in Nablus.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answers of 28 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 129–30W, on Israel/Palestine, what steps he will take to ensure that Israel complies with the UK Government's policies. [184060]

Mr. Rammell: The UK will continue to pursue its policy towards Israel in the areas raised, through bilateral dialogue with the Israelis and through the activities of the European Union, the Quartet (UN, US, Russia, EU) and the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's response is to the ruling of the International Court on the route of the Israeli wall; and if he will make a statement. [184757]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion with his EU counterparts on 12 July. We have repeatedly said that we recognise Israel's legitimate security concerns. But we consider the building of the barrier on Occupied Territory to be illegal. The EU has said the same; so has the UN General Assembly. We continue to call upon the Israeli Government to re-route the barrier away from Occupied Territory. Similarly we call on the Palestinian Authority to meet their commitments on security. A draft resolution is being considered by the UN General Assembly. If it is put to a vote we shall vote according to the merits of the resolution.

Maritime Archaeology

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to assist the maritime archaeology of sunken British vessels in the waters off Commonwealth countries, with particular reference to wrecks off St. Kitts being researched by the St. Kitts Maritime Archaeological Project. [185001]

Mr. Rammell: We have no current plans to assist the St. Kitts Maritime Archaeological Project.

Milosevic Trial

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress of the Milosevic trial at The Hague; and if he will make it his policy to press for the trial to be completed. [184024]

Mr. Rammell: The Prosecution finished presenting its case in the Milosevic trial on 25 February.

The defence stage of the trial began on 5 July. Milosevic wishes to undertake his own defence, but there are concerns about his health. Given these concerns the trial chamber has decided to adjourn until 19 July with a further adjournment from 21 July until 31 August in order to allow the defendant additional time to prepare his case. The trial chamber has indicated it may be necessary to assign defence counsel to assist or represent Milosevic should he be unfit to do so himself. Full details can be found on the ICTY website at http://www.un.org/icty/milosevic/trialc/order-e/040706.htm.

The UK continues to believe it is important that Milosevic, like others indicted by the ICTY, must stand trial for the crimes of which he is accused. We trust the Tribunal will find a fair and satisfactory solution to allow the completion of this trial.

North Cyprus

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Turkish Government on a reduction in the number of Turkish troops based in northern Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [184132]

Mr. MacShane: Our ambassador in Ankara has a close working relationship with the Turkish Government. During his dialogue with the Turkish Government on the UN Secretary General's settlement plan the issue of Turkish troops was discussed.

Our fundamental goal remains to work for a Cyprus settlement. The Turkish Government gave its full support to the UN Secretary General's settlement plan. This included provision for the phased withdrawal of Turkish troops down to a militarily insignificant level.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he had at his recent meeting in London with the Turkish Cypriot

Prime Minister of the occupied area of northern Cyprus, as to a reduction in the number of Turkish troops based in Northern Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [184134]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I discussed a wide range of issues with Mr. Talat, including Turkish troops in northern Cyprus. Mr. Talat assured us that he would continue to work for a settlement to the Cyprus problem. As my hon. Friend knows, the UN Secretary General's proposals for a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem included a provision for a substantial phased withdrawal of Turkish troops.

It is a matter of regret that those proposals were not accepted by the Greek Cypriots and troops remain. It remains the view of the Government that a comprehensive settlement as set out by the UN Secretary General offers the best means of addressing all aspects of the Cyprus problem, including the presence of Turkish troops.

North Korea

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the potential threat posed to international security by North Korea. [184023]

Mr. Rammell: We believe that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has been pursuing two separate programmes for the production of fissile material, through the enrichment of uranium and the processing of plutonium. We view this as a serious potential threat to international security. We also remain very concerned at the threat to international security posed by DPRK's willingness to transfer ballistic missile technology and systems to other states. We support the objective of the continuing six-party talks: a Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons, and believe that the comprehensive, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of North Korea's nuclear weapons programmes is necessary to assure this objective.

Saddam Hussein

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the United Kingdom was consulted by *(a)* the United States Administration and *(b)* the interim Iraqi Government in respect of the arrangements made for the first appearance in court of Saddam Hussein; whether he was made aware in advance that only US media would be permitted in the court for the former President of Iraq's appearance; and whether he plans to consult the interim Iraqi Government over the access to the court by other than US media companies in future hearings of former members of the Iraq Government. [184396]

Mr. Rammell: UK, US and Iraqi officials discussed in advance the media arrangements for the arraignment of Saddam Hussein. The media representatives present in the courtroom were there as a press pool. They included representatives of Al-Jazeera (pan-Arab satellite television) and Al-Iraqiya (Iraqi satellite television).

We have also been consulted on the arrangements for the next court appearance. The Baghdad press corps have themselves selected the proposed media pool.

Terrorism

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what guidance he has issued to British citizens working in countries where there is a high risk of terrorist attacks, concerning their personal safety. [184028]

Mr. MacShane: Travel advice for 217 countries, including those where there is a high threat from terrorism, is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website: www.fco.gov.uk. This provides practical objective, accurate and up-to-date information including on personal safety, so that British nationals can make informed decisions about travelling abroad. Our diplomatic missions also communicate such advice to British expatriates through wardens' networks overseas. In October 2003 the FCO and the Confederation of British Industry launched the Security Information Service for Businesses Overseas (SISBO), which provides British companies with information on political and security risks in overseas markets.

Visas

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many visas were granted in *(a)* Romania and *(b)* Bulgaria between January and July 2004. [183272]

Mr. Mullin: The figures requested are only available for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2004. Between these dates 15,874 visas were issued at our embassy in Bucharest, Romania and 13,496 visas were issued at our embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria.

West Bank/Gaza Strip

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on bilateral relations with the Palestinian authorities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. [184026]

Mr. Rammell: Through our Consulate-General in Jerusalem and the British Information Service Office in Gaza we conduct discussions with the Palestinian Authority on a range of issues. These crucially include how the UK can support the Palestinian Authority in meeting its obligations under the Roadmap; work with the Palestinian Authority to build its capacity on security is one such example. My noble Friend Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean last visited the Palestinian Authority in January 2004. The Consulate-General offers a full visa and consular service in Jerusalem and the Occupied Territories.

The UK is a significant bilateral donor of development assistance in the Occupied Territories. The Department for International Development has planned expenditure of £16.15 million on assistance to the Palestinian Authority and Palestinian civil society, and a further £12.35 million for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the current financial year.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had about the *(a)* political and *(b)* economic situation in Zimbabwe with other southern African countries. [183336]

Mr. Mullin: We regularly make our views on Zimbabwe clear to southern African countries. Most recently I discussed Zimbabwe with representatives of a number of African leaders during the African Union Summit from 6 to 8 July in Addis Ababa.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Orders in Council

Llew Smith: To ask the Leader of the House if he will list each occasion when Her Majesty's Government has legislated by way of an Order in Council since 1 May 1997; and what the reason for deciding on this way to legislate was in each case. [184395]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

Her Majesty's Government legislates through Orders in Council either because Parliament has provided for delegated legislation under a particular Act to be made in that way, or because a Prerogative power is being exercised which can be given legislative force in no other way. Not all Orders in Council represent "legislation by Her Majesty's Government", and the task of listing those that do could be carried out only at disproportionate cost. A list of all Orders in Council made since October 2000 can be found, however, on the Privy Council Office website at www.pco.gov.uk.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Civil Emergencies (Voting Arrangements)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what contingency arrangements have been made for casting votes at an election in the event of there being a civil emergency such as a foot and mouth outbreak. [185207]

Mr. Leslie: The arrangements for counting votes are the responsibility of the relevant Returning Officer. Guidance on appropriate actions in the event of various emergencies (such as security threats, riot, flood, fire, etc) is issued to Returning Officers before each parliamentary election. Special guidance related to the foot and mouth outbreak was issued before the last general election. An assessment of the need for further advice would be made in the light of the circumstances and the nature of the emergency.

Electoral Fraud

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will set up a committee to investigate allegations of corruption, vote tampering and voter manipulation in the June elections. [185076]

Mr. Leslie: The Government have no plan to do so. Some allegations of electoral fraud are already under criminal investigation. In addition, five electoral petitions are before the courts. More generally, the independent Electoral Commission has a statutory duty to report on the European Parliamentary elections. It is also statutorily required to evaluate the operation of the all-postal voting electoral pilots. I understand that the Commission's reports will consider electoral fraud issues.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its predecessor Department and *(c)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183894]

Mr. Lammy: Total travel costs, which includes domestic and overseas travel for the Department and covers costs for the Court Service (CS), the Public Guardianship Office (PGO) and the Department for Constitutional Affairs, Headquarters (DCA HQ) are set out in the following table.

Period	*DCA HQ*	*CS*	*PGO*	*Total DCA*
2004–05[1]	556,356	720,660	7,570	1,284,586
2003–04	2,389,149	3,664,272	34,639	6,088,060
2002–03	1,174,209	3,964,961	41,783	5,180,953
2001–02	1,179,355	3,377,593	61,480	4,618,428
2000–01	1,307,772	2,972,788	43,082	4,323,642
1999–2000	1,096,679	3,215,919	28,751	4,341,349
1998–99	903,983	2,696,618	16,934	3,617,535

[1] To 30 June.

There has been an increase in travel costs for the DCA HQ between 2002–03 and 2003–04, which is mainly due to a change in attribution of costs between the Court Service, PGO and DCA HQ and due to an increase in responsibilities for the Department.

Information on the previous year is not readily available.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Alcohol Promotions

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will hold discussions with the alcohol industry and licensed trade, in particular the large pub chains, to encourage the stocking of a range of non-alcoholic beers, lagers and ciders on licensed premises. [183657]

Caroline Flint: We are currently having discussions with the industry around the development of the social responsibility scheme for retailers, which was one of the recommendations of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England. This scheme is likely to contain a pledge to consider the pricing policy on non-alcoholic drinks, and to encourage discounting of them. The scheme will also be likely to include a commitment to offering free water and reasonably priced soft drinks in all pubs and clubs.

Asylum Seekers

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) on what date his Department agreed a contract with Reliance Monitoring Service to provide a system for tagging individuals seeking asylum; if he will publish a copy of the contract; and if he will make a statement; [183918]

(2) what the value of the contract with Reliance Monitoring Service to provide a system for tagging individuals seeking asylum is. [183920]

Mr. Browne: The Secretary of State has not let a contract with Reliance Monitoring Services for tagging individuals seeking asylum and residing in Scotland.

Reliance Monitoring Services Ltd. have been providing electronic monitoring services in the South of England since 1 October 2001 under the terms of a contract with the Home Office and electronic tagging services within the Scottish criminal justice system since 1 May 2002 under the terms of a contact with the Scottish Executive.

IND plans to pilot the use of electronic monitoring for immigration purposes from the autumn in accordance with clause 36 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc.) Bill.

The pilot in England and Wales will be run under the existing Home Office contract. A separate procurement exercise is under way to provide services for use by IND in Scotland.

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals seeking asylum in the UK and residing in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* England, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland will be involved in his Department's pilot scheme to provide a system for tagging individuals seeking asylum. [183922]

Mr. Browne: The pilot will cover up to 200 people for voice recognition and up to 50 people for tagging (including up to 10 on satellite tracking). Numbers will be divided between the three contractors operating under the existing Home Office contract for England and Wales and an interim contractor in Scotland.

The Immigration and Nationality Directorate has no plans to pilot tagging in Northern Ireland, but will consider the use of electronic monitoring through voice recognition depending on the outcome of the pilots in England and Wales and Scotland.

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department consulted the Scottish Executive prior to the awarding of the contract with Reliance Monitoring Service to provide a system for tagging persons seeking asylum. [183923]

Mr. Browne: The Secretary of State has not awarded a contract to Reliance Monitoring Services for the electronic monitoring of individuals seeking asylum and residing in Scotland.

Home Office officials met officials from the Scottish Executive in Glasgow in January and have kept them fully informed of plans to procure electronic monitoring services in Scotland.

Child Trafficking

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the first inter-ministerial meeting on child trafficking will be held. [182840]

Mr. Browne: There is close co-operation across Government to tackle the crime of human trafficking. For example, Reflex the multi-agency task force set up to co-ordinate intelligence and law enforcement in a response to organised immigration crime, including human trafficking, brings together all the key agencies and Departments. The Government Departments represented on Reflex include the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Crown Prosecution Service, and the Home Office.

The Home Office and the Department for Education and Skills work closely on the subject of child trafficking. We are jointly considering the results from the Reflex funded multi-agency operation, Paladin Child. This involved the Metropolitan police, the Immigration Service, social workers from Hillingdon Social Services and secondees from NSPCC. The operation risk assessed children arriving at Heathrow airport without their parents or legal guardians and social services followed up those considered to be at risk. The operation did not uncover any evidence of child trafficking. However, the report did make a number of recommendations related to child protection.

This issue of human trafficking is currently within the remit of a number of ministerial groups. Ministers are currently considering whether a ministerial group focussing specifically on human trafficking would be of benefit in taking forward the agenda in this area.

Unaccompanied[1,2,3] children, aged 17 or under, applying for asylum in the United Kingdom, by nationality, 1999 to 2003

Nationality	*1999*[4]	*2000*[4]	*2001*[4]	*2002*[5,6]	*2003*[6]
Albania	125	95	85	300	145
Czech Republic	30	20	20	10	—
Macedonia	—	—	100	110	55
Moldova	*	5	35	145	5
Poland	45	15	25	10	60
Romania	85	40	50	130	15
Russia	5	*	5	10	170
SAM	1,520	665	475	725	15
Turkey	115	155	95	85	85
Ukraine	*	5	*	5	5
Other former USSR	25	20	10	10	5
Other former Yugoslavia	30	35	80	5	*
Europe other	10	5	—	*	*
Europe total	1,995	1,055	985	1,545	560
Colombia	20	5	5	5	5
Ecuador	15	5	5	5	5
Jamaica	5	5	*	15	5
Americas other	5	*	5	—	5
Americas total	40	15	20	30	20
Algeria	10	25	20	40	20
Angola	40	100	145	210	115
Burundi	10	20	20	30	60
Cameroon	—	5	20	30	20
Congo	5	10	30	25	15
Democratic Republic Congo	35	45	80	145	95
Eritrea	95	85	110	220	125
Ethiopia	55	60	140	140	100
Gambia	—	—	*	5	5
Ghana	*	10	5	5	5
Ivory Coast	*	5	5	5	10
Kenya	10	10	15	30	25
Nigeria	45	25	35	55	35
Rwanda	35	50	40	65	20
Sierra Leone	65	75	130	110	35

Unaccompanied[1,2,3] children, aged 17 or under, applying for asylum in the United Kingdom, by nationality, 1999 to 2003

Nationality	1999[4]	2000[4]	2001[4]	2002[5,6]	2003[6]
Somalia	190	175	200	345	255
Sudan	5	10	5	15	30
Tanzania	*	5	*	5	5
Uganda	10	25	45	105	125
Zimbabwe	5	35	35	90	10
Africa other	10	25	25	70	105
Africa total	630	800	1,115	1,745	1,225
Iran	15	65	25	50	65
Iraq	60	110	180	1,310	220
Middle East other	15	15	20	50	30
Middle East total	90	190	225	1,410	310
Afghanistan	215	300	675	720	235
Bangladesh	5	5	15	60	50
China	165	115	135	260	145
India	15	15	20	60	60
Pakistan	20	25	25	40	45
Sri Lanka	125	170	140	125	15
Vietnam	5	20	90	180	125
Asia other	5	5	5	15	10
Asia total	550	655	1,100	1,460	685
Nationality not known	40	20	25	5	5
Grand total	3,350	2,735	3,470	6,200	2,800

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5 with * = 1 or 2.
[2] Unaccompanied at point of arrival, aged (or if no proof) determined to be 17 or under and not known to be joining a relative or guardian in the United Kingdom.
[3] Figures exclude disputed age cases.
[4] May excluded some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices.
[5] Not comparable with manual counts data prior to 2002.
[6] Provisional figures.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to reply to the letter to him dated 24 May from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. P. Cookson. [183687]

Mr. Blunkett: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 13 July 2004.

Data Collection/Sharing (Children)

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken recently to improve the collection of data on children entering the country. [183311]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* The Immigration Service does not routinely collect data on children arriving in the United Kingdom. It does however act as the first information point to identify children who may be at risk when they arrive in the United Kingdom.

The overwhelming majority of children arriving in the UK do so legitimately and safely and give no cause for concern. However, if an immigration officer had concerns about a child arriving in the UK, mechanisms are in place to ensure that such information is collected and shared with relevant agencies, such as social services.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the data collected on children entering the country are shared with other relevant agencies. [183308]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 14 July 2004]:* The Immigration Service does not routinely collect data on children arriving in the United Kingdom. But it has recently introduced a number of measures aimed at ensuring that children at risk are identified on arrival and, where appropriate, other agencies informed.

Child Protection Officers are based at Heathrow Airport and at the Croydon Asylum Screening Unit in order to strengthen the links between the police and the Immigration Service to counter child trafficking and problems associated with unaccompanied minors. In addition social services have recently placed staff at the Croydon Asylum Screening Unit to work alongside Immigration Service staff advising them on child welfare issues. A scoping study is also being undertaken to examine the feasibility of social work teams being based at the major ports of entry.

The Immigration Service also participated in Operation Paladin Child, initiated by the Metropolitan Police Child Protection Command to define the nature of child migration from non-EU countries to the UK via Heathrow, and which also involved the NSPCC and Hillingdon Social Services. The report into the operation's findings made a number of recommendations, including the creation of multi-agency partnership teams at major ports. The Immigration Service will work with the police and other agencies involved to help implement those recommendations.

Identity Cards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the effect on the prevention of terrorism of not requiring foreign nationals coming to the UK for less than three months to have an identity card. [182297]

Mr. Browne: It is well known that terrorists use false and multiple identities to help undertake and finance their activities in the UK and abroad. An identity card scheme would disrupt the use of false identities by terrorist organisations, for example in the money laundering and organised crime, which support their terrorist activities. Such operations are generally perpetrated over long periods of time.

The Government agrees with Sir John Stevens, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, who has said that he has absolutely no doubt that a card scheme would have a significant effect in the war against terrorism.

Immigration Removals

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detainees under immigration service control have signed forms for return to their home country and are awaiting removal. [183832]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of detainees awaiting removal to their home country following a request to make a voluntary departure is not recorded by the Home Office. This information could be obtained only by examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average waiting time was for detainees under immigration service control who have signed forms to return to their home country, in the last period for which figures are available. [183833]

Mr. Browne: Information on the average waiting time for the removal of detainees to their home country following a request to make a voluntary departure is not recorded by the Home Office. This information could be obtained by examination of individual cases files only at disproportionate cost.

Passports

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people are to participate in the UK Passport Service biometrics enrolment trial; and if he will make a statement. [183042]

Mr. Browne: The trial began in April and is fully rolled out, functioning at four fixed sites and a mobile unit. It is expected to run for around six months until September when the United Kingdom Passport Service (UKPS) will have enrolled 10,000 people. Up to 2 July, 3,675 people have participated.

The trial is testing the recording of biometrics and public perceptions.

Police

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were employed by Northamptonshire police at *(a)* 1 April 1997 and *(b)* 1 April 2004. [183752]

Ms Blears: The Northamptonshire police had 1,177 police officers on 31 March 1997. This had increased to 1,234 on 31 December 2003 (the latest published figure). In addition the force had 812 police support staff on 31 March 2003 compared with 554 in March 1997. At the end of March 2004 the force also had 12 Community Support Officers.

Refugee Women (Employment)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the efforts made by *(a)* the Community Integration Partnership project in the West Midlands and *(b)* other similar projects to address barriers refugee women face when trying to find employment. [183309]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 14 July 2004]:* The Community Integration Partnership (CIP), which was formed as a direct result of a joint partnership between West Midlands Consortium for Asylum Support (WMCARS) and Roselodge Group in March 2003, is currently funded under the Home Office's Refugee Integration Challenge Fund to help refugee women to access training, education and employment. Their main objectives are to address the barriers that many refugee women face in doing so, for instance by obtaining relevant information, confidence building, arranging childcare, and enhancing language skills. It works in close partnership with a range of Government and non-government bodies across the West Midlands which share its commitment to the provision of services to refugee women.

Security Officers (Crime)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many British Security Industry Association security officers have been convicted of criminal offences when carrying out their duties in each of the last five years. [184535]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* The information requested is not available. The British Security Industry Association is a professional trade association for the security industry in the UK. Membership of the BSIA is at company rather than individual level.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pensioner Households (Income)

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average income for pensioner households was in each year from 1993 to 2003. [184558]

Malcolm Wicks: The following table gives the mean net (after tax, in 2002–03 prices) Before and After Housing Cost income of pensioner units between 1994–95 and 2002–03. Information is based on the Family Resources Survey, which began in 1994–95.

Mean income

	Net BHC	*Net AHC*
1994–95	189	161
1995–96	188	160
1996–97	199	170
1997–98	202	174
1998–99	208	182
1999–2000	216	189
2000–01	225	202
2001–02	233	210
2002–03	237	214

Note:
Pensioner units are defined as single (non-cohabiting) people over state pension age (65 and over for men, 60 and over for women) and couples (married and cohabiting) where the man is over pension age.
Source:
Pensioners' Income Series 2002–03, in 2002–03 prices.

Child Support

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what factors underlie the decision not to reward parents coming off benefits and into full-time education with the child maintenance bonus under the old scheme and child maintenance premium under the new scheme. [181629]

Mr. Pond: The child maintenance bonus is a measure to provide an incentive for parents with care to go into work.

The child maintenance premium is a disregard of income for parents with care who are in receipt of either income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance. When a parent with care ceases to receive income-related benefit, she will receive all of the maintenance paid.

Child Support Agency

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects Child Support Agency cases assessed under the old legislation to be transferred for assessment under the new legislation. [184734]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink) on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason maintenance from non-resident parents which is uncollected by the Child Support Agency will be disregarded and written off. [183286]

Mr. Pond: The Child Support Agency has no powers to write-off debt.

Legislation provides for a non-resident parent to cease to be liable for a proportion of his arrears in certain tightly defined circumstances. In such cases the Secretary of State may make a payment to the parent with care.

Compensation Recovery Unit

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claims were registered with the Compensation Recovery Unit in respect of accidents and illnesses at work; how many resulted in repayment of benefit in such cases; and what the total amount of benefit recovered was. [185163]

Jane Kennedy: The information is in the table.

Employer liability compensation cases and benefit recovered

Cause	*2002-03*	*2003-04*
Claims received via employer liability		
Accident	92,915	79,286
Disease	90,427	211,924
Claims resulting in repayment of benefit		
Accident	111,322	115,214
Disease	75,028	100,506
Amount recovered		
Accident (£)	65,121,648	65,934,190
Disease (£)	37,334,756	39,054,286

Note:
The figures of claims resulting in repayment of benefit include some received in, and carried forward from, the previous year.
Source:
Compensation Recovery Unit Database.

Hearing Loss

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of evidence about the cumulative effects of hearing loss occasioned by war-time noise combined with age related hearing loss. [183610]

Mr. Caplin: I have been asked to reply.

The current scientific understanding of noise-induced sensorineural hearing loss is that it does not get worse on removal from the noise giving rise to the injury and that, in the context of the War Pensions Scheme, hearing loss due to noise and that due to subsequent effects of age are not more than additive. This is the basis on which the Department considers claims for hearing loss due to service in the armed forces.

In terms of specific assessments of the effects of hearing loss, in 1997 Baroness Hollis, the Minister then responsible for war pensions, asked the then Government Chief Medical Officer, Sir Kenneth Calman, to chair an independent expert review of the assessment of hearing loss in the War Pensions Scheme. Both that independent review and a further departmental review in February 1999 confirmed that the Department's approach to the assessment of hearing loss in war pensions was in line with current scientific and medical understanding. Since early 1999 emerging evidence on the matter has continued to be monitored.

The Industrial Injuries Advisory Council, an independent non-governmental body which advises the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on matters relating to the Industrial Injuries Scheme, published their review of occupational deafness in November 2002 (Cm 5672). This confirmed the War Pensions Scheme approach to assessment.

New Deal for Young People

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many school leavers joined the New Deal programme in Havering in *(a)* 1999, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003. [184244]

Jane Kennedy: Information on whether people joining New Deal are school leavers is not available.

Information on the numbers of young people joining New Deal for Young People in Havering, and their ages on joining, is in the table.

Starts to New Deal for Young People in Havering

Age on joining	*1999*	*2002*	*2003*
18	70	60	80
19	80	70	70
20	70	60	60
21	60	40	60
22	50	50	50
23	50	40	50
24	60	40	50
Total	450	360	430

Notes:
1. All figures are for January to December each year.
2. All figures are starts rather than individuals and may include people who have started New Deal more than once.
3. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
4. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
Source:
DWP Information and Analysis Directorate.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1341–42W, what the average cost per place on each of the four options in the New Deal for Young People was in the last 12 months. [182122]

Jane Kennedy: The information is not available.

It is intended that a unit cost system, capable of capturing this type of information, will be part of the system implementation of the Resource Management System. The system is currently still in the design and development stage and we anticipate that roll out will commence from late 2005.

Occupational/Personal Pensions

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the percentage of employees in each decile of employee incomes who do not contribute to an occupational or personal pension. [185168]

Malcolm Wicks: The proportion of employees of working age that have no pension provision by earnings deciles in 2002–03 is shown in the table.

Decile	*Percentage*
Low	81
2	62
3	59
4	48
5	42
6	36
7	27
8	22
9	16
High	13

Notes:

1. All figures are estimates derived from the Family Resources Survey (FRS) 2002–03, the latest year for which data is available. The coverage of the survey is the UK.
2. Estimates show the proportion of working age employees with no pension provision within the deciles of the overall working age gross earnings distribution.
3. People with no pension provision are defined as those who are not members of an occupational pension and not currently contributing to a personal or stakeholder pension scheme.
4. Employees have been defined as full-time and part-time employees.
5. Working age has been defined as 20–59 for women and 20–64 for men.
6. Earnings deciles have been defined in relation to working age gross earnings for employees.

Source:
Family Resources Survey 2002–03.

Post Office Card Accounts

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many benefit recipients have changed their method of payment from payment into a bank account to payment into a Post Office card account since the beginning of direct payment. [184630]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested.

Figures supplied are for benefit accounts not benefit recipients. A benefit recipient may have more than one benefit account.

The Post Office card account has been available since April 2003.

The number of benefit accounts that have changed from a bank account to a Post Office card account from April 2003 to May 2004 is 12,625.

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many benefit recipients have changed their method of payment from payment into a Post Office card account to payment into a bank account since the beginning of direct payment. [184631]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested.

Figures supplied are for benefit accounts not benefit recipients. A benefit recipient may have more than one benefit account.

The Post Office card account has been available since April 2003.

The number of benefit accounts that have changed from a Post Office card account to a bank account from April 2003 to May 2004 is 5,765.

Private Finance Initiative

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies of the Department have spent on electricity use for each year from 1997 to date. [181395]

Mr. Pond: Since DWP came into being, its total spend on electricity was £10,097,555 and £11,394,575 in 2001–02 and 2002–03 respectively. Figures are not yet available for 2003–04.

It is not possible to provide an accurate breakdown of spend to Agency level, as invariably DWP buildings are occupied by a number of the Department's businesses.

Underfunded Pension Schemes

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the written statement of 30 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 15–16WS, on underfunded pension schemes (insolvency), what assessment he is undertaking of the number of people who lost pension rights when their scheme was wound up, where the sponsoring employer was solvent, but would have been insolvent had full pension rights been provided. [184355]

Malcolm Wicks: The data gathering exercise undertaken to inform the report published on 30 June focused on underfunded schemes sponsored by insolvent employers. The information requested is not available although we are seeking further information and consulting on the circumstances of schemes winding up underfunded with solvent employers prior to making final decisions on eligibility for the Financial Assistance Scheme.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the written statement of 30 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 15–16WS, on underfunded pension schemes (insolvency), how many people have lost *(a)* any and *(b)* 10 per cent. or more of their expected pension benefits from underfunded schemes wound up by insolvent employers since 1997; and if he will list the schemes whose members were included in the research exercise. [184356]

Malcolm Wicks: It is estimated that *(a)* some 70,000 members may have lost any of their expected pension benefits and that *(b)* some 65,000 members face losses

of 10 per cent. or more of their expected pension benefits from underfunded schemes being wound up by insolvent employers since 1997. These estimates are consistent with those published on 30 June and exclude any non-pensioners' indexation offered by their schemes as well as excluding those with the very smallest cash losses of less than £5 a week. They are rounded to the nearest 5,000 members and so the estimates of the numbers losing 10 per cent. or more of their expected pension benefits are the same as those previously published for the numbers losing 20 per cent. or more.

We are unable to list the schemes whose members were included in the research exercise as this information was provided by scheme trustees in confidence.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the written statement of 30 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 15–16WS, on underfunded pension schemes (insolvency), what steps he is taking to ensure that the data gathered covers all cases where companies sponsoring defined benefit schemes have become insolvent since 1997. [184357]

Malcolm Wicks: The report that was published on 30 June provides estimates of the numbers of people facing significant reductions in their expected pensions as a result of schemes starting to wind up underfunded with insolvent employers since 1997. Those estimates were based on a combination of new information collected, for the purpose of the estimates, from independent trustees, and information already available in the Occupational Pension Regulatory Authority's Pension Schemes Registry. While the new information collected did not itself cover all such schemes, the two sets of information combined provided a firm basis for the global estimates published.

We are, however, working with the pensions industry to collect more information on affected schemes to assist the development and implementation of the Financial Assistance Scheme.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Residential Accommodation

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of establishments registered to provide residential accommodation for children were the subject of *(a)* scheduled and *(b)* unannounced inspections in each of the last three years. [178495]

Margaret Hodge: Data are only available for the years 2002–03 and 2003–04 and have been provided by the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

In 2002–03 a total number of 1,172 children's homes were registered. In that period there were 1,031 announced inspections (88 per cent. of all registered children's homes) and 639 unannounced inspections (54.5 per cent. of all registered children's homes).

In 2003–04 a total of 1,956 children's homes were registered. In that period there were 1,683 announced inspections (86 per cent. of all registered children's homes) and 1,678 unannounced inspections (85.8 per cent. of all registered children's homes).

It must be taken into account that homes that have not been registered until the latter part of the year might not achieve the second (unannounced) inspection within the same year, although it should occur within the annual timeframe.

Accountancy Costs

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much his Department has spent on accountants in each year since 1997. [183972]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Information on spend on accountants is not collected separately from that of other expenditure. The number of accountants employed by the Department since 1997 is shown in the table. The figures for each year are not directly comparable because of machinery of government changes in 2001 and 2003.

Period	*Number*
1997–98	71
1998–99	64
1999–2000	66
2000–01	41
2001–02	56
2002–03	39
2003–04	36

Adult Skills

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average cost of *(a)* an A-level, *(b)* an Advanced GNVQ and *(c)* a NVQ level 3 or equivalent vocational qualification are; and how many people achieved each of these qualifications in 2003. [174370]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 25 May 2004]:* The cost of examination entry is set by the independent awarding bodies. The typical cost of entry and the number of people achieving *(a)* A-levels *(b)* Advanced GNVQs and *(c)* NVQ level 3 or equivalent in England in 2003 are as follows:

Qualification	*Typical cost of entry*[1] *(£)*	*Number of candidates achieving qualification*[2]
(a) GCE A-level	66.00	244,426
(b) VCE AS-level	42.00	10,622
VCE A-level	79.00	27,870
VCE Double Award	150.00	34,349

As part of the Curriculum 2000 reforms the Advanced GNVQ was replaced by the Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE) group of qualifications.

Using the most recent data available the number of level 3 NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications) and VRQs (Vocationally Related Qualifications) achieved in 2002/03 are shown in the following table.

Qualification	*Typical cost of entry*[1] *(£)*	*Number of qualifications achieved*[3]
(c) NVQ Level 3	110.00	85,196
VRQ Level 3	—	45,076

[1] Typical cost of entry is based on entry through Edexcel. These figures have been taken from information provided on the Edexcel website.

[2] Information on candidates attempting GCE A levels and VCE qualifications is taken from information collated for the 2003 Performance Tables.

[3] Information on achievements for level 3 NVQs and VRQs is taken from the 2002/03 National Information System for Vocational Qualifications (NISVQ).

Note:

For VRQs the cost is not shown as this would be dependent upon the exact qualification.

Building Schools for the Future Programme

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the private contractors participating in the Building Schools for the Future programme; and if he will make a statement. [184866]

Mr. Miliband: The first schemes to be procured under the Building Schools for the Future programme are not due to come to the market until later in the summer.

However, several contractors have been engaged in accordance with public procurement processes to assist in the creation and development of Partnerships for Schools (PfS), which is the non departmental public body established by the Department to manage and co-ordinate the Building Schools for the Future programme.

These contractors are Bevan Ashford, KPMG, Capita, Precept, Anders Elite and Fujitsu. In addition, the following have had engagements which have now been concluded; Augmentis, Bridge and Beyond.

PfS is also in the process of procuring framework contacts for the following range of services on behalf of itself, local authorities, schools and other stakeholders:

Legal advisory services

Financial advisory services

Programme Management

Communications

Technical advisory services

Education advisory services

Team Development.

Chief Mathematics Adviser

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* human and *(b)* financial resources he plans to make available to the post of chief mathematics adviser to enable the successful applicant to fulfil the responsibilities listed in the job description. [184108]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The post of Chief Adviser for Mathematics will be a highly influential and pivotal role and the successful candidate will work together with senior officials and Ministers to take forward the work detailed in our response to Professor Adrian Smith's report Making Mathematics Count, which I announced in the House on 28 June. Our response document contained a number of specific financial commitments and I am considering additional resources in the light of this week's Spending Review announcements.

Child Abuse

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how his Department monitors parental child abuse cases in the UK. [184173]

Margaret Hodge: This Department does not monitor parental child abuse cases. Rather, the Department collects information relating to children who are listed on the child protection register.

Children are placed on the child protection register when a multi-agency child protection conference considers them to be at continuing risk of significant harm. That risk may arise from a number of factors, one of which may be parental abuse, but the register does not record the source of the risk.

Children should be registered under one or more of the categories of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or neglect, according to a decision by the chair of the child protection conference. The categories used for registration help indicate to those consulting the register the nature of presenting concerns. Recording information in this way also allows for the collation and analysis of information locally and nationally.

The Department publishes, on an annual basis, information relating to registrations, de-registrations and re-registrations of children on the child protection register.

Children in Care

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children are residing in children's homes in West Sussex. [178491]

Margaret Hodge: Information on the total number of children residing in children's homes in West Sussex is not collected centrally.

At 31 March 2003, the latest date for which information is available, it is estimated that West Sussex County Council had responsibility for 20 looked after children residing in children's homes and hostels within their local authority. A further 30 are in children's homes outside their local authority boundary. Information on the number of looked after children from other councils who are residing in residential accommodation within West Sussex is not collected centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of children's homes in West Sussex were subject to *(a)* scheduled and *(b)* unannounced inspections in each of the last three years. [178492]

Margaret Hodge: According to information provided by the Commission for Social Care Inspection there are 32 children's homes in West Sussex, of which nine are run by the Local Authority. Since 1 April 2002 all of the homes have been inspected twice a year (one announced and one unannounced inspection in each year).

Departmental Staffing

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many non-Civil Service staff have worked on projects in the Department in each year since 1997. [183977]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department does not hold this information centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Disabled People (Services)

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the efficacy and efficiency of services provided by his Department to disabled people; and if he will make a statement. [183253]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 12 July 2004]*: The Government are committed to improving the position of disabled people in society and believe that public bodies should take the lead in promoting equal opportunities. That is why the draft Disability Discrimination Bill extends the DDA to the functions of public bodies and introduces a duty on public bodies to promote equality for disabled people.

Accordingly, my Department keeps the efficacy and efficiency of services provided to disabled people under constant review. The Sure Start Unit has published and disseminated guidance and training materials to Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) in local authorities, which will guide and empower them to support early identification, intervention, develop inclusive early learning environments and existing

service provision. These materials will help them to support children in removing barriers to learning wherever these exist.

The Children Act Report 2002, published by DfES in June 2003, pulls together the latest information from statistical returns, inspections and research on social services support for children. This report includes a chapter on support for disabled children and their families. See the DfES website at http://www.dfes.gov.uk.Ofsted inspections of schools and LEAs include a requirement to look at and report on the inclusion of children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. In addition, Ofsted also undertake reports on specific themes. It is due to report in September 2004 on the initial impact of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and will also be reporting at regular intervals on progress being made as a result of the Government's Strategy for SEN: Removing Barriers to Achievement. Ofsted also has the lead responsibility for inspecting Connexions partnerships. All Ofsted inspections focus on the experience of young people and evaluate and report on quality and effectiveness of the partnership. Ofsted's framework for inspection states that they should report on how responsive the partnership is to the range and diversity of young people in the area. In making their judgments, Ofsted report on the relevance of programmes provided and whether they provide for the diverse needs of young people within the target age group, taking into account such features as sex, link ethnicity and disability and ensuring equality and equity. See the Ofsted website at http://www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) provides funding to the higher education institutions and further education colleges it funds to widen access and improve provision for disabled students. It publishes an annual series of performance indicators that cover access, progression, retention, research, graduate employment and disability. The allocation of funds reflects the proportion of students that each institution recruits who are in receipt of the disabled students allowance (DSA). See "Explanation of how the mainstream disability allocation for 2004–05 is calculated" at http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/sldd/allocat.asp

HEFCE also distributes special initiative funding in support of students with learning difficulties and disabilities. In the current round, they have funded 54 projects in two strands. Funding for this round of projects began in January 2003 and the programme ends in December 2005. See HEFCE's "2003–05 Special funding programme: Improving provision for disabled students" at http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/sldd/fund03-O5.asp

HEFCE also funds the National Disability Team to support projects and provide guidance to the higher education sector on disability issues and legislation. More details can be found at http://www.natdisteam.ac.uk/

In May 2003 HEFCE published "Project capital round three: invitation to apply for funds". Of the £494 million allocated to improve capital and IT infrastructure to support learning and teaching, £117 million is allocated to improve provision for disabled students, in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and its extension in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. See http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/circlets/2004/cl02_04/

In addition, the Department has published guidance on the additional student support that students with disabilities are entitled to. This guidance ("Bridging the Gap; A guide to the Disabled Students Allowances (DSAs) in higher education") can be downloaded from http://www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport/students/stu_students_with_d.shtml.

A review of the administration of disabled students allowances was carried out by SKILL: the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities at the request of DfES. A summary of SKILL'S findings and recommendations can be found on the Department's website at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport/dsa_.shtml

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) published its Annual Equality and Diversity Report for 2002–03 in November 2003, including an assessment of progress in providing equal access to Further Education and adult learning for disabled people. This publication is available in electronic form on the LSC's website: www.lsc.gov.uk

Sure Start

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been made available to Sure Start projects in the London borough of Islington for each year since the inception of Sure Start; and what the projected funding for future years is. [184723]

Margaret Hodge: The London borough of Islington has six Sure Start local programmes, two Early Excellence Centres and eight Neighbourhood nurseries, the first of which was approved in October 2000. The revenue funding for these initiatives is shown in the following table:

Table 1

£

	Amount (Revenue)
2000/01	448,250
2001/02	894,900
2002/03	2,277,208
2003/04	4,030,346
2004/05	4,910,149
2005/06	5,227,097
Total	17,837,950

The total amount of capital allocated to the Sure Start initiatives in Islington is £7,587,100. In addition Islington has been allocated £1,033,126 revenue and £3,149,773 capital to develop children's centres over the period of 2004–06.

These figures do not include local authority funding for child care and nursery education allocated to Islington.

The Chancellor announced in the Spending Review that the Sure Start Unit will be allocated £1,167 million,

£1,483 million and £1,667 million for 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08 respectively for England. At this stage it is not possible to say how much will be allocated to individual local authorities.

Out-of-city Schools

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Nottingham pupils have gone to out of city schools in the last academic year; (ii) what funding was transferred out of the city as a result; and (iii) how many pupils in each of the last three years have been returned to city schools during the course of the year. [184662]

Mr. Miliband: The information is as follows:

(i) The information requested is shown in the following table.

Number and proportion of LEA resident pupils in maintained primary[1] and secondary[1] schools educated in other LEAs and the number and proportion of non-residents educated in schools located within the LEA—January 2003

	Nottingham	
	Primary	*Secondary*
Number of pupils resident within the LEA	25,615	16,451
Number of resident pupils educated in other LEAs	1,365	3,659
Percentage of resident pupils educated in other LEAs[2]	5.3	22.2
Number of pupils educated within the LEA	25,538	13,937
Number of pupils educated in the LEA that are resident in another LEA	1,288	1,145
Percentage of pupils educated in the LEA that are resident in another LEA[3]	5	8.2

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Percentage reported is calculated as a percentage of resident pupils living within the LEA.
[3] Percentage reported is calculated as a percentage of school population attending schools within the LEA.
Source:
NPD 2003.

(ii) Local education authorities are funded for the pupils attending schools within their authority irrespective of the area of residence of the individual pupils (with the exception of SEN pupils where recoupment is arranged locally). Therefore there is no need for funding transfers in respect of cross border movements.

(iii) Data of this type are not currently available.

St. Helens Schools

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* head teachers, *(b)* teachers and *(c)* support workers were employed in St. Helens schools in each year from 1997 to 2004. [184621]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the full-time equivalent number of head teachers, all regular teachers and support staff employed in the maintained sector in St. Helens local education authority for each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest information available.

	Head teachers[1]	*All teachers*[2]	*Support staff*[3]
2003	78	1,630	800
2002	78	1,580	790
2001	75	1,570	680
2000	77	1,570	570
1999	81	1,570	530
1998	84	1,570	500
1997	83	1,590	480

[1] Source: Annual Survey of Teachers in Service 2001 to 2003 and Database of Teachers Records (DTR) 1997 to 2000. The DTR is maintained primarily for pensions purposes. The figures include all teachers who are being paid as head teachers.
[2] *Source:* Annual Survey of Teachers in Service
[3] *Source:* Annual School Census. Support staff include teaching assistants, administrative staff, technicians and other medical, child care and education support staff.

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average pay was for teachers in St. Helens in each year from 1997 to 2004. [184623]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the average salary of full-time regular qualified teachers in the maintained schools sector in England and Wales as at March of each year. The latest information available is for 2002.

As at March	£
2002	28,720
2001	27,200
2000	25,390
1999	24,440
1998	23,540
1997	22,900

Source:
The Database of Teacher Records. Figures cover all grades and include all allowances.

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what major development and spending projects *(a)* have taken place since 1997 and *(b)* are planned to take place over the next two years in St. Helens; [184626]

(2) what the level of *(a)* capital and *(b)* revenue spend was in St. Helens primary schools in each year from 1997 to 2004. [184622]

Mr. Miliband: The bulk of capital funding is allocated to local education authorities (LEAs) and schools by formula so that they can decide their priorities for investment in line with locally decided asset management plans. We do not, therefore, hold detailed information about school building developments and projects that have taken place, or are planned.

The following table shows the capital allocations made to St. Helens LEA and all its schools, both primary and secondary, from 1996–97 to 2003–04.

Capital allocations to St. Helens and its schools

	Allocation (£000)
1996–97	2,286
1997–98	1,818
1998–99	3,244
1999–2000	3,802
2000–01	6,603
2001–02	5,562
2002–03	10,234
2003–04	7,152

For revenue spend in primary schools in St. Helens, the figures are as follows:

St. Helen's: Net institutional expenditure (NIE)[1] (cash terms)

£

	NIE (pre-primary and primary)[2]	*NIE (pre-primary)[2]*	*NIE (primary)[2]*
1996–97	29,540,000	—	—
1997–98	27,484,000	—	—
1998–99	29,286,000	—	—
1999–2000	33,966,565	514,585	33,451,980
2000–01	37,197,870	828,287	36,369,583
2001–02	39,765,740	1,174,816	38,590,924
2002–03[3]			39,865,585

[1] Net institutional expenditure (NIE) includes all school-recurrent funding, including teaching staff and non-teaching staff salaries, school premises costs, equipment and supplies. It takes account of unspent balances held by schools at the year end. It does not include the cost of school meals, home to school transport, LEA central administration or the financing costs of capital expenditure.

[2] Prior to 1999–2000 figures are drawn from the RO1 return which collected combined information for pre-primary and primary. In 2002–03 the structure of the form changed to collect in-school expenditure information from the primary, secondary and special sectors only.

[3] The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. Consequently the expenditure reported in 2002–03 is not strictly comparable with earlier years.

Source:

The expenditure data prior to 1999–2000 is drawn from the annual 'RO1' spending returns which local authorities submitted to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions. From 1999–2000 onwards, data is taken from local education authorities' Section 52 Outturn Statements submitted to the DfES.

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many cases against his Department, the agencies for which it is responsible and its predecessor organisations have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181473]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department is committed to embedding diversity and equality into its employment policies and practices.

The number of employment tribunal cases against my Department is set out as follows:

	Equal pay	*Sex discrimination*	*Race discrimination*	*Disability discrimination*	*Unfair dismissal*
2002		1	1	—	—
2003		—	1	[1]3	2
2004		3	—	1	1
Total		4	2	4	3

[1] Two cases included unfair dismissal.

Information before these years in the form requested is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

There were no awards made against my Department during the years quoted, however, applicants did receive out of court settlements totalling £26,356. The cost for contesting claims during the years quoted totalled just over £99,500.

Fair Admissions Taskforce

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of recruitment of the Head of the Fair Admissions Taskforce was; and what his *(a)* salary and *(b)* other employment costs for the next three years are estimated to be. [184321]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 15 July 2004]*: Professor Schwartz receives no remuneration as Chair of the Admissions to Higher Education Review, other than expenses. There were no costs of recruitment.

As Vice-Chancellor of Brunel University, Professor Schwartz's salary is a matter for Brunel University. All Vice-Chancellors' salaries are in the public domain, and the THES of 20 February 2004 listed his pay for the year 2002–03 as £174,000.

Fieldwork

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment he has made of a possible link between falling numbers of science graduates and the availability of fieldwork and out-of-classroom activity in schools; and if he will make a statement; [183157]

(2) if he will make fieldwork and out-of-classroom learning part of the core science curriculum; what assessment he has made of the obstacles to biology fieldwork; and if he will make a statement; [183158]

(3) what assessment he has made of the benefits of fieldwork and out-of-classroom activity in developing practical skills for use *(a)* at undergraduate level, *(b)* at postgraduate level and *(c)* in employment; and if he will make a statement. [183159]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: No assessment has been made of the impact that the availability of fieldwork in school science has on science graduate numbers. We will set out measures to increase the number of students studying the physical sciences and engineering through the Government's 10 year investment framework for science and innovation, published alongside the 2004 spending review.

Out of classroom learning is already a statutory requirement in National Curriculum Geography and we will continue to encourage schools to provide fieldwork opportunities in science. We are developing training and guidance for science teachers in fieldwork, including risk assessment, through our new network of Science Learning Centres.

The Field Studies Council's recent 'Review of Outdoor Learning', which the Department part funded, pointed to the potential learning, attitudinal, interpersonal and social outcomes of fieldwork and out of classroom activity such as leadership, team working, enquiry and self-reliance.

Formula Spending Share

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average *(a)* primary formula spending share per pupil and *(b)* secondary formula spending share per pupil is for each local education authority for 2005–06 listed in descending order of secondary formula spending share. [184955]

Mr. Miliband: Figures for 2005–06 will not be available until the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is announced in the autumn.

Foundation Schools

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills with whom a school must consult should it wish to adopt foundation status; and how such consultations are funded. [184704]

Mr. Miliband: The Secretary of State's statutory guidance currently says that those bringing forward proposals for a change in the category of a school should consult all interested parties. These include:

any local education authority likely to be affected by the proposals;

other schools in the area;

parents and teachers in the area who may be affected by the proposals;

if proposals involve, or are likely to affect, a school which has a particular religious foundation, the appropriate religious body;

if the proposals affect the provision of full-time 16–19 education, the Learning and Skills Council.

Funding of consultations is the responsibility of those bringing forward the proposals.

The Five Year Strategy document proposes a simpler and quicker procedure for schools to change category. We intend that the new procedures should retain a requirement for consultation.

Free School Transport

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Weston-Super-Mare constituency he estimates would lose the right to free school transport under the proposals contained in the Draft School Transport Bill. [183819]

Mr. Charles Clarke: This would be a matter for the LEA. The School transport Bill (which has been published for prelegislative scrutiny) allows local education authorities to apply to the Secretary of State to run pilot schemes which will cater for ALL pupils, not just those currently qualifying for free school transport. Pilot authorities may charge for transport, except for pupils eligible for free school meals, but charges must be set at a level that does not encourage car use and caters for the needs of large and low income families.

The Local Government Association, the Audit Commission and the Social Exclusion Unit have all asked us to trial alternatives to the current regime. No authority will be forced to run a trial, and we have no plans to require all authorities to change their existing arrangements.

Higher Education

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of higher education students studied *(a)* physical sciences, *(b)* medicine, *(c)* dentistry, *(d)* engineering and technology and *(e)* architecture, building and planning in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) 2002–03. [183268]

Alan Johnson: The available information is given in the table. A new method of allocating students to subject groups was introduced in 2002/03, the effect of which was to decrease the number of students in the 'combined' category and increase those who were allocated to specific subjects. This means that the figures for 2002/03 are not directly comparable with those for earlier years so the comparisons in the table have been made with 2001/02 instead.

Proportion of all HE Enrolments at UK HEIs studying specific subjects

Percentage

Subject group	1996/97	2001/02	2002/03
Physical Sciences	4.1	3.2	3.3
Pre-clinical/Clinical Medicine	1.9	2.0	2.0
Pre-clinical/Clinical Dentistry	0.3	0.3	0.3
Engineering and Technology	7.5	6.4	6.0
Architecture, Building and Planning	2.7	2.2	2.1

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in which academic areas the percentage of higher education students studying a particular subject has fallen since 1997; and by what amounts. [183312]

Alan Johnson: The available information is given in the table. A new method of allocating students to subject groups was introduced in 2002/03, the effect of which was to decrease the number of students in the 'combined' category and increase those who were allocated to specific subjects. This means that the figures for 2002/03 are not directly comparable with those for earlier years so the comparisons in the table have been made with 2001/02 instead.

Distribution of higher education students at UK HE institutions by subject of study

Subject	Percentage of all HE enrolments		
	1997/98	2001/02	Change
Medicine and Dentistry	2.2	2.3	0.0
Subjects Allied to Medicine	9.2	11.0	1.7
Biological Sciences	4.8	4.6	-0.2
Veterinary Science	0.2	0.2	0.0
Agriculture and Related Subjects	0.8	0.8	-0.0

Distribution of higher education students at UK HE institutions by subject of study

Subject	Percentage of all HE enrolments 1997/98	2001/02	Change
Physical Sciences	3.9	3.2	-0.7
Mathematical Sciences	1.1	1.1	0.0
Computer Science	4.3	5.7	1.4
Engineering and Technology	7.1	6.4	-0.8
Architecture, Building and Planning	2.5	2.2	-0.3
Social, Economic and Political Science	7.2	7.0	-0.2
Law	3.2	3.2	0.0
Business and Administrative Studies	12.4	11.7	-0.7
Librarianship and Information Science	—	—	—
Languages	5.1	4.7	-0.4
Humanities	3.4	3.2	-0.2
Creative Arts and Design	5.3	5.7	0.4
Education	7.5	7.4	-0.1
Combined	18.5	18.2	-0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	n/a

n/a = Not applicable.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Percentage of all higher education students in the above subjects in 2002/03[1]

Subject	2002/03
Medicine	2.3
Subjects Allied to Medicine	11.4
Biological Sciences	5.9
Veterinary Science	0.2
Agriculture and Related Subjects	0.7
Physical Sciences	3.3
Mathematical Science	1.2
Computing Science	6.1
Engineering and Technology	6.0
Architecture, Building and Planning	2.1
Social Studies	7.7
Law	3.7
Business and Administrative Studies	13.0
Mass Communications and Documentation	1.9
Languages	5.9
Historical and Philosophical Studies	3.9
Creative Arts and Design	6.3
Education	7.3
Combined	11.2

[1] For the academic year 2002/03 HESA uses a different method of allocating students to subject groups and so figures are not comparable to earlier years.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency.

London Admissions System

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will set out details of the London admissions system referred to in page 52 of his five year strategy for children and learners. [184703]

Mr. Miliband: The London Schools Admissions System (LSAS) has been developed by the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in London to create an infrastructure which will simplify the secondary school admissions process for London parents. From September 2005, all 33 London boroughs and eight adjoining LEAs will co-operate to process applications for secondary schools. Parents will be able to apply for up to six maintained secondary schools on a single application form. Individual admission authorities will continue to consider applications under their published arrangements, but where an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school the LSAS will offer the applicant the available school ranked highest on their application form. This will ensure that no child gets more than one offer and that more children are offered a school place on the national offer date of 1 March. We are confident that because fewer children will be left with no offer of a school place, the LSAS will help to reduce the anxiety and frustration which many parents, pupils and schools feel under the current application system.

Means-tested Benefits

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the means-tested benefits available through his Department and the agencies for which it is responsible *(a)* in May 1997 and *(b)* now. [182594]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following table sets out means-tested benefits that applied on May 1997 and those that apply in July 2004. Further changes will be implemented for the 2004/05 academic year as a result of the Higher Education Act.

	May 1997	July 2004
Higher Education		
Full-time students	Student grant (mandatory awards from LEAs). Grants for dependants—adults and children. Travelling expenses. Disabled students allowances. Discretionary access funds.	Grants for fees. Grants for dependants—adults and children. Travel grant. Student loan (25 per cent. means-tested). Discretionary hardship fund. Hardship loan.
Part-time Students	No means-tested benefits available.	Part-time student loan.
Further Education	Learner support funds.	Learner support funds. Education maintenance allowance. Adult learning grants.
School Age	Free school meals. Free school milk. Remission of charges for the cost of board and lodging while attending residential school trips.	Free school meals. Free school milk. Remission of charges for the cost of board and lodging while attending residential school trips.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many non-departmental public bodies for which his Department is responsible have been *(a)* established and *(b)* abolished since 1997. [182942]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Since 1997,14 Executive, Advisory and Tribunal NDPBs have been established, 11 have been abolished and one ceased to be an NDPB and was de-classified as an NDPB.

Pupil Funding (Harwich)

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding per pupil was spent in the Harwich constituency in each year since 1997. [184997]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than constituency level. The figures provided are for Essex LEA and are shown in the following table.

Net current expenditure (after recharges) per pupil—Cash terms

	Total
1997–98	2,410
1998–99	2,640
1999–00	2,650
2000–01	2,880
2001–02	3,200
2002–03	*3,410*

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from Essex LEAs' Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. 2002–03 data are subject to change by the LEA. Section 52 is collected at local authority level, not constituency level, so the figures provided are for Essex LEA. 1997–98 figures are for Essex LEA prior to local government reorganisation. From 1998–99 onwards parts of Essex LEA became Southend and Thurrock LEAs. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
2. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. This change in calculation is identified by the use of italics. The 2002–03 figure is calculated by taking all the LEA expenditure, excluding CERA and Youth and Community, and dividing it by the FTE pupil numbers in maintained pre-primary, primary, secondary and special schools.
3. The figures shown are calculated by dividing the LEA expenditure by the number of pupils in maintained establishments. Essex has a large proportion of its pre-primary pupils educated outside mainstream establishments. If these are taken into account then the unit cost in 2001–02 reduces to approximately £3,110 and in 2002–03 to £3,300.
4. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA.
5. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis. Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.

School Halls (East Sussex)

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new school halls have been approved for primary schools in East Sussex in each of the last 10 years; and how many applications for new school halls for primary schools in East Sussex have been rejected in each of the last 10 years. [185071]

Mr. Miliband: We do not hold the information requested. The majority of capital support is allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans.

In 2001–02 there were five projects in East Sussex awarded funding under the Spaces for Sports and Arts programme operated by Sport England. This programme was intended to increase community and curricula use in primary schools.

School Leaving Age

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average age of school leavers in *(a)* Great Britain and *(b)* Havering was in (i) 1999, (ii) 2001 and (iii) 2003. [184252]

Mr. Miliband: The data are not collected centrally. In England, a pupil ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the school year in which he reaches the age of sixteen. This means that pupils will be aged between around sixteen years and ten months and fifteen years and ten months when they leave school.

School Workload Agreement

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment he has made of the number of schools that will be able to fund the implementation of the School Workload Agreement in 2005–06 and 2006–07; [184660]

(2) what options head teachers can follow in order to release funds to implement the requirements of the schools remodelling agreement; [184658]

(3) what mechanisms are in place to ensure the successful implementation of the School Workforce Agreement in all schools for 2005–06; [184659]

(4) what assessment he has made of the impact of reductions in numbers of teachers and teaching assistants on the introduction of planning, preparation and assessment time for all teachers. [184661]

Mr. Miliband: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement I laid before the House on Tuesday 3 July on school funding for 2005–06, *Official Report*, column 55WS. On the same day there was also a press notice issued by the Department (DfES press notice 2004/0137) which included a statement welcoming the school funding settlement by the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (made up of the majority of the school workforce unions and other partners).

The written statement to the House sets out how we have considered, with our partner signatories, the costs of implementation of the National Agreement. It announces what funds will be available to schools to implement the Agreement in 2005–06.

From 2006 we will provide guaranteed three-year budgets for every school, which will give head teachers and governors unprecedented financial security and confidence, and the ability to plan for the future.

Practical advice and support is available to assist successful implementation at school level, from the national network of LEA remodelling advisers and from the National Remodelling Team—NRT (part of National College for School Leadership). The NRT website, www.remodelling.org, contains a range of strategies and models based on real school level case studies on managing in the changes and will include shortly, a toolkit and resources pack specifically on guaranteeing planning, preparation and assessment time for teachers.

In addition, from September, up to 10,000 schools will have access to workshops and consultancy as part of the second year of the Financial Management in Schools programme. This builds on the first year of this programme which saw thousands of schools benefit from the programme.

We will continue to monitor trends in the schools workforce through the Annual Schools Census each January. There are now 427,800 full-time equivalent teachers—28,600 more than in 1997 and the highest number since 1981—and the number of support staff has increased to 241,700, having more than doubled since 1997. These figures illustrate the trend of the significant increases in teachers and support staff since 1997. The next School Workforce Volume will be available in the autumn.

Schools (Foundation Status)

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether there will be an appeals system *(a)* against a school's decision to apply for and *(b)* against a decision to grant a school foundation status. [184890]

Mr. Miliband: The decision on whether to proceed to and adopt Foundation status will be for the governing body of a school alone, though they will be obliged to publish proposal of their intention to make the change of status.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the enablement of a foundation school to appoint a majority of governors from *(a)* a charitable foundation and *(b)* a faith sponsor referred to in chapter 4, page 49 of his five-year strategy for children and learners will be subject to (i) consultation with and (ii) the agreement of all parents in the locality. [184891]

Mr. Miliband: We shall be consulting in due course on the proposals for foundation schools set out in the Department's five-year strategy. At that point we will set out in more detail our plans for ensuring that stakeholders, including local parents, are consulted and have the opportunity to make representations about proposed changes to the constitution of schools.

Solvent Abuse

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding the Government have provided for education on solvent abuse in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [184579]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The funding that the Department has allocated to local education authorities to support drug education and prevention in all schools in England since 1999 is provided in the table. This would include education about the effects of solvents; a statutory requirement of the National Curriculum. We have not directed the proportion of this funding that should be spent on education about solvent abuse.

£ million

	Funding
1999–2000	7.4
2000–01	[1]7.4
2001–02	13.1
2002–03	15.2
2003–04	14.3
Total	57.4

[1] Allocated as part of social inclusion grant

Since April 2004, the level of support for drug education in schools is for local education authorities and schools to decide.

"Drugs: Guidance to Schools" issued by DfES to all schools this year made clear that volatile substance abuse should be addressed at an early stage in the curriculum. We are also supporting teachers' professional development through the PSHE certification programme which will support teaching of drug education, including volatile substance abuse, in schools. 3,000 teachers are set the benefit this year.

The Department of Health is leading the development of a strategy for volatile substance abuse which will include measurable and achievable targets.

Specialist Schools

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether a specialist school, applying for an additional specialism, will be required to undergo all the procedures inherent in its original application for specialist status. [184702]

Mr. Miliband: As set out in the Department's Five Year Strategy, the opportunity to develop a second specialism will be offered at re-designation (when specialist schools apply to retain the status for a further four year phase). This year, schools qualifying for the simplified re-designation procedure will be eligible. In recognition of what these schools have already achieved, on both exam performance and value added bases, the application process will be light touch—with short guidance asking for summary plans to be annexed to the main re-designation application. This light touch approach reflects wider policy moves towards a new relationship with schools. Applicants will also need to consult their LEAs, the Specialist Schools Trust and the Youth Sport Trust, including to ensure their choice of second specialism enhances the existing local specialist balance.

Students (Means-Testing)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what effect university bursaries and grants will have on students in receipt of means-tested bursaries from 2006. [184878]

Alan Johnson: Bursaries are not treated as part of taxable income and so are not taken into account in the Government means test that determines entitlement to our grants.

Teachers' Salaries

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his Department estimates to be the average salary cost in 2004 to *(a)* schools, *(b)* his Department and *(c)* local education authorities of (i) a newly qualified teacher, (ii) a teacher with five years' experience in teaching and (iii) a teacher nearing retirement. [183156]

Mr. Miliband: The salary costs of the majority of teachers in schools are met by school budgets. There are no additional costs to local authorities. The Department for Education and Skills provides special grants to meet the cost of teachers who pass the performance threshold and contributes to the cost of performance pay awards. In the financial year 2001/02 the performance threshold grant totalled £436,703, 000 and the performance pay grant totalled £19,887,000.

At 31 March 2002, the latest information available, the average salary of a newly qualified full-time entrant to the maintained school sector in England and Wales was £17,870. The salary for full-time qualified teachers with five years service was £25,310 and for full-time qualified teachers aged 55 to £59, 32,890. These figures are for all grades and include all allowances. Employer national insurance and pension contributions are excluded: for the average salaries above the contribution rates are 13.9 per cent. for new entrants, 14.6 per cent. for those with five years experience and 15.3 per cent. for those aged 55 to 59. The normal age for the retirement of teachers is 60.

This information is based on data from the Database of Teachers Records which is maintained primarily for pensions purposes.

University Attendance (Havering)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 18 year olds *(a)* in Great Britain and *(b)* from Havering chose to go to university in (i) 1997, (ii) 1999, (iii) 2001 and (iv) 2003. [184251]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions service (UCAS) and covers 18 year old, English domiciled applicants accepted through UCAS to full time first degree and HMD courses. Figures are given in the table.

Percentage of 18 year olds accepted through UCAS to HE courses

Year of Entry	*Havering LEA*	*England*
1997	16.2	20.5
1999	16.9	20.0
2001	19.0	21.5
2003	16.8	21.4

University Entrants

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 18 year olds in *(a)* England and *(b)* Somerset chose to go to university in (i) 1997, (ii) 2001 and (iii) 2003. [184642]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions service (UCAS) and covers 18 year old, English domiciled applicants accepted through UCAS to full time first degree and HND courses. Figures are given in the table.

Percentage of 18 year olds accepted through UCAS to HE courses

Year of Entry	*Somerset LEA*	*England*
1997	21.6	20.5
2001	21.4	21.5
2003	19.9	21.4

NORTHERN IRELAND

Athletics Tracks

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans the Government have to develop an eight lane athletics track for international athletics meetings in Northern Ireland. [182617]

Angela Smith: Northern Ireland currently has three eight lane athletics tracks with facilities of the standard required to hold minor international athletic events. These are at Antrim Stadium, Ballykillaire Sports Centre in Bangor and Templemore Stadium in Londonderry. However, the facilities at these venues are not of a standard which would allow major international athletic events to be hosted.

Provision for an eight lane athletics track for major international athletic meetings in Northern Ireland is a matter in the first instance for the Governing body of athletics in Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Athletics Federation. To date I have received no proposals from them for such a facility.

Care Homes (South Down)

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what action will be taken to resolve the shortage of home care staff in the South Down area; [183058]

(2) if he will make a statement on the shortage in home care staff in the South Down area. [183064]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) recognises the recruitment and retention difficulties faced by domiciliary care providers, not only in the South Down area but across the region as a whole. Research has been commissioned, which includes exploring with Health and Social Services Trusts and independent domiciliary care providers, the key issues affecting their ability to commission or deliver such services in the future. The outcome of this research will help to inform decisions on future funding for domiciliary care services.

DHSSPS is committed to securing additional resources for community care services. This year I have allocated an additional £4 million for community care,

which will include domiciliary care. These funds have been allocated to boards on the basis of their capitation shares of overall resources.

Chlamydia

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will establish a chlamydia screening programme in Northern Ireland. [183028]

Angela Smith: The Department is in the process of establishing a Working Group to consider the evidence and the feasibility of introducing a Chlamydia screening programme in Northern Ireland.

Civil Servants (Industrial Action)

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the impact of the current industrial action of civil servants on the payment of rates. [180791]

Mr. Pearson: While the ongoing industrial action is causing some disruption to services the Rates Collection Agency has deployed contingency measures and performance at the end of May 2004 was on a par with that at the end of May 2003.

Diabetic Retinopathy Screening

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been made available in the last year to roll-out a regional diabetic retinopathy screening programme in Northern Ireland; and *(a)* how and *(b)* where this funding has been spent. [183451]

Angela Smith: In the financial year 2003–04 £175,000 was allocated to the four Health and Social Services Boards, on a capitation basis, to begin the development of a regional diabetic retinopathy screening programme. This year (2004–05) £300,000 has been provided to the boards towards the extension of the programme. These resources will allow the boards to commence recruitment and training of staff for photography and grading, and certain aspects of IT. £100,000 has been set aside to support the development of central elements of the programme including a regional co-ordinator, clerical support, and a quality assurance framework. A further £300,000 capital funding is available this year for the purchase of essential equipment.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the implementation strategy is for rolling out regional diabetic retinopathy screening in Northern Ireland; and what the *(a)* timescales and *(b)* targets for the future roll-out are. [183452]

Angela Smith: Introduction of a comprehensive regional diabetic retinopathy screening programme with its different methodologies and complex IT and operational aspects is expected to take a number of years. Boards are developing local implementation plans which take account of local needs and existing arrangements. They are being guided by the Department's Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Working Group. The aim is to screen around 20,000 people with diabetes in the current year, subject to recruitment of appropriate staff.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the progress is of the Regional Diabetic Retinopathy Steering Group since January in taking forward the proposals outlined in the Report of the Working Group to the Chief Medical Officer, October 2002, entitled Proposal for the Introduction of a Comprehensive Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Programme in Northern Ireland. [183453]

Angela Smith: Following the Report of the Working Group, money was made available in April 2003 to develop diabetic retinopathy screening. Since then the Department's Diabetic Retinopathy Working Group has been overseeing developmental work required for the extension of the Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Programme. This includes work with Health Board staff, and other health professionals involved in screening, in progressing local implementation plans. Work is also on-going on issues including regional co-ordination, a quality assurance framework, datasets and IT support. The capacity of the treatment services is also being assessed.

Drugs

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his Department is doing to limit mortality and morbidity from adverse drug reactions in Northern Ireland. [183415]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is actively supporting the introduction of medicines management services in Northern Ireland. These are specifically targeted to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with medicine use. Such services include prescribing support, medication review, managing your medicines schemes, repeat dispensing, patient education and interface management between primary and secondary care.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will provide mainstream funding for the Stopping Them Starting drugs prevention campaign through education projects in primary schools. [184063]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department for Education does not directly fund or prescribe the use of any particular programmes or materials that schools should use. It is entirely a matter for individual schools to select the resources and materials they consider necessary to deliver the curriculum, including drugs education.

Education Budget

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how much of the projected budget for schools in 2005–06 will go to *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary education; [184214]

(2) what special funding has been allocated to schools in socially deprived areas in the 2005–06 budget. [184294]

Mr. Gardiner: Specific budgets for the 2005–06 financial year will be determined in light of the outcome of the Budget 2004 Spending Review.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what additional funding for education in Northern Ireland was received from the Exchequer following the Chancellor's funding statement in March. [184216]

Mr. Gardiner: The Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement provided for increased allocations for the Department for Education and Skills in 2006–07 and 2007–08. Northern Ireland received a proportion of these increases but, under the standard funding arrangements, such additions are not hypothecated as the allocation of the overall Northern Ireland budget is a matter for local decision.

Equality Commission

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been paid in legal aid for cases supported by the Equality Commission in the last three years. [171541]

Mr. Spellar: The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) is not responsible for legal aid but does support a range of discrimination cases of strategic value through its legal and financial resources. ECNI's published Annual Reports and Accounts for 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03 report spending on legal cases supported by the Commission as:

	£
2000–01	653,890
2001–02	1,046,561
2002–03	2,750,825

As stated in the Audited Accounts, the total for 2002–03 includes a contingent liability of legal fees of £605,000 anticipated over the next three years in respect of 287 closed cases.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases the Equality Commission has supported in the last three years, broken down by *(a)* gender, *(b)* disability and *(c)* religion; and how many succeeded. [171542]

Mr. Spellar: The information requested is as follows.

Area	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Gender	141	160	52
Disability	68	112	43
Religion/Political Opinion	142	289	37

Applications Granted Assistance 2000–01 to 2002–03

On the basis of information supplied by the Equality Commission, in the same period the following numbers of cases were either settled or heard and upheld[1].

[1] The year in which applications were granted support and the year when settlements or hearings were completed are unlikely to be the same.

	Number of cases
2000–01	108
2001–02	124
2002–03	196

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases are before the Equality Commission; and how long each has been awaiting a decision. [171543]

Mr. Spellar: There are currently 176 applications for assistance being considered by the Equality Commission of which 120 have been received within the past four months and 56, four months or more.

The target processing period is four months and a number of those applications currently requiring longer are dependent on responses from respondents.

Foster Carers

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many foster carers in each health trust area in Northern Ireland receive fee pay for children in their care; what the average amount of money paid to foster carers for fee pay is; and whether the criteria for fee paying to foster carers is the same in each health trust area in Northern Ireland. [183489]

Angela Smith: The number of foster carers in receipt of fee pay in each Health and Social Services Trust area in Northern Ireland as of quarter ending 31st March 2004 is as follows:

Health and Social Services Trust	*Number of Fee Paid Foster Carers*
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	7
Causeway HSS Trust	6
Craigavon and Banbridge HSS Trust	3
Down Lisbum HSS Trust	28
Foyle HSS Trust	11
Homefirst HSS Trust	23
Newry and Moume HSS Trust	2
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	50
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	78
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	5
Ulster Community Hospitals HSS Trust	20

The average amount of money paid to foster carers for fee pay and the criteria for fee paying to foster carers in Northern Ireland is not centrally available.

Genitourinary Medicine

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to increase the number of hospital sites offering genitourinary medicine outpost clinics. [183416]

Angela Smith: The Department recently consulted on "A Five Year Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan". Rather than increasing the number of hospital sites that currently offer genitourinary medicine services, the strategy recommended that a more holistic approach should be adopted. Many people wish to access the wide range of sexual health services in one setting, and for some this will be a community setting such as a GP surgery. The Department is currently considering the results of the consultation exercise and in October will host a major conference on sexually transmitted infections and sexual health services.

Health Service Projects

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the health service projects funded fully or partly by private finance initiatives. [166698]

Angela Smith: The following projects are fully funded by Private Finance Initiative:

Commissioning Body	*Project Title*
Royal Group of Hospitals and Dental Hospital HSS Trust	Car Parking
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	Holywell Hospital Energy Management System
Craigavon Area Hospital HSS Trust	Energy Management System
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	Renal Unit
Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS)	Regional Clinical Waste Disposal Facilities
United Hospitals HSS Trust	Antrim Hospital Renal Unit
Royal Group of Hospitals and Dental Hospital HSS Trust and Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	Link Laboratories
Various HSS Trusts/Boards	All Equipment Leases
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	Cancer Centre Equipment

The 'Equipment Leases' project consists of a variety of 46 leases. The major leases are:

Commissioning Body	*Lease*
Royal Group of Hospitals and Dental Hospital HSS Trust	Anaesthetics, Theatres and Intensive Care Services
Royal Group of Hospitals and Dental Hospital HSS Trust	Fractures/Accident and Emergency Centralisation
Royal Group of Hospitals and Dental Hospital HSS Trust	Redevelopment Scheme
Causeway Hospital HSS Trust	PACS X-Ray Equipment

There are no projects that have been partly funded by PFI.

Housing Executive

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties were sold in each of the past five years to tenants who were *(a)* in full receipt of housing benefit, *(b)* in partial receipt of housing benefit and *(c)* not in receipt of housing benefit. [183508]

Mr. Spellar: Historical information is not readily available in the form requested. However, since the Northern Ireland Housing Executive began to collect this information in July 2003, the figures are as follows:

Of a total of 4,752 house sales:

1,823 applicants were in receipt of full housing benefit

492 were in receipt of partial housing benefit

2,437 were not in receipt of housing benefit.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties have been sold in each year since 1998 to joint tenancy of more than two joint tenants. [183509]

Mr. Spellar: This information is not available.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties have been bought by their occupiers with a discount. [183510]

Mr. Spellar: The information requested is not readily available. However, the Housing Executive estimates that approximately 97 per cent. of the 109,245 houses sold from the introduction of the house sales scheme in March 1981 would have been sold with a discount.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action will be taken to resolve the problem of waiting times for Housing Executive grant assessments. [183059]

Mr. Spellar: Preliminary work has been undertaken on the 'Modernising the Private Sector Improvement Services' project, the main aim of which is to streamline the grants process and make the process easier for applicants. Detailed work is planned to start as soon as possible following the approval of the Housing Executive's overall Modernising Services Business Plan. This is expected to take place within the next few months and it is anticipated the Grants Project will be complete two years after that.

In the meantime, work is continuing on streamlining procedures particularly in relation to Disabled Facilities Grants. In addition the Grants Service is engaged in a Charter Mark strategy with the aim of having all Grants Offices meeting the standard by early 2006. This follows the success of the Craigavon office in achieving a Charter Mark in 2003.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will give details of the weaknesses identified in the Auditor General's Report, NIA 41/03, HC 673 on the financial control and monitoring of grants paid to registered housing associations. [183061]

Mr. Spellar: In summary, the Auditor General's report identified weaknesses relating mainly to certifications submitted by Housing Associations, procedural issues, supporting evidence, control and monitoring arrangements by both the Department and Housing Associations.

The Report however also acknowledged the work that had been and was being done to address these issues.

The Department for Social Development is continuing to implement the full range of measures agreed with the Auditor General.

Full details of the Auditor General's findings are contained in his Report which was laid before Parliament in November last year and a copy of which is available in the Library.

MOT Certificates

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether cars registered in Northern Ireland but whose MOT vehicle test certificate has expired due to industrial action by Civil Servants in Northern Ireland will be exempt from prosecution whilst travelling in England; and if he will make a statement. [184761]

Angela Smith: The Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA), which is responsible for vehicle testing, has been keeping in contact with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) regarding the legal obligations for motorists during the current period of industrial action.

The PSNI has advised that it will not prosecute a motorist whose MOT certificate has expired provided they have evidence to show that they have maintained their vehicle in a roadworthy condition and have applied to the DVTA for a vehicle test. The PSNI remind motorists of the need to keep their vehicles in a roadworthy condition at all times and have indicated that they may prosecute in cases where this has not been done. However, all relevant circumstances will be taken into account before deciding whether to prosecute.

Police forces throughout GB are being kept informed of the situation in NI, and it is expected that they will adopt a similar approach.

A vehicle does not require a certificate when it is being driven to an MOT centre for a pre-arranged test.

In the meantime the legislative process is now under way to provide temporary exemption for cars and motorcycles to allow these vehicles to be taxed and registered in Northern Ireland and to be driven legally anywhere in the United Kingdom. It is anticipated that certificates of temporary exemption, valid for up to six months, will be available from mid August 2004.

Museums and Heritage Review

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made on the recommendations contained in the Northern Ireland Museums and Heritage Review. [183065]

Angela Smith: Since the publication of the Joint Departmental Response to the Local Museum and Heritage Review there have been three liaison meetings between representatives of DCAL and EHS, as recommended in the Response. A Heritage Sub-Group of the Cultural Forum was formed in December 2003 to take forward the recommendations of the Review and there have been three meetings held to date. The Sub-Group is currently working its way through the recommendations and has agreed to hold a planning day, focusing on the priorities and outcomes required, in the autumn. In addition, work is ongoing to develop a comprehensive statistical picture of the sector.

Nexus Institute

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been provided to the Nexus Institute in each of the last 10 years. [183024]

Angela Smith: A full and complete breakdown of all sources of funding (for example, funding from individual Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts and Education and Library Boards) over the period of 10 years, could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has awarded the Nexus Institute recurrent core funding in the support of central administration costs over the last 10 years. This is shown in the following table:

	£
1994–95	34,556
1995–96	50,668
1996–97	52,000
1997–98	52,304
1998–99	55,794
1999–2000	57,244
2000–01	58,672
2001–02	60,140
2002–03	61,644
2003–04	64,085

In addition, the organisation has been awarded several one off payments to assist in the purchase of office equipment, development of business plans and conference expenses etc. This amounts to £96,360.

In April 2002 the Department awarded the Nexus Institute a further £104,718 over a three year period, towards a Double Trauma project assisting those affected by sexual abuse.

The Northern Ireland Office began funding the Nexus Institute in August 2000 and the amounts of award are shown in the following table:

	£
2000–01	39,256
2001–02	56,830
2002–03	58,494
2003–04	65,290

Sexual Abuse Victims

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been made of the *(a)* availability of services for and *(b)* level of need of victims of sexual abuse in Northern Ireland. [183016]

Angela Smith: No such assessment has been completed to date in relation to services provided directly, or funded by, HSS boards and trusts. However, key preliminary research to inform the development of a regional strategy to address sexual abuse is now under way. This will include compiling baseline information

on the current availability of services for victims and work on assessing the level of need. In co-operation with other Departments and agencies whose responsibilities also encompass matters relating to sexual abuse, it is the Department of Health, Social Service's and Public Safety's intention to develop and publish the draft strategy for consultation by late summer 2005. In terms of services provided by the PSNI, there are currently 11 Child Abuse and Rape Enquiry (CARE) units and four CARE suites. Each CARE unit is staffed by five to eight Detective Constables and one Detective Sergeant, with one Detective Inspector responsible for two to three CARE units.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research he has collated on the percentage of those with mental illness who report having suffered sexual abuse. [183025]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Terrorism Victims

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money has been spent in each of the last five years on organisations to help the victims of terrorism in Northern Ireland. [166642]

Angela Smith: There is no definitive list of organisations that help the victims of terrorism in Northern Ireland. Any organisation may help victims of terrorism as part of its own aims and objectives.

The following table shows details of how much money has been spent by the 11 Northern Ireland Departments and Northern Ireland Office in each of the last five years on organisations whose primary aim is to help the victims of terrorism in Northern Ireland.

	Total (£)
1999–2000	2,777,939
2000–01	2,662,617
2001–02	3,035,359
2002–03	5,504,884
2003–04[1]	[1]5,691,585

[1] These figures are only provisional spending totals for the year, as final outturn figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

Waiting Times

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate how many patients with trigeminal neuralgia are awaiting surgery at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast. [182627]

Angela Smith: A total of seven patients with trigeminal neuralgia are currently waiting for surgery at the Royal Victoria hospital, Belfast.

HEALTH

Anti-cancer Drugs

Mr. Bailey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the take up of new anti-cancer drugs authorised by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence; [180496]

(2) what measures may be taken by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to encourage a more uniform use of anti-cancer drugs across the country. [180497]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Last autumn, we asked Professor Mike Richards, the national cancer director, to report on the implementation of National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on drugs for cancer.

Professor Richards' report was published on 14 June. It shows that NICE guidance has been effective in increasing the uptake of recommended new treatments and in reducing variations. Nevertheless, the report finds that there are still unacceptable variations in uptake. The reasons are complex but do not appear to be associated with restrictions in funding. A copy of the report is available in the Library.

In parallel with the publication of this report, my noble Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Lord Warner) issued a statement setting out the responsibilities of the national health service in responding to guidance from NICE and a range of actions to support the NHS in these tasks. NICE can play a key part in promoting its guidance and in providing costing templates and other tools to help the NHS with implementation.

Bed Occupancy

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will estimate the number of extra hospital beds required to reduce bed occupancy rates to 85 per cent. of their current level in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement; [184099]

(2) what plans he has to reduce bed occupancy in NHS hospitals. [184224]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is not possible to make an estimate of this kind at either a national or strategic health authority level. Bed occupancy depends not only on the number of beds provided, but on the level of demand for those beds and the way flow through beds is managed.

Average or snap shot weekly bed occupancy is often not the critical factor for bed availability: rather it is the hourly levels of bed occupancy and the temporary mismatch between admissions and discharges that influence the ability of trusts to admit emergency patients without delay and avoid the cancellation of electives. Much bed capacity can be released through simply reducing the current, often substantial, temporary peaks and troughs in bed occupancy.

Trusts have identified improving the way they use their bed capacity as a top priority and significant support is being delivered through the national programme to improve throughput in accident and emergency. Improved use of beds is critical to delivering this priority alongside the priorities on electives.

Branded Medicine Prices

Siobhain McDonagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which country in Europe has the highest prices for branded medicines; and what the range of prices is. [183665]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Each year, the Department publishes a comparison of branded medicine prices in the United Kingdom with a range of European countries and the United States. The latest published figures for 2002 show that the UK is the highest among these European comparator countries. The range of prices is shown in the table.

Bilateral comparisons of ex-manufacturer prices

Country	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*Five year[1] average*
France	85	84	80	81	81	81
Germany	108	97	91	94	95	95
Italy	81	83	79	82	86	86
Netherlands	n/a	n/a	81	84	88	89
Spain	71	67	64	67	75	75
UK	100	100	100	100	100	100
USA	174	184	209	217	201	204
Austria	81	83	77	81	86	86
Belgium	86	84	78	81	86	86
Finland	86	85	83	84	88	89
Ireland	90	88	83	88	93	93

[1] This is based on bilateral comparisons, i.e. the form and strength matches occurred between the UK and another country, using average annual exchange rates.

Dentistry

Mr. Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in Morley and Rothwell constituency have taken commitment payments to devote more time to NHS dentistry. [179682]

Miss Melanie Johnson: 18 general dental service (CDS) dentists in the Morley and Rothwell constituency received commitment payments in April 2004 for the quarter ending March 2004.

Commitment payments are based on dentists' gross fees, together with a patient registration requirement for the higher payments and are based on previous years, so do not require additional time in the future to be devoted to national health service dentistry. Commitment payments will be increased, up to a maximum threshold, if a dentist takes on additional CDS work.

Departmental Accounting Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who the Finance Director of *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the NHS Appointments Commission and *(c)* the Food Standards Agency is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183424]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The finance directors/managers of the three bodies and their qualifications are:

Body	*Name and position*	*Qualification*
Department of Health	Mr. Richard Douglas (Finance Director)	CIPFA
National Health Service Appointments Commission	Ms Lynn Shadford (Finance Manager)	ICAEW
Food Standards Agency	Mr. Allan Hutton (Finance Director)	CIMA, CIPFA

In the five year period starting 1999–2000, the Department has prepared resource accounts in each year. The resource accounts were qualified in 1999–2000 arising from limitation in audit scope.

The Food Standards Agency has prepared three sets of resource accounts from 2000–01.

Apart from the above qualified opinion on the Department's resource account, all accounts have been given a true and fair opinion by the comptroller and auditor general.

The first summarised account of the NHS Appointments Commission was qualified in 2001–02 arising from limitation in audit scope. The 2002–03 account was unqualified.

The audit opinions for 2003–04 will be available later in the year.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the *(a)* number, *(b)* value and *(c)* purpose of contracts his Department holds with (i) A. T. Kearney, (ii) PricewaterhouseCoopers and (iii) Atos KPMG. [180440]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 28 June 2004]:* The Department does not centrally hold a record of the number or the purpose of individual contracts. Only payments made are recorded.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what departmental expenditure was on *(a)* mobile telephones, *(b)* hospitality and *(c)* taxis in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest accounting period for which figures are available. [184552]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

£000

	1996–97	*2003–04*
Mobile telephones	[1]33	222
Taxis	[2]—	403
Hospitality	105	109

[1] This figure relates to national health service regional offices only. Mobile phone costs were not identified separately from other telecommunications expenditure in the rest of the Department.
[2] Not available—taxi costs were not separately identified in 1996–97.

Departmental Legal Costs

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost to the Department of external legal advice was in the last 12 months. [180324]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has a service level agreement with the legal division of the Department of Work and Pensions for the provision of legal services, including advice. The value of the agreement was £4.5 million in 2003–04. External legal services are used, often on commercial matters, but the specific costs of this advice cannot be dis-aggregated from the overall cost of consultancy services without incurring disproportionate costs.

Diabetes

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the numbers of *(a)* type 1 and *(b)* type 2 diabetics. [R] [183715]

Ms Rosie Winterton: An estimated 1.3 million people in England have diabetes. About 15 per cent. of these have type 1 diabetes.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he expects the UK Scrutiny Committee to report on the future provision of screening for type 2 diabetes; [183717]

(2) what evidence he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the number of individuals suffering from diabetes who have not yet been formally diagnosed. [183718]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The United Kingdom national screening committee (NSC) is undertaking a development project on the feasibility and impact of screening patients at greatest risk of diabetes in disadvantaged areas, reaching high risk groups through primary care. The Department has also commissioned some additional research to look at the prevalence of type 2 diabetes in the population.

This work will inform the advice the NSC has been asked to give on the most effective policy for screening for type 2 diabetes. It will report to the Department in 2005.

Environmental Sustainability

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies spent on (i) electricity use and (ii) water and sewerage services in each year since 1997. [181726]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Costs for the principal buildings on the Department's London estate are as follows.

Electricity

Year	*(£000s)*
1997–98	615,007
1998–99	614,783
1999–2000	634,859
2000–01	545,079
2001–02	579,102
2002–03	551,938
2003–04	572,782

Water and Sewerage

Year	*(£000s)*
1997–98	36,396
1998–99	33,614
1999–2000	32,607
2000–01	32,224
2001–02	29,009
2002–03	34,684
2003–04	29,372

London staff of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) occupy buildings that are rented and most of the utilities are included within the service charge. However, figures for electricity costs only are available for Hannibal House, which is shared between MHRA and Departmental staff. Expenditure is as follows.

Electricity

Year	*(£000s)*
1997–98	58,654
1998–99	53,124
1999–2000	48,124
2000–01	49,219
2001–02	53,689
2002–03	50,382
2003–04	57,855

Expenditure for the wheelchair evaluation centre at Blackpool, part of MHRA, is as follows. Figures are for electricity and gas combined.

Electricity and Gas

Year	*(£000s)*
1997–98	6,074
1998–99	6,118
1999–2000	4,835
2000–01	5,029
2001–02	6,522
2002–03	5,275
2003–04	6,009

Water and Sewerage

Year	*(£000s)*
1997–98	1,407
1998–99	1,478
1999–2000	1,527
2000–01	1,754
2001–02	2,013
2002–03	1,922
2003–04	1,466

The National Health Service Purchasing and Supplies Agency became an agency of the Department in April 2000. Figures for the years following are as follows.

Electricity

Year	*(£000s)*
2000–01	23,591
2001–02	32,901
2002–03	38,570
2003–04	30,122

Water and Sewerage

Year	*(£000s)*
2000–01	3,704
2001–02	2,576
2002–03	2,476
2003–04	2,292

Figures for the NHS Pensions Agency are as follows.

Electricity

Year	*(£000s)*
1997–98	60,554
1998–99	61,333
1999–2000	55,326

Electricity

Year	*(£000s)*
2000–01	50,678
2001–02	52,919
2002–03	46,787
2003–04	56,309

Water and Sewerage

Year	*(£000s)*
1997–98	26,237
1998–99	27,459
1999–2000	30,675
2000–01	13,542
2001–02	23,026
2002–03	24,218
2003–04	27,003

The NHS Estates Agency (NHSE) occupies rented office space in Leeds city centre. NHSE is not billed separately for its energy and water; these are included in its service charge.

Instrument Sterilisation

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the contracts let or in the process of tendering for the provision of instrument sterilisation services to NHS trust hospitals giving the *(a)* location of each service, *(b)* the hospitals for which it will provide the service and *(c)* the dates of the period of contract; and what further contracts for similar services he intends to let in each of the next three years. [184756]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* Contracts for the provision of sterile services may arise as a result of an individual outsourcing procurement, as part of a large private finance initiative or public private partnership or where one national health service trust provides such services for others.

Decisions on whether to let contracts and to whom are for individual NHS trusts to take, within the rules relating to such procurements and details are not held centrally.

As part of their strategies for modernising sterile services, strategic health authorities are encouraging the setting up of joint ventures, which entails a number of NHS trusts pooling their demand, and advertising jointly for a private sector partner. Information about the joint ventures established so far is set out in the table. The details of these contracts have not yet been agreed.

Trusts	*Date of advertisement*
The Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	June 2003
Pan Birmingham Group	
University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust	November 2003
Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust	
Birmingham Women's Healthcare NHS Trust	
Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Trust	
Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust	
Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	
Birmingham Heartlands and Solihull Hospitals NHS Trust	
South Birmingham Primary Care Trust	
Kent Group	
The Medway NHS Trust	November 2003
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust	
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	
South Manchester and North Cheshire Group	
South Manchester University Hospital Trust	November 2003
North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	
Thames Valley Group	
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	November 2003
Heatherwood and Wexham Park NHS Trust	
Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust	

Internet Drug Sales

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to prevent the advertising and selling of drugs via the internet that are only available in the UK with a general practitioner's prescription. [183492]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The responsibility for regulating medicines on the United Kingdom market lies with the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), an executive agency of the Department. The MHRA takes the view that internet and mail order sale and supply of medicines is acceptable, provided the legislative requirements are met. There are perfectly legitimate internet-based dispensing pharmacies, where patients can sign their prescriptions and post them to the pharmacist to be filled. Medicines are then sent back to the patient by post. The law allows for this.

The MHRA is also responsible for the enforcement of these requirements and any website brought to its attention for breaching regulations regarding advertising, sale and supply of medicines will be investigated. Such sites will be contacted, initially in order to seek compliance and although the MHRA has no powers to force closures of websites, it seeks to achieve compliance through internet service providers (ISPs), which are advised on UK law.

The MHRA recognises that, in order to deal with the risks posed by the internet, it is impossible to act unilaterally. To this end, the MHRA's enforcement group works closely with other Government Departments and law enforcement authorities, both in the European Community and elsewhere, in an effort to address possible courses of action.

Less-invasive Technologies

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the use of less-invasive technologies in the NHS. [174965]

Mr. Hutton: Many diseases and illnesses which have been routinely treated with surgical intervention are now being successfully managed or cured with less invasive forms of treatment. Last year the Department issued guidelines to the national health service governing the use of new interventional procedures. The guidelines are supported by the work of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE).

NICE is responsible for assessing the safety and efficacy of new technologies to protect the safety of patients. It also supports clinicians in the process of managing and introducing new procedures.

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on support available for those suffering from myasthenia gravis; and what steps he is taking to raise awareness of myasthenia gravis among the medical profession. [184213]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 15 July 2004]*: Patients with myasthenia gravis are able to access a range of national health service services. Although there is no cure for this condition, there are a number of treatments available to help control it. These include medication, surgery, and palliation.

We have no specific plans to raise awareness of the condition among the medical profession. However, we are committed to improving services for patients with neurological diseases. The national service framework for long term conditions will focus on improving services for people with neurological conditions. While the framework will not cover myasthenia gravis specifically, it will recommend improvements in standards, care and support that will benefit everyone with a neurological condition.

Non NICE-appraised Treatments

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary care trusts in England do not fund non-National Institute for Clinical Excellence appraised products and treatments. [183988]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what grounds primary care trusts may refuse to fund non-National Institute for Clinical Excellence appraised products if a clinician wishes to prescribe them. [183989]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for primary care trusts (PCTs) to determine what criteria they use in deciding whether to fund a treatment or therapy which has not been appraised by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence. However, we would expect PCTs to consider the available evidence on clinical and cost effectiveness of treatments.

Critical Care Networks (Transfers)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 5 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 580W, on critical care networks (transfers), for what reasons patients are transferred between hospitals for non-clinical reasons; and if he will make a statement. [184206]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Critical care transfers between hospitals occur for non-clinical reasons where critical care beds or other necessary resources are not immediately available. There are 29 critical care networks that work with commissioners and providers to assess the needs of the critically ill, plan services to meet those needs, agree standards and monitor the delivery of critical care. It is their role to ensure transfers for non-clinical reasons occur only within the network and only occur following consultant-to-consultant discussion and agreement.

Pharmaceutical Price Regulation

Andy Burnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what negotiations have been held with the pharmaceutical industry following the consultation on the future of the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme; and when they will be completed. [183533]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Following consultation on the future of the pharmaceutical price regulation scheme (PPRS), the Department started confidential bilateral negotiations with the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry on new arrangements. These negotiations started in February 2004 and are continuing. It remains the Government's preference to include another voluntary PPRS agreement with the research-based pharmaceutical industry and to do this as speedily as possible commensurate with a satisfactory outcome for the taxpayer and the national health service.

Prescription Medicines Prices

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to ensure that the prices paid in the UK for branded prescription medicines are comparable with those in other countries in Europe; and if he will make a statement. [183666]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department, on behalf of the United Kingdom Government, is currently negotiating with the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) on a new Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme. It is seeking to negotiate another voluntary agreement that delivers prices that represent value for money for the taxpayer and the national health service as well as reasonable returns for the research-based pharmaceutical industry.

Restraint Procedures

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what restraint procedures are allowed to be used within a psychiatric hospital when a patient becomes violent or aggressive to ensure that the patient or members of staff are not physically injured; and if he will make a statement. [184133]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Guidance on the use of restraint, for those detained under section of the Mental Health Act 1983, is laid out in the Mental Health Act Code of Practice.

Section 19.12 of the Code of Practice states that:

"Any restraint used should:

be reasonable in the circumstance;

apply the minimum force necessary to prevent harm to the patient or others;

be used for only as long as is necessary;

be sensitive to gender and race issues."

Trusts should regularly audit their control and restraint procedures consistent with the framework of clinical governance.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence is currently carrying out its final consultation on its guidance, "Disturbed (violent) behaviour: the short-term management of disturbed (violent) behaviour in in-patient psychiatric settings", which is scheduled for publication later in the year.

In February this year, "Developing Positive Practice to Support the Safe and Therapeutic Management of Aggression and Violence in Mental Health In-patient Settings" was issued to assist services by the National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) programme on the management of violence.

The NIMHE programme is also developing a scheme for regulation and accreditation for trainers and training in the prevention and management of aggression and violence in mental health services.

Salary and Recruitment Costs

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* the cost of recruitment and *(b)* the total cumulative salary bill are for the (i) national cancer director, (ii) national director for heart disease, (iii) chairman of the better hospital food panel, (iv) national director of mental health, (v) national director for older people's services and (vi) alliance development manager at the tobacco policy unit. [184551]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The four national clinical directors are each employed on a national health service consultant contract and the Department reimburses the costs of their time. The alliance development manager, which has been renamed regional liaison manager, is a secondment from the voluntary sector.

Because these posts were filled through secondment arrangements as permitted by the Civil Service Commissioners, there were no recruitment costs incurred in these appointments.

The chairman of the better hospital food panel receives no remuneration and there were no recruitment costs associated with his appointment.

TNF Blockade

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received from consultant rheumatologists regarding the prescribing of TNF blockade; whether the obligation to fund it includes funding the nursing and administrative infrastructure necessary to facilitate and enable funding the administration of the drug; what guidance he has issued to primary care trusts and acute trusts; and if he will make a statement. [184875]

Dr. Ladyman: We are not aware of having received any representations from consultant rheumatologists on this subject. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) reported on these drugs in 2002, so we would expect that any representations would have been received by them. There has, however, been correspondence from hon. and right hon. Members and the public, as well as several parliamentary questions, on anti-TNF therapy.

National health service bodies are under a statutory obligation to fund treatments recommended in NICE technology appraisals. We expect primary care trusts (PCTs) to meet their statutory obligations, and strategic health authorities to follow up any allegations of non-compliance.

The NHS has three months from the date of publication of guidance on technology appraisals to provide funding, so that clinical decisions made by doctors involving NICE recommended treatments or drugs can be funded. We last reminded PCTs of these obligations in guidance published in January 2003.

The Department has not issued guidelines on the dispensing of anti-TNF drugs. NICE issued guidance on these drugs in March 2002. They recommended that consultant rheumatologists, or consultant paediatric rheumatologists in the case of juvenile idiopathic arthritis, should prescribe these drugs, in accordance with the guidelines set out by the British Society for Rheumatology or British Paediatric Rheumatology Group.

Wiltshire Ambulance Trust

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the criteria are for the Wiltshire Project for evaluation of the Wiltshire Ambulance Trust. [184230]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In April 2004 Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA), in partnership with Wiltshire Ambulance National Health Service Trust, embarked on a project to consider how emergency services could be better shaped to meet the demands of the future.

The criteria for the project are a matter for the SHA and trust.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 20 July 2004

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Job Losses (Civil Servants)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Leader of the House how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Office announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisers. [185467]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the answer which my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury gave today.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Climate Change

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the terms of reference are for the review of the Government's climate change strategy; what procedures she has established for the conduct of the review; and when she expects to publish the final report. [183680]

Mr. Morley: The Government remain committed to reviewing the UK climate change programme this year. We will be making an announcement shortly on our plans for the review.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research her Department has commissioned on the implications of Common Agricultural Policy reform; and when she next plans to meet her European Union counterparts to discuss Common Agricultural Policy reform. [184007]

Alun Michael: Defra commissioned several analyses of the likely impacts of the reform proposals before they were agreed, to help inform the Government's negotiating position. In addition analysis of the redistribution of subsidy and other effects arising from implementation of the Single Payment Scheme in England was carried out in-house. These studies are all published on Defra's website. A programme to monitor and evaluate the CAP reforms is also being put in place. This will include a CAP Environmental Observatory to monitor the environmental impacts of changing farm practices and production levels, and a project to analyse the economic linkages of the agricultural industry, including the Single Payment Scheme, with the wider rural economy.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, met her European counterparts at the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 19 July, where she set out the UK's views on reform of the CAP sugar regime and on proposals to review the EU's Rural Development Regulation—an increasingly important element of the CAP.

Health and Pesticide Exposure

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the report of the survey of Health and Pesticide Exposure, undertaken by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine to be published; and if she will make a statement. [184612]

Alun Michael: The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine sent a preliminary report to Defra on the afternoon of Tuesday 13 July 2004.

This is a preliminary draft that has not yet been subject to peer review, as is usual prior to the publication of any scientific report. We are currently seeking independent experts to carry out such a review. We will send their comments to the researcher at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, inviting him to address them in his final report. This may necessitate redrafting the report. We hope that this process will be completed by the end of October.

Defra is also continuing to seek the contractor's co-operation with an independent audit of the clinical phase of the study. This was described in my answer to the hon. Member's previous question given on 26 May 2004. It is hoped that this will be completed by late autumn this year.

Landfill Gas

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many megawatts of renewable energy were generated from landfill gas in each year since 1998; and what projections she has made of how much renewable energy will be generated from landfill gas in each year from 2005 to 2010. [181223]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

Electricity generation from landfill gas in the UK in each year since 1998 is as follows:

	MWh
1998	1,185,000
1999	1,703,000
2000	2,188,000
2001	2,507,000
2002	2,679,000
2003	3,276,000

Source:
Digest of UK Energy Statistics 2004

Forecasts of renewables are not giving for individual technologies because the Renewables Obligation is market led and therefore the precise make up in the future will be decided by the market.

Milk

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many litres

of liquid milk were imported into the UK from EU countries in each of the last five years, broken down by country of origin. [172935]

Alun Michael *[pursuant to his reply, 20 May 2004, c. 1110W]*: My answer referred to a table showing UK imports of liquid milk from the EU 15 member states in each of the last five years to 2003, broken down by country of despatch and a footnote made clear that the figures were provisional and subject to amendment. It has since been established that a figure under the 2003 entry for the Irish Republic was incorrect. The figure should have read 19,494 thousand litres. The rest of the answer remains correct and the amended table is as follows:

UK imports of liquid milk from EU15 countries, 1999–2003

Thousand litres

Country	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Grand total*
Irish Republic	60,342	60,199	54,835	26,233	19,494	221,103
Denmark	30,334	25,166	9,421	795	425	66,140
Germany	17,078	19,531	11,196	5,629	3,888	57,323
France	13,288	8,514	9,667	10,299	8,600	50,368
Belgium	6,786	6,922	3,811	2,345	3,759	23,624
Netherlands	3,620	462	919	2,198	1,027	8,227
Austria	2,844	1,355	—	—	—	4,200
Italy	114	214	91	101	70	590
Portugal	—	0	—	—	40	40
Spain	23	14	—	—	—	37
Sweden	1	—	—	—	—	1
EU 15 total	134,431	122,378	89,940	47,600	37,303	

Single Farm Payments

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what conclusions she has reached about the future prospects for *(a)* tenant farmers, *(b)* livestock farmers, *(c)* arable farmers, *(d)* horticulture producers, *(e)* moorland farmers, *(f)* non-moorland, severely disadvantaged area farmers, *(g)* traditional family farms and *(h)* all other farms following her Department's published assessment of the likely impact of her plans for the future disbursement of single farm payments. [184759]

Alun Michael: By decoupling subsidy and implementing the Single Payment Scheme in England, as announced on 22 April, the Government are providing a policy framework conducive to encouraging enterprise and market orientation in line with the Strategy for Sustainable Food and Farming. Future prospects for agriculture depend on various factors but the Government are optimistic that farmers and growers will rise to the challenges and opportunities that present themselves.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

House of Commons (Administration) Act 1978

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire representing the House of Commons Commission if he will review the workings of the House of Commons (Administration) Act 1978 in the light of progress with the implementation of the Braithwaite Report on the structures and procedures of the House, with particular reference to the recommendation contained in it that there should be a further review in about five years from July 1999. [184408]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Almost all the recommendations of the 1999 Braithwaite Report have been implemented by the House of Commons Commission. There has been continuing follow-up, including review of estates and works, and reporting services. The Commission frequently discusses House governance issues; most recently, at its June and July meetings, considering the recommendations of a major review of IS/IT governance, which will be taken forward in consultation with the Information Committee and the authorities of the House of Lords. In the circumstances, I see no current need for a broader review.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AIDS

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action the Government are taking to tackle the problem of AIDS worldwide. [184317]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I refer my hon. Friend to the written statement made by the Secretary of State to the House earlier today and to the Government's new Strategy 'Taking Action: The UK's Strategy for Tackling HIV/AIDS in the Developing World' copies of which have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Empty Houses

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development for how many empty houses his Department is responsible; and if he will make a statement. [182143]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is not responsible for any empty houses

Haiti

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action he is taking to address the long-term causes of environmental vulnerability of poor communities in Haiti and the

Dominican Republic following the recent flooding and landslides in the border region between the two countries. [184328]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID responded swiftly to the recent floods in Hispaniola providing £0.5 million of immediate humanitarian support to the relief operation in Haiti through the United Nations and non-governmental organisations. £259,400 of this money will go in support of emergency programmes to re-launch agricultural production and help provide food security, water and sanitation, distribution of non-food items and interventions in emergency education.

The longer-term reconstruction and development needs of Haiti have recently been assessed, costed and set out in a two-year Interim Co-operation Framework covering the period July 2004 to September 2006. One of its specific priority sectors is environmental protection and rehabilitation. An International Donor Conference will take place on 19–20 July in Washington DC at which donors will pledge financial support to Haiti. The UK will participate in this Conference. DFID's financial contribution will be through the EU and shareholdings in the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank.

In the Dominican Republic, DFID provides support through a small grants scheme, which assists non-government organisations to target poverty reduction.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to measure the criterion the Department set itself in its current Regional Assistance Plan for the Caribbean of improved understanding of Haiti's situation and options for recovery. [184329]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID undertook a fact-finding mission to Haiti in June 2003, in order to become familiar with the situation on the ground. In 2004 DFID sent two missions to Haiti to assess the humanitarian situation, following the political violence and instability in the first quarter of 2004, and the floods in May.

DFID works closely with an international network of bilateral and multilateral institutions working to support Haiti, including the Haiti Contact Group co-ordinated by the World Bank. The UK will be represented at the upcoming International Donors Conference on Haiti, to be held in Washington on July 19 and 20, which will focus on securing donor support for the Interim Co-operation Framework.

DFID also maintains contact with civil society organisations in order to get their perspective on the situation in Haiti. DFID officials met with UK NGOs working in Haiti in May 2004 and DFID receives regular information from civil society organisations through various channels, including the Haiti Support Group.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how he will work with the EU to ensure that EU aid to the interim Haitian Government is conditional on ensuring that the aid is directed towards those most in need. [184331]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The provision of EU aid to Haiti under the European Development Fund (EOF) has been subject to constraints applied by member states within the Common Position since January 2001. EOF 8 funds have only been available for civil society projects and electoral support. On 16 July, the appropriate measures put in place by the EU in relation to Haiti under Article 96 of the Cotonou agreement were amended and the European Commission will notify the interim Haitian Government of the funds available under EOF 9.

EU development assistance can be provided only after free and fair elections have been held. Once funds start to flow, DFID will monitor how these are spent as part of our continuing watching brief on Haiti. DFID will be particularly keen to ensure that poverty reduction is the principal focus of this assistance.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking for immediate release of funds for Haiti under the European Development Fund (EDF 9). [184332]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: €27 million from EDF 8 will continue to support programmes of direct benefit to the population of Haiti through civil society organisation and the electoral process.

On 16 July, the European Council agreed that the appropriate measures, which had been in place by the EU in relation to Haiti under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, should be amended. This decision means that the European Commission will now notify the interim Haitian Government of the level of funding under EOF 9 which is available to Haiti, and will proceed to draft the new Country Strategy Paper.

Under EOF 9, €95 million is available to Haiti. Of this €72 million cannot be disbursed until the Country Strategy Paper is developed, and free and fair elections have been held. At this point the National Indicative Programme will be prepared which sets out how the detail of these funds will be used. The other €23 million, under EOF 9, can be released prior to the signing of the National Indicative Programme.

Kenya

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the Kenyan Government on assistance on their current budget deficits; and if he will make a statement. [185020]

Hilary Benn: DFID is in regular contact with the Kenyan Government on this issue. DFID's Kenya Country Assistance Plan recognises that budget support is Kenya's preferred form of aid. It also makes clear that the level of British aid to Kenya, and whether or not DFID will provide bilateral poverty reduction budget support, will depend on the pace with which the Kenyan Government implements its Economic Recovery Strategy, especially in tackling corruption, preparing and implementing budgets that benefit the poor, and strengthening public financial management.

Progress is not yet sufficient to enable us to provide such support. DFID is particularly concerned about recent reports of corruption allegedly involving senior members of the Kenyan Government and we have urged President Kibaki to ensure that appropriate and firm action is taken to investigate these reports, make the

results public and take action against all those found to have acted corruptly. However, DFID will continue to use sectoral support and project aid where we believe that it can have a sustainable impact on poverty reduction and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in Kenya.

TRANSPORT

Rail Services (Southampton)

5. **Mr. Denham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the Strategic Rail Authority regarding rail routes from Southampton to the midlands; and if he will make a statement. [184919]

Dr. Howells: Ministers and officials in my Department meet regularly with the Strategic Rail Authority about a wide range of issues.

The Government have set out their long-term proposals for passenger and freight services in the "Future of Rail" White Paper.

West Coast Main Line

14. **John Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on improvements to the west coast main line. [184928]

Dr. Howells: The West Coast Upgrade is being delivered in line with the Strategy published by the Strategic Rail Authority in June 2003. New tilting trains have entered service, and a new timetable will be introduced in September this year with enhanced service frequencies and reduced journey times. Further improvements will follow in 2005 and 2008.

Community Transport

15. **Mr. Todd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport support he has given to community transport in South Derbyshire. [184929]

Mr. McNulty: Most of the capital funding for local transport provided by the Department is allocated through Local Transport Plans, and so it is for the Local Transport Authorities to determine how these resources are best used to serve local priorities. This year we have, however, made £465,750 available through the Rural Bus Challenge Programme to support the Southern Derbyshire Rural Access Initiative

National Railcard

16. **Lawrie Quinn**: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the proposed introduction of a national railcard. [184930]

Mr. McNulty: My right hon. Friend has asked the Strategic Rail Authority and the industry to work up proposals for a national railcard. The SRA is currently taking this forward and I expect to receive advice later this year.

Road Safety

17. **Bob Russell**: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many crashes involving vehicles on the hard shoulder of motorways occurred in the last year for which figures are available. [184931]

Mr. Jamieson: The number of personal injury accidents that occurred on hard shoulders of English trunk motorways in 2002, the latest year for which validated data is available, was 104.

The provisional number of personal injury accidents that occurred on these motorway hard shoulders in 2003 was 73.

No records are kept of non-injury accidents.

Seafaring Ratings

18. **Mr. Austin Mitchell**: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects to make a decision on whether to introduce an employment and training link for UK seafaring ratings and officers as part of the tonnage tax regime. [184932]

Mr. Jamieson: The tonnage tax regime is under review and representations have been invited by the end of September. The possibility of an employment link is one of the issues that has already been raised. We will announce our conclusions when all of the representations have been carefully considered.

Airport Noise

19. **David Taylor**: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent representations he has received about the need for noise controls near regional airports. [184933]

Mr. McNulty: Although from time to time the Department receives representations about noise control measures at various regional airports, recent representations have mostly been about Nottingham East Midlands Airport. The Government's conclusions on proposals to tackle operational aircraft noise from civil aircraft were published in December 2003.

Camera Safety Partnerships

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to publicise his Department's guidelines for the operation of camera safety partnerships. [184613]

Mr. Jamieson: The current handbook of rules and guidelines for the operation of the safety camera cost recovery programme was placed in the Library of the House on 5 December 2003. The handbook is currently being updated for 2005–06. The new handbook will be placed in the House Library and published on the DfT website.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what monitoring processes are in place to ensure that his Department's guidelines for the operation of camera safety partnerships are observed. [184614]

Dr. Howells: The programme rules require the safety camera partnerships' accounts to be audited annually by the audit commission. Partnerships must also provide regular data to the Department on numbers of

collisions and casualties. An independent report on the first three years of the operation of the safety camera programme by University College London and PA Consulting Group was published on 15 June, confirming the major reduction in collisions, deaths and casualties achieved at camera sites.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the level of public awareness of the guidelines that are in force for the operation of camera safety partnerships. [184615]

Mr. Jamieson: *The criteria for the deployment of* safety camera and the rules on camera conspicuity and visibility rules have been placed on the DfT website. The University College London and PA Consulting Group report on the first three years of the safety camera programme, published on 15 June, includes a description of the programme and the key rules and guidelines, and this is also available on the DfT website.

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money was received by central Government in 2003 in fines paid by motorists who were prosecuted for speeding as a result of the evidence of fixed cameras. [179818]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 21 June 2004]*: During the financial year 2002–03, the latest year for which figures are available, the amount of conditional offer fixed penalty fines relating to speed and red light safety cameras within the safety camera programme was £68,872,320. From this amount, £54,256,502 was returned to the Safety Camera Partnerships to cover their costs. We do not hold information centrally for camera operations other than those operated within the Safety Camera Partnerships. Neither is information held centrally on the amount of fines raised as a result of court proceedings.

Figures for fixed cameras alone are not separately available.

Commercial Vehicles (Safety)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the Highways Agency to publish its report on safety of commercial vehicles; and if he will make a statement. [184301]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency intends to publish a report on its Study of Trunk Road Accidents Involving Goods Vehicles early in 2005.

The Highways Agency is currently undertaking research into accidents involving Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). The work is not yet complete but the initial findings suggest that there are a number of complex and interrelated issues involved with HGV accidents.

Diesel Deposits (Prosecutions)

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many prosecutions there have been in each of the last five years as a direct result of a vehicle depositing diesel on the road. [185552]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is not collected by my Department in this format.

In 2002–03 the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency tested 466,000 heavy goods vehicles, 4,673 of which failed due to faults with the fuel system and also with oil leaks. During the same period 2,031 HGVs were given a prohibition for faults to the fuel system or for oil leaks at the roadside.

Harwich

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much funding has been spent in the Harwich constituency from the Local Transport Plan. [184998]

Mr. McNulty: The constituency of Harwich falls within the Essex Local Transport Plan area. Essex has been allocated £109 million of local transport plan funding since 2000.

Decisions on how much of this funding is spent in Harwich are a matter for the authorities concerned.

Infrastructure/Services (Storm Damage)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has commissioned on preventative measures to restrict damage to transport *(a)* infrastructure and *(b)* services caused by adverse weather conditions. [184037]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has commissioned a number of projects addressing the impact of adverse weather conditions on transport infrastructure and services. This includes the following recent projects:

(a) Infrastructure

- Investigation of the value for money of winter maintenance
- Prevention and removal of snow and ice on roads
- De-icing of modern surfaces
- Salt spread rates for thin surfacings
- Low humidity salting
- New de-icers for Midland Links
- Review of flooding incidents on the (HA) network
- Slope stability and establishment of vegetation
- Revision of wind data for BS5400
- The Changing Climate: Impact on the DfT

(b) Services

- Performance of variable message signs in adverse weather conditions
- High Speed Craft Wind Heeling Moment Methodology
- Integrated Safety Guards and Spray Suppression for Heavy Goods Vehicles

The majority of the projects are funded by the Highways Agency and further information can be obtained from their website www.highways.gov.uk. The remaining projects are funded by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and DfT(C) with further information available at www.mcga.gov.uk and www.dft.gov.uk respectively.

MOT Certificates

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether cars registered in England, but whose MOT vehicle test certificate expires during their stay in Northern Ireland, will be exempt from prosecution *(a)* while in Northern Ireland and *(b)* immediately on their return to England where the

vehicle owner can demonstrate that the reason for not having their vehicle examined was due to the industrial action of Northern Ireland civil servants; and if he will make a statement. [184763]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: The industrial action in Northern Ireland would have no impact on cars registered in Great Britain as such vehicles can only be MOT tested here. If the MOT certificate expires during a stay in Northern Ireland, the driver of the vehicle could face prosecution in the Province. On returning to GB, the vehicle would be exempt from the requirement to hold a MOT certificate provided it was driven directly to a pre-arranged MOT test.

Motorways (Traffic Officers)

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many traffic officers have been deployed on motorways in England; and where they have been deployed. [184791]

Mr. Jamieson: There are currently 92 traffic officers, both on the road and in the control room, responsible for motorway patrols in the West Midlands. This will increase to 180 by the end of the year.

Nottingham East Midlands Airport

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether an assessment has been made of the environmental impact of the proposed new noise preference routing *(a)* pole and *(b)* Trent 2 over southern and western Nottinghamshire for aircraft using Nottingham East Midlands Airport; [183978]

(2) whether the proposed flight path *(a)* pole and *(b)* Trent 2 over southern and western Nottinghamshire for aircraft using Nottingham East Midlands Airport has been agreed; [183979]

(3) whether he will impose time restrictions on using the flight path *(a)* pole and *(b)* Trent 2 over south west Nottinghamshire for aircraft using Nottingham East Midlands Airport to ban night flights between 11 pm and 6 am. [183980]

Dr. Howells: These proposed airspace changes have been the subject of an environmental assessment by Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA). After careful examination of the proposals, the Department is satisfied that they provide a safe and effective solution for all airspace users in the East Midlands, while mitigating the environmental impact to the greatest extent possible. Officials have conveyed this response to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). It will then be for the CAA to agree the changes with NEMA.

In order to mitigate the environmental impact of the new POLE Standard Instrument Departure route and following consultation, NEMA have given an undertaking that the route will not be used between the hours of 2200 and 0600. The Northwest bound Trent route has been realigned to avoid over-flight of Derby, which would represent a significant net environmental benefit.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations have been made to him from councils in Nottinghamshire about the proposed new flight paths over southern and western Nottinghamshire for aircraft using Nottingham East Midlands Airport. [183981]

Dr. Howells: None directly, though I am aware of representations made to the Civil Aviation Authority and Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA) by various local authorities in this connection.

Road Congestion

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what methods of tackling road congestion between Manchester and Birmingham he has considered since 10 December 2002 in addition to widening the M6 motorway between junctions 11 and 20. [181667]

Mr. Jamieson: The document "Managing our Roads" published in July 2003 set out the Government's approach to tackling congestion and the various approaches which are being considered in addition to widening motorways. However, the Secretary of State for Transport has published a consultation paper "M6: giving motorists a choice", which invites views on a new expressway to run parallel with the M6 between Birmingham and Manchester as an alternative to widening the existing M6.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of road congestion in Essex in each of the last 10 years. [183599]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department does not make estimates of the costs of road congestion in Essex. Detailed information on traffic flows on all roads in the county would be needed for such an estimate. The cost of its collection to the highway authorities in the county would exceed the value of the information to decision-makers.

Road Contractors

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicles used each of the roads built using the design, build, finance and operate contracting method, in each month of operation; who the contractor was in each case; how much was paid under each contract; and if he will make a statement. [180846]

Mr. Jamieson: The table shows the traffic figure (in vehicle kilometres) for each financial year for each of my Department's Design Build Finance and Operate projects since these were opened to traffic. Providing figures for each month would be disproportionately expensive.

Project	*Company*	*Length of Road (km)*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
M1-A1	Yorkshire Link Ltd.	30	—	640	676	716	743	769
A69	Road Link (A69) Ltd.	34	489	494	488	505	526	537
A19	Autolink Concessionaires (A19)	118	—	1565	1611	1637	1698	1753

Project	Company	Length of Road (km)	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
	Ltd.							
A50	Connect (A50) Ltd.	57	—	675	731	793	856	864
M40	UK Highways M40 Ltd.	122	—	3844	3859	3932	3944	3944
A1(M)	Road Management Services (Peterborough) Ltd.	21	—	405	416	429	439	449
A417/ A419	Road Management Services (Gloucester) Ltd.	52	544	574	582	604	617	641
A30/ A35	Connect (A30/A35) Ltd.	102	—	—	591	634	649	695

Figures are given in millions of vehicle kilometres.

The following table shows the total payments made under my Department's Design Build Finance and Operate Contracts.

Financial year	£ million
1998–99	105
1999–2000	119
2000–01	142
2001–02	130
2002–03	128

CABINET OFFICE

Public Services

24. **Ms Keeble:** To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what steps he is taking to co-ordinate the improvement of public service delivery across Government. [184911]

Mr. Alexander: The Delivery and Reform Team, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, brings together those Heads of Units from the Cabinet Office, HM Treasury and No. 10 that are concerned with the delivery of better public services and civil service reform. The Delivery and Reform Team ensures co-ordination from the centre of the overall strategy and key strands of the Government's agenda.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Analogue Radio

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what plans she has made for switching off analogue radio signals; what the likely timescale is; what criteria will be applied; what target she has set for the proportion of households with access to digital technology before the analogue signal is switched off; and if she will make a statement; [184127]

(2) what representations she has received regarding the switching off of analogue radio signals; and if she will make a statement. [184131]

Estelle Morris: Section 67 of the Broadcasting Act 1996 requires the Secretary of State to keep under review the development of digital radio for the purposes of considering how long it would be appropriate for sound broadcasting services to be provided in analogue form.

In particular, the Act requires her, on or before the fourth anniversary on which the first national digital multiplex is granted, to ask Ofcom and the BBC to report on the current position and future prospects for the provision of radio multiplex services; the availability of digital sound programme services and existing analogue services in digital form; and the ownership or possession of equipment capable of receiving digital sound services. These reports are to be submitted to the Secretary of State by 31 October. A number of other industry bodies have also been asked to submit any comments they wish to make. All contributions will be considered alongside the BBC and Ofcom reports, and the Government will publish their response.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185113]

Estelle Morris: Since my appointment as Green Minister for DCMS in July 2003, the Department has published its comprehensive Sustainable Development Strategy and a copy is in the Library of the House. I have encouraged collaboration at ministerial and official level with the Department for Education and Skills in connection with education for sustainable development. I have also had a bilateral meeting with the Minister of State for the Environment.

Publicly Owned Collections

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to her answer of 28 June 2004, what initiatives the Government have introduced to improve public access to items in publicly owned collections of museums, galleries and other civic buildings that are permanently in storage; and if she will make a statement. [185657]

Estelle Morris: DCMS encourages each of its sponsored museums and galleries to improve both intellectual and physical access to those collection items not on open display. Examples include the Natural History Museum Darwin Phase 1 Project which contains the Museum's remarkable collection of 22 million zoological items collected over the last 200 years and the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester's Collection Centre which opened up 70 per cent. of the Museum's collection to the public when it opened in 2001. The National Museum of Science and Industry will be opening a new branch of the National Railway Museum (Locomotion) at Shildon in September of this year. It will enable visitors to view up to 60 vehicles that they might not have been able to see previously. In each case the Department has contributed funding to these developments. We also encourage the development of virtual access. A recent example of this is 'Ingenious', the new website of the National Museum

of Science and Industry which allows access to 30,000 images from its collections, which might not otherwise be seen.

Wembley Stadium

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent representations she has received on progress on the new Wembley Stadium development; and what the latest estimated date is for completion. [183595]

Mr. Caborn: In the period since 1 April 2004 we have received no representations asking about progress towards completion of the Wembley Stadium development.

A key milestone for Wembley National Stadium Ltd. was the successful raising of the Stadium arch in June 2004. The Stadium remains on target for completion in January 2006 and to be built within budget.

We continue to work with all those involved in the development to ensure that public contributions are protected and used in the most efficient and effective ways possible.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent representations she has received on the costs of the new Wembley Stadium development. [183596]

Mr. Caborn: Since 1 April 2004 we have received letters from the right hon. Sir George Young and from Mr. Stuart Sutherland of Dornoch, Scotland, about the cost of the Wembley Stadium development.

The stadium remains on target for completion in January 2006 and to be built within budget.

We continue to work with all those involved in the Wembley National Stadium development to ensure that public contributions are protected and used in the most efficient and effective ways possible.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Access to Universities

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister for Women what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills regarding *(a)* the opportunities available for older women to attend universities and *(b)* how to increase opportunities for women to attend universities. [183712]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* We have regular bilaterals on the cross-Government skills agenda. These bilaterals cover a host of skills related items including, where relevant, issues relating to gender and age in industry and academia. Women returners will be helped by reforms in the Government's Skills Strategy, including the new learner entitlement for those without qualifications, better learner support, and better Information Advice and Guidance. Steps have already been taken to improve services for adults such as the University for Industry (Ufi)/learndirect national advice service. DTI is also taking forward a strategy to improve women's representation in science, engineering and technology, including a resource centre with a specific women returners project.

The Government are keen to ensure that everybody can access learning and qualifications and this is why the Access to Learning funds prioritise groups of students, like mature students who may have existing financial commitments, when allocating the funding. Other forms of financial support available are Career Development Loans, Parents Learning Allowance and the Adult Dependents Grant, which support students who have a financially dependent adult family member.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Apprenticeships

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what policies are followed by his Department to encourage young people to enter apprenticeship schemes within the construction industry. [185339]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Changes to the Apprenticeship programme recently announced will benefit all sectors including construction. We want to put in place a coherent ladder of high quality vocational opportunities responsive to the needs of young people, older workers and business. We intend to build a family of apprenticeship programmes to suit a variety of needs from aged 14 upwards. These will include: Young Apprenticeships for 14 to 16-year-olds, a pre-apprenticeship route within the existing Entry to Employment programme, Apprenticeships at NVQ Level 2, Advanced Apprenticeships at NVQ Level 3 and a strengthened progression route into higher education, including vocational Foundation Degrees.

In addition we have set up a new network of employer-led Sector Skills Councils to work with government to meet the skill needs of their sectors. Construction Skills—the SSC for construction—was licensed in September 2003. A key role for SSCs is to encourage take up of apprenticeship places by young people and others.

The number of new entrants to the sector rose by 4 per cent. between 2001/02 and 2002/03 and the construction sector is the second most popular Apprenticeship framework with over 23,000 young people in training. Construction was also the most popular sector for both young people and employers responding to the recent Apprenticeship marketing campaign.

Family Support

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions of 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 12, on child poverty, if he will list for each year since 1997 for which data is available the resources that the Government has put into counselling and encouraging people to resolve their relationship difficulties in the interests of their children. [184445]

Margaret Hodge: There are a number of ways in which the Government encourage people to resolve relationship difficulties in the interests of the child. The Marriage and Relationship Support (MARS) grant funds activities aimed at helping people establish, maintain and develop successful relationships with their partners. This includes encouraging people to resolve

relationship difficulties in the interests of their children and meeting the needs of socially and commonly excluded groups.

The MARS programme (since 1997) provided grants as follows: 1997–98: £3.4 million; 1998–99: £3.0 million; 1999–2000: £3.2 million. Following Sir Graham Hart's recommendations in his report to the Lord Chancellor on Marriage Support Funding (published in November 1999), the allocation was increased as follows: 2000–01: £4 million; 2001–02: £4.5 million; 2002–03 and 2003–04: £5 million.

Additionally, Sure Start local programmes and Children's Centres provide a range of family support and counselling services and opportunities for couples to discuss relationship issues. Similarly, a Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) officer might be involved at court directions hearings in providing assistance to children and their families to help them reach agreement on arrangements for their children, primarily in respect of contact and residence.

Children's Centres

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the running costs of each children's centre have been since each was established, broken down by region. [185155]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: The Sure Start Unit does not hold details on the running costs for individual children's centres—this is a matter for local authorities.

Connexions

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent discussions he has had with HM Customs and Excise concerning the ability of local authorities acting as Connexions partnership lead bodies to reclaim VAT charged on services subcontracted to private providers; and if he will make a statement. [185070]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: Guidance on the ability of local authorities acting as Connexions Partnership lead bodies to reclaim VAT on services subcontracted to private providers was given at a workshop for Connexions Partnerships provided jointly with HM Customs and Excise on 20 April. Written guidance was issued to Partnerships on 12 May. We continue to work with HM Customs and Excise to consider, and advise on, individual Partnership proposals.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what programmes are being implemented by the Connexions Service to engage young people during the summer holiday period. [185357]

Margaret Hodge: The majority of Connexions Partnerships (40 out of 47) are the Lead Delivery Agents for the Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme. This provides diversionary and developmental activities for 8 to 19 year olds in school holiday periods. In addition 17 partnerships are involved with the delivery of the Big Lottery Fund's Uproject. This offers a similar range of activities and is aimed at 16 year olds who have no firm plans for their future. The Connexions Service is also responsible for signposting young people to a range of other activities provided by partner organisations.

The programmes comprise quality arts, sports and cultural activities which include an element of learning and self development.

Nursery Education (St. Helens)

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many nursery places there were in St. Helens in each year from 1997 to 2004. [184624]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in St. Helens local education authority area are shown in the table.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by three and four-year-old children in St. Helens local education authority area 1997–2003

Position in January each year	*Number*
1997	3,300
1998	3,200
1999	3,200
2000	3,600
2001	3,700
2002	3,900
2003	3,900

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

The latest figures on provision for three and four year olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin Provision for children under five years of age in England–January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many St. Helens families have been involved in Sure Start schemes. [184625]

Margaret Hodge: Around 2,100 families were seen by the five Sure Start local programmes in the St. Helens local authority area in 2003–04. We expect around 600 families to use the nine neighbourhood nurseries in the area. They offer 370 child care places and we are expecting some 900 children to use these.

Finance and Analytical Services Directorate

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding was made available to, and how many full-time equivalent staff were employed by, the Finance and Analytical Services Directorate in 2004–05. [182601]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As at 1 April 2004, 472 staff worked in the Finance and Analytical Services Directorate. The administrative costs allocated to the Directorate for 2004–05 were £19.268 million.

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding was made available to, and how many full-time equivalent staff were employed by, the *(a)* Analytical Services Directorate, *(b)* Secondary Education Group and *(c)* Standards and Effectiveness Unit in 2004–05, broken down by their constituent parts. [182602]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As at 1 April 2004, 293 staff worked in Analytical Services Directorate (ASD), 179 staff worked in the Secondary Education Group (SEG), and 143 staff worked in the Standards and Effectiveness Unit (SEU). However, as part of the Department's intention to create a stronger strategic capacity, ASD has recently restructured so that around 50 per cent. of analysts are based in the Department's Schools, Children Young People and Families, Lifelong Learning and Higher Education Directorates.

The administrative costs allocated for 2004–05 were:

(a) ASD, £11.444 million (of which £5.984 million has been transferred to other Directorates);

(b) SEG, £7.38 million and

(c) SEU, £3.62 million.

Learning and Skills Council (London East)

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether all people in the London East Learning and Skills Council region who wish to study for a basic skills qualification in a further education college in the academic year 2004–05 are guaranteed a place; and if he will make a statement. [184293]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: These are matters for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Literacy and Numeracy

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent discussions he has had with business representatives on levels of literacy and numeracy skills of school-leavers. [185214]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have many discussions with a range of business leaders about skills needs at all levels, including regular meetings with the CBI (Confederation of British Industry) and the Sector Skills Councils. I visit bursaries of all subjects on a regular basis.

At the Skills Strategy One Year on Conference on the 7 July, I welcomed the shared statement by the CBI, TUC (Trades Union Congress) and Small Business Council which emphasised the importance of ensuring employers, unions, employees, Government and training providers support the development of skills at basic level and Level 2 to improve employability.

Pupil Referral Units

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the rate of unauthorised absence from pupil referral units. [184434]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department does not collect absence data from pupil referral units.

Youth Services

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will publish the Green Paper on the reform of services for young people; which specific services he is seeking to reform; and what recommendations for reform will be included. [185069]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: We plan to work across Government to develop and publish a Green Paper for young people in autumn 2004. The types of service and issues it will address are set out in the Department for Education and Skills: Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners. It is too early to say what recommendations for reform will be included.

Students (Wandsworth)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of full-time students resident in the London borough of Wandsworth stayed in education after the age of *(a)* 16 and *(b)* 18 years in each of the last three years. [184118]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: For Inner London, participation in education and training is only shown as a total because participation estimates for individual Inner London LEAs cannot be estimated reliably. This is due to considerable numbers of pupils who attend independent schools in an LEA other than the one in which they reside and residence information for independent school pupils is not available. The percentage of 16-year-olds participating in full-time education in Inner London at end 2001 (the latest available year) was 73 per cent.

There are also figures published for local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas, which cover Inner London. These will be affected by the cross-boundary movement, though to a lesser extent due to their larger size. The London Central LSC area includes Wandsworth LEA. The percentage of 16-year-olds participating in full-time education in London Central LSC area at end 2001 (the latest available year) was 74 per cent.

These figures are taken from the Statistical Bulletin 01/2004 and have been produced using post-Census population estimates. Historic population estimates are not currently available on a comparable basis; and therefore, comparable participation rates for earlier years prior to 2001 cannot be produced.

The percentages of 18-year-olds participating in full-time undergraduate courses in Wandsworth LEA for the last three years are given in Table 1. The higher education (HE) figures show the proportion of students who gain places in HE courses at age 18, and so will not include those who enter at 19 or over.

Table 1: Proportion of English domiciled students aged 18 accepted through UCAS to full-time undergraduate courses in the UK, by LEA of domicile

As at autumn	*Percentage*
2001	23.9
2002	23.6
2003	23.4

Sure Start

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to support disadvantaged children and families who do not live in wards covered by the Sure Start programme. [184996]

Margaret Hodge: Children's centres are the focus of the Government's plans to expand high quality integrated service provision to young children and families. By 2008 we will have developed up to 2,500 children's centres. In areas not currently covered by Sure Start programmes, centres will develop from a wide range of settings in the maintained, private and voluntary sectors. In the long term the Government aim to develop a children's centre in every community.

Vending Machines

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment his Department has made of the distribution cost of installing vending machines in schools selling only water, fresh milk, juice and fruit; and if he will make a statement; [184541]

(2) whether his Department has conducted research into installing healthy vending machines in schools; and if he will study the example of the Green Machine when conducting work in this area; [184542]

(3) what correspondence his Department has had from *(a)* the National Association of Head Teachers and *(b)* the National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Teachers on vending machines in schools; and if he will make a statement. [184543]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The provision of vending machines in schools is determined by individual school governing bodies.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has not carried out any assessment of the distribution cost of installing vending machines which offer healthy food and drink, nor conducted research into installing healthy vending machines in schools. However, DfES and Department of Health are jointly funding the 'Food in Schools' (FiS) initiative, which includes an investigation of how healthy food and drink can be offered in vending machines in schools.

In addition, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) recently investigated the economic viability of healthier drinks vending provision in schools, and their findings are published in "A Feasibility Study into Healthier Drinks Vending in Schools" which can be found on the FSA's website: www.foodstandards.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/apr/vending

Information about the Green Machine has been forwarded to officials in DoH and FSA who lead on vending machine projects.

We have not received correspondence about vending machines from the National Association of Head Teachers or the National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Teachers.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Students (Means-tested Benefits)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much money was paid to students on means-tested benefits in the last year for which figures are available. [184877]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

Appointees

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants have an appointee to act on the claimant's behalf in respect of benefit claims and payments; and in how many cases the appointee is *(a)* a family member or friend, *(b)* a member of staff of a public body, *(c)* an independent care home owner or manager and *(d)* another person acting in their professional capacity. [182728]

Maria Eagle: The information is not available in the format requested as details on appointees are not collected centrally.

At the end of February 2004 there were 174,700 pensions credit claims where there was an appointee and 118,200 in respect of income support claims.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many representations have been received about appointeeship in connection with the proposed mental capacity legislation; and from whom. [182729]

Maria Eagle: The Department received correspondence from the Making Decisions Alliance after the pre-legislative scrutiny of the Draft Mental Incapacity Bill.

In addition, a number of organisations, including the Making Decisions Alliance, referred to the Department's appointee procedures when giving evidence to the Joint Committee on the Draft Mental Incapacity Bill.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what changes are planned on the information for *(a)* staff undertaking assessments of capacity and *(b)* appointees following the implementation of the mental capacity legislation; [182730]

(2) whether there will be a requirement for staff of his Department undertaking assessments of claimant's capacity to manage his or her affairs to have regard to the Code of Practice under the mental capacity legislation. [182731]

Maria Eagle: We are currently looking at the potential impact of this Bill on our appointee arrangements. We will finalise the review in the event that the Bill receives Royal Assent and the Code of Practice is completed.

Benefit Fraud

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the weekly multiplier is that is used to estimate the average amount of housing and council tax benefit fraud run-on in cases where a fraudulent claim has been detected. [183161]

Mr. Pond: For local authorities, the Weekly Benefit Saving (WBS) scheme was replaced by the Security Against Fraud and Error (SAFE) scheme on 1 April 2002. Unlike WBS, where a 32 week multiplier was used when calculating savings from anti fraud activity, no such multiplier is used for SAFE.

Under SAFE, local authorities earn a fixed monetary reward based on the amount of reduction in benefit for each overpayment which they detect that is a result of fraud or claimant error. In addition, local authorities are partly compensated for the costs incurred in bringing forward sanctions and prosecutions.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his written answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 731W, on benefit fraud, what the average *(a)* weekly incorrect benefit reward and *(b)* security against fraud and error subsidy was as a proportion of expenditure. [183261]

Mr. Pond: Local authorities earn Weekly Incorrect Benefit (WIB) rewards for overpayments they recover which have arisen as a result of fraud and claimant error. The average total WIB reward across all local authorities as a proportion of expenditure was 0.2 per cent. in 2002–03. The average total Security Against Fraud and Error subsidy across all local authorities as a proportion of expenditure was 0.3 per cent. in 2002–03.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff in his Department have been *(a)* investigated, *(b)* suspended, *(c)* dismissed, *(d)* prosecuted and *(e)* convicted for involvement in benefit fraud in each of the last six months; and what amounts were involved in each case. [184688]

Mr. Pond: Information is not available in the exact format requested. Such information as is available is shown in the table and accompanying text.

32 cases of staff suspected of involvement in benefit fraud have been investigated during the period 1 January 2004 to 30 June 2004. These cases include both fraudulent personal claims to benefit and assisting third parties to commit benefit fraud.

In the same period, 10 members of staff were given either a disciplinary penalty and/or were prosecuted and convicted of an offence. Some of these will have resulted from investigations in earlier periods. Details, including the amount of benefit involved in each case, are shown in the following table. Where an amount is not shown in the table, either it has not been possible to determine a value or the overpayment is still being calculated.

Number	*Outcome*	*Value*
1	Officer prosecuted and sentenced to a 12 month conditional discharge and £75 costs. The officer continues in post pending a decision about his employment status	£979
2	Officer prosecuted for offences committed in 2000 and sentenced to 11 months imprisonment.	£38,938
3	Officer prosecuted and sentenced to two months imprisonment. The officer was initially suspended on full pay, which changed to suspension without pay from the date formal charges were made. They have since been dismissed.	£4,180 plus an additional potential overpayment of £2,013
4	Officer prosecuted and sentenced to an 18 month Community Rehabilitation Order and ordered to pay £1,510, the amount to be repaid in full by 18 December 2004. The officer was initially suspended from duty and subsequently resigned.	£410
5	Officer found guilty of benefit fraud and will be sentenced on 16 July 2004. The officer was suspended from duty and subsequently dismissed.	£1,327 plus an additional potential overpayment of £2,600
6	Officer sentenced to a 200 hour community service order and has been dismissed	£3,112
7	Officer prosecuted and fined £120 costs and ordered to pay £628. The overpayment has been repaid in full	£2,599
8	Officer Dismissed	£5,280
9	Officer Dismissed. Prosecution pending.	£660
10	Officer Dismissed	—

In addition to the cases listed in the table four officers resigned prior to a penalty being imposed.

Details of staff suspensions are not routinely captured. Where appropriate, staff are suspended from duty pending the outcome of any action.

Benefits (Electronic Claims Facility)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the benefits that can be claimed using an electronic claims facility. [185057]

Mr. Pond: At present, only Carers Allowance can be claimed using an electronic claims facility; however, we are working to extend this provision to other benefits as soon as it is practical to do so. In addition, electronic claim forms are available on the internet for many of our benefits; these can be completed before being printed off, signed and forwarded to the appropriate office.

Child Support Agency

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many prosecutions resulting from the criminal offence of non-co-operation with the Child Support Agency there have been since January 2001. [184670]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Webb dated 20 July 2004:

In reply to your recent parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many prosecutions resulting from the criminal offence of non-co-operations with the Child Support Agency there have been since January 2001. As at 30 June 2004, 319 people have been prosecuted under the Child Support Pensions and Social Security Act 2000 for failing to provide information to the Child Support Agency. Of these, 317 have been found guilty.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Child Support Agency has been owed in outstanding maintenance payments in each of the last seven years. [184671]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Webb, dated 20 July 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much the CSA has been owed in outstanding maintenance payments in each of the last 7 years.

The annual accounts of the Agency indicate that the recoverable balance outstanding on full maintenance assessments, as at 31 March each year, is as follows:

	£million
31 March 1998	412
31 March 1999	512
31 March 2000	521
31 March 2001	528
31 March 2002	509
31 March 2003	664

The accounts to 31 March 2004 will be published shortly.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many non-resident parents have had their driving licences removed by the courts since April 2001 as a result of the provisions introduced under the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000. [184673]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Webb, dated 20 July 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many non-resident parents have had their driving licences removed by the courts since April 2001 as a result of the provisions introduced under the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000.

Disqualification from driving (and committal to prison) is only considered after all other enforcement options have been attempted or discounted. Since the power to withdraw driving licences was brought into effect on 2 April 2001 20 licences have been suspended and 2 licences have been removed.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Dorrell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many full-time equivalent employees of his Department there were in the East Midlands in each year since 1997. [185495]

Maria Eagle: Information on staff numbers by Government Office Region was not collected prior to September 2001. Information at that date and each year thereafter is in the table.

DWP staff numbers in East Midlands Government Office Region

	Staff numbers
30 September 2001	5,730
30 September 2002	6,126
30 September 2003	6,245

Notes:

1. Numbers are Whole Time Equivalent (rounded to the nearest whole number).
2. Numbers are consistent with Cabinet Office definitions other than the inclusion of staff on paid maternity leave.
3. Numbers are point in time at the dates shown.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what co-ordination is taking place across agencies and sections of his Department to minimise the loss of experienced staff in offices subject to plans for closure. [185148]

Maria Eagle: Following the Budget and Spending Review announcements detailed business and staffing plans are currently being developed across the Department in order to manage the reduction of 30,000 posts by March 2008.

This planning activity is being undertaken through co-ordinated activity across all agencies and sections of the Department. In taking the programme of change forward staff deployment will be managed to ensure the Department retains and utilises the skills and experience of staff in each of its businesses.

Havering (Employment)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to help those seeking employment in Havering. [184254]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Rosindell dated 20 July 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply direct to your question about the help available to those seeking employment in Havering. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

There are two Jobcentre Plus offices delivering services to the people of Havering.

1. Romford Jobcentre Plus, 30 Main Road, Romford. Opened on 7 June 2004.
2. Hornchurch Jobcentre Plus, North Street, Hornchurch. Opened on 24 March 2004.

Both offices provide a range of services to customers seeking employment, including:

access to a personal adviser to assist finding suitable employment;

access to touch screen Jobpoints or the internet;

entry to the New Deal programme;

work trials, for customers to show employers what they can do or to try out a job.

Depending on personal circumstances there is other help available to help customers find employment. For example, lone parents may be able to get help with childcare costs. People with disabilities can get help from specialist Disability Employment Advisers or join New Deal for Disabled People. A range of training programmes is also available to provide extra support and help in getting, and keeping, a job. Further details on the services available are contained in leaflet PFL 2, available in Jobcentre Plus offices, or by visiting www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk.

Although these services are common to Jobcentre Plus offices, there are a range of local initiatives, specific to Havering, to help local people into work.

The Oldchurch Recruitment Centre, for example, opened in May 2004 and initially targeted the construction workers for the first phase of the development of the new Oldchurch Hospital. This positive partnership working with local employers has resulted in over 30 customers gaining employment at the site. To expand this scheme we are developing working agreements with the local Health trusts and have begun to match Jobcentre Plus customers with vacancies as they arise in local Hospitals.

Another initiative is with the new Asda supermarket, due to open in Romford in the autumn of 2005. Work is to begin on clearing the site in the autumn 2004 and we are in discussion to use our services to recruit people for the demolition and construction phases of the new store. Furthermore, we aim to undertake the entire recruitment of staff for this new supermarket.

We have also planned a number of events for the summer to specifically address the employment needs of customers in Havering. In partnership with the London Borough of Havering, Jobcentre Plus will be running a stand at the Havering Town Show on 29 and 30 August. This will promote the services of Jobcentre Plus and assist customers in finding employment. Furthermore there will be a seasonal vacancy promotion in the Romford area on 21 and 22 September 2004 designed to match customers to upcoming Christmas vacancies.

The District Manager for North East London, has written to all local MPs offering to meet on a regular basis to discuss developments in the District.

I hope this is helpful.

Jobseeker's Allowance (Havering)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance in Havering in each year since 2000. [184249]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

People claiming Job Seekers Allowance in Havering local authority area

	Number of people claiming
May 2000	2,934
May 2001	2,241
May 2002	2,346
May 2003	2,593
May 2004	2,444

Notes:
1. Information related to all Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants, and will include both those receiving contribution-based JSA, income-based JSA, and claimants not receiving JSA but signing for national insurance credits only.
2. Information is based on a 100 per cent. count of claimants of unemployment-related benefits.

Source:
Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems.

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases against his Department, the agencies for which it is responsible and its predecessor organisations have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181469]

Maria Eagle: The available information is in the tables.

Table A—legal services provided to the former Employment Service and Jobcentre Plus by private sector law firm

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Number of cases								
Equal pay	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Sex discrimination	6	12	9	8	6	4	4	1
Race discrimination	5	2	8	10	5	2	3	0
Disability discrimination	9	14	14	27	20	22	18	7
Unfair dismissal	0	0	6	10	7	13	11	8
Number of cost awards								
Against respondent	—	—	—	—	2	4	11	14
Against applicant	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Costs								
Settling	—	—	—	—	121,500.00	43,580.00	94,291.00	96,277.95
Contesting	114,728.26	219,312.39	190,883.69	284,339.38	460,693.75	290,394.51	334,085.94	131,064.09

Table B—legal services provided to DWP by Government Solicitors

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Number of cases				
Disability discrimination	—	—	—	42
Race discrimination	—	—	—	26
Sex discrimination	—	—	—	32
Unfair dismissal	—	—	—	63
Other	—	—	—	33
Total number of cases	109	81	104	196
Counsel fees	162,315	104,493	267,303	247,603

Two sets of figures are provided above due to the merger in 2002 of the Employment Service with the Benefits Agency to form Jobcentre Plus, a business unit of the Department for Work and Pensions. Prior to the merger, legal services on employment law matters were provided to the Employment Service by a private firm of solicitors—who remain the legal service provider for Jobcentre Plus. These figures are provided in Table A.

Table B represents the employment law statistics for cases conducted by departmental solicitors, who dealt with all employment litigation cases on behalf of the former BA, CSA, Pensions Service and DCS and other DWP agencies. Where the table is incomplete, information is not readily available and it would involve disproportionate cost to the Department to collate these figures. In particular, information on the costs of settling cases was not collected by the Department, nor was information collated, prior to 2003, on the specific types of case against the Department.

Hospital Downrating Rules

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the value in cash terms was of reducing each benefit affected by the hospital downrating rules in each of the last seven years. [184672]

Mr. Pond: The information requested is not available.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the running costs, including staffing costs, of Jobcentre Plus centres were in each year since 1997; and how many people were employed in centres in each year. [182164]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Simmonds, dated 20 July 2004:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply direct to your question concerning the running costs and staff costs of Jobcentre Plus centres each year since 1997, and how many people were employed in centres in each year. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The information you have asked for can be found in the table below.

Year ended 31 March (for financial figures)	*Total staff at 30 April (WTE)*	*Staff costs (£000)*	*Other administration costs (£000)*	*Total gross administration costs (£000)*
1997	31,550	—	—	—
1998	30,796	—	—	—
1999	32,675	—	—	—
2000	32,620	—	—	—
2001	34,110	—	—	—
2002	[1]85,020	—	—	—
2003	80,170	1,712,111	1,254,131	2,996,242
2004	79,234	1,669,766	1,384,015	3,023,303

[1] Staff numbers increase from 2001 to 2002 due to the merger of the Benefits Agency and the Employment Service

Source:

Cabinet Office Statistics website for Headcount.

Latest draft of the 31 March 2004 accounts for financial figures.

It may be helpful if I explain that Jobcentre Plus came into existence in April 2002, bringing together staff from the Employment Service and part of the Benefits Agency. It deals with both claims to, and payments of, all working age benefits as well as job-finding activities. Data on staff is collected by grade rather than job role and it is not possible to identify accurately the number of staff working in front facing customer service centres from this information. The financial figures shown are only available since the introduction of Jobcentre Plus.

As these figures show, there has been a reduction in staff numbers from 2003 to 2004 and, as would be expected, the staff costs for 2004 have also decreased. However, the gross administration costs for the agency have increased. This is due to higher costs falling under the heading "Other Administration Costs". There are a number of different categories of expenditure that come under this section of the accounts, although the majority are not directly related to the number of staff employed. The main variances relate to the following:

	£ million
Areas of expenditure impacted by Jobcentre Plus Implementation Project	+ 71
Increased accommodation costs	+ 22
Increased use of corporate IT services	+ 22
Reduced income from other agencies as less project/ non-project work carried out on their behalf	+ 59
Expenditure relating to a contract for provision of IT services has been absorbed by DWP	-40
Total	+ 134

I hope this is helpful.

Attendance Allowance

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 16 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1018W, on attendance allowance, how many attendance allowance claims in Scotland have been subject to appeal since February 2002, broken down by *(a)* disability benefit centre and *(b)* month. [183264]

Maria Eagle: The information required is set out in the following tables. Total numbers of attendance allowance cases in payment in Scotland, at February 2004 and February 2004 are included in a subsequent table.

Attendance allowance appeals in Scotland, for Glasgow Disability Benefit Centre and the period February 2002 to May 2004 by month

Month	Lodged[1]	Received[2]	Cleared at hearing	Cleared in favour	Cleared against	Cleared upheld	Cleared others	Adjourned	Postponed
2002									
February	130	135	105	50	—	45	5	35	20
March	100	100	130	60	—	65	5	35	20
April	120	85	125	75	—	50	—	20	15
May	120	90	120	70	—	45	5	30	25
June	110	95	80	45	—	35	5	25	15
July	115	100	85	45	—	35	—	20	20
August	110	110	90	55	—	30	5	25	25
September	85	125	85	50	—	30	5	20	30
October	110	140	75	45	—	30	—	30	20
November	130	85	85	50	—	35	—	25	15
December	80	115	70	40	—	30	—	20	10
2003									
January	120	95	140	75	—	60	5	35	25
February	95	95	95	50	—	45	5	20	15
March	95	90	75	40	—	35	—	20	10
April	80	65	90	45	—	40	5	30	10
May	100	120	80	35	—	40	5	20	10
June	100	100	100	40	—	55	5	30	10
July	100	95	95	45	—	50	—	20	15
August	115	80	70	35	—	30	—	25	10
September	80	115	85	45	—	40	5	25	15
October	125	120	90	50	—	35	5	25	10
November	115	85	80	35	—	40	5	15	10
December	80	75	55	20	—	30	5	20	5
2004									
January	85	115	80	40	—	35	5	25	5
February	80	115	75	35	—	40	—	25	5
March	115	125	95	50	—	45	5	25	10
April	45	110	65	25	—	40	—	25	5
May	—	55	65	20	5	40	—	35	5
Total	2,740	2,830	2,490	1,265	5	1,135	90	710	390

Attendance allowance appeals in Scotland, for Edinburgh Disability Benefit Centre and the period February 2002 to May 2004 by month

Month	Lodged[1]	Received[2]	Cleared at hearing	Cleared in favour	Cleared against	Cleared upheld	Cleared others	Adjourned	Postponed
2002									
February	40	40	50	20	—	30	—	5	5
March	60	45	55	20	—	30	5	5	5
April	40	55	35	15	—	20	—	5	5
May	55	35	55	25	—	30	—	—	10
June	40	50	25	10	—	15	—	5	5
July	45	55	25	15	—	10	—	5	10
August	35	45	30	15	—	15	—	5	5
September	40	40	30	10	—	20	5	5	—
October	45	55	35	15	—	15	—	5	5
November	45	30	30	15	—	10	—	5	5
December	25	25	30	15	—	15	—	—	5
2003									
January	30	30	30	10	—	20	—	5	5
February	45	45	20	10	—	10	—	5	5
March	30	35	30	15	—	15	—	5	10
April	40	30	20	5	—	15	—	—	—
May	65	25	30	10	—	20	—	5	—
June	55	60	35	15	—	15	—	5	5
July	50	40	20	10	—	10	—	5	—
August	55	55	30	15	—	15	—	—	—
September	50	40	40	20	—	20	—	10	5
October	40	60	30	15	—	15	—	5	—
November	55	55	35	10	—	25	—	15	5
December	45	45	25	15	—	10	—	5	—
2004									
January	35	45	45	20	—	25	—	5	5
February	35	35	30	10	—	20	—	5	—

Attendance allowance appeals in Scotland, for Edinburgh Disability Benefit Centre and the period February 2002 to May 2004 by month

Month	Lodged[1]	Received[2]	Cleared at hearing	Cleared in favour	Cleared against	Cleared upheld	Cleared others	Adjourned	Postponed
March	30	20	40	20	—	20	—	5	10
April	25	15	30	15	—	15	—	10	—
May	—	75	20	5	—	15	—	10	5
Total	1,150	1,175	905	390	—	495	20	140	120

'—' denotes data equal to nil or negligible.
[1] An appeal is lodged with the first tier agency. This may bring about a reconsideration by the decision maker. When the first tier agency receives this application, this is called the lodgement date.
[2] When an appeal is sent to the Appeals Service for them to action, this is the received date.
Appeals data notes:
1. All figures are subject to change as more up to date data becomes available.
2. The whole of Scotland is covered by Glasgow and Edinburgh Disability Benefits Centres figures for the latest months may rise significantly as information feeds through to the Appeals Service.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest five and may not sum.

Attendance allowance in payment within Scotland, February 2002 and 2004

	Attendance allowance in payment
February 2002	129,200
February 2004	134,600

Attendance allowance data notes:
1. Cases where payment of benefit has been suspended are excluded.
2. February 2002 figure taken from a 5 per cent. sample at 28 February 2004.
February 2004 figure taken from a 5 per cent. sample at 29 February 2004.
3. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported case load. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.
4. May 2004 are unavailable, as yet unreleased.
Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his proposed fund to offer financial assistance to workers who have lost their pension rights in private schemes will cover employees of foreign owned entities; and if he will make a statement. [184749]

Malcolm Wicks: The details of the financial assistance scheme, including the eligibility of employees of foreign owned entities, will be developed through consultation with stakeholders such as pension scheme trustees, trades unions and key business representatives. Until this work has been completed we will not be in a position to give any scheme members assurances that they will be covered. To do otherwise could be misleading.

Pensioners (Domiciled Abroad)

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what arrangements are in place for the payment of *(a)* state pension and *(b)* other benefits to UK senior citizens who retire to (i) another EU state, (ii) Norway, (iii) Switzerland, (iv) the USA and (v) Australia; what the current value is of a UK state pension paid to an individual who retired to each of these countries in (A) 1985, (B) 1995 and (C) 2000; and if he will estimate the cumulative difference in the total value of pensions such an individual would have received in each of the stated areas compared to an individual who retired in the UK. [184368]

Malcolm Wicks: The Information is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is as follows:

Payment of a UK State Pension is not affected by a person's country of residence during retirement. However, where a pensioner lives outside the UK, the State Pension is not uprated unless he or she is living in a country in respect of which EC legislation or a reciprocal agreement provides for uprating.

The European social security co-ordinating regulations contain rules which set out whether UK benefits are paid in another Member State (Regulation 1408/71). From June 2002 Switzerland is also covered by these regulations. UK pensioners who live in another Member State or Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland or Switzerland may receive UK benefits there. This will depend on whether the benefits are covered by the coordinating regulations, the nationality of the person and which state they are living in.

The table shows the cumulative value, from 1 April 1985, 1995 and 2000 respectively to the end of the 2003/04 financial year, of upratings of a full basic State Pension (excluding age additions) which a person would have received if:

a) he remained entitled to a full basic State Pension; and

b) he was continuously resident in a country in respect of which either legislation or a reciprocal agreement provided for the uprating of State Pension.

£

Date	Rate of full basic State Pension per week	Cumulative value of year on basic State Pension
1 April 1985	35.80	20,467.95
1 April 1995	57.60	4,626.35
1 April 2000	66.75	1,360.10

Polygamous Spouses

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the total value of benefits paid to polygamous spouses was in each of the last five years; [185671]

(2) how many polygamous spouses are in receipt of benefits from his Department. [185672]

Mr. Pond: The information is not recorded centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Post Office Card Accounts

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether staff in the Department are permitted to dissuade benefit recipients from opening Post Office Card Accounts; [184628]

(2) how many people who are not in receipt of benefits have opened a Post Office Card Account. [184629]

Mr. Pond: Staff in the Department for Work and Pensions do not in any way discourage customers from opening Post Office card accounts.

All Department for Work and Pensions staff have been provided with information on all of the account options available to the customer. The role of our staff is to provide factual information on the features of the different account options available to the customer. The customer can then decide which type of account they choose to have their money paid into based on their individual needs and circumstances.

Many customers are choosing the Post Office card account option, with 2.8 million having opened one so far.

The Post Office card account is available only to those in receipt of benefits, state pensions and tax credits.

However, it is important that customers are made aware that the Post Office card account is not the only account that can be used at post offices.

Renewable Energy

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies has come from renewable sources for each year from 1997 to date. [181394]

Mr. Pond: DWP was set up in June 2001. The proportion of electricity it has obtained from renewable sources has been 25 per cent. and 21.4 per cent. in 2001–02 and 2002–03 respectively.

It is not possible to provide an accurate breakdown of consumption to Agency level, as invariably DWP buildings are occupied by a number of the Department's businesses.

Information for 2003–04 will be reported in the next Sustainable Development in Government report in November 2004.

The Department continues to exceed the target for sourcing 10 per cent. of its electricity from renewable sources, as set out in the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate". The framework can be found on the Sustainable Development in Government website.

Referrals for Medical Advice (Claimants)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many referrals for medical advice were made by staff of his Department when assessing the capacity of a claimant to manage his/her financial affairs in 2002–03. [182700]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not normally require a report by a qualified medical officer before granting an appointeeship. A visiting officer will make an independent assessment of a customer's ability to manage his or her own affairs based on Department guidelines. In cases where there is some doubt the opinion of a suitably qualified professional may be sought, for example a social worker, community psychiatric nurse or general practitioner.

Information is not available on of the number of interviews that are undertaken.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what training staff of his Department receive prior to undertaking assessments of a claimant's capacity to manage their own financial affairs; [182698]

(2) what guidance is given to staff of his Department on appointeeship; when this guidance was last updated; and whether it is available to the public *(a)* through the Department's website and *(b)* from local offices. [182727]

Maria Eagle: A wide range of training is available to staff undertaking assessments of a person's capacity to manage their own affairs, including training on disability awareness, and working with vulnerable groups, which contains specific training regarding dealing with people with mental health problems. In addition new visiting officers will spend time accompanying more experienced members of staff as part of their training.

All staff have access to guidance in the Agents, Attorneys, Appointees and Receivers Guide, which is currently being updated. While there is currently no specific training about undertaking an assessment of a person's capacity to manage their own financial affairs, a new training product is currently being developed which will help staff identify who may need an appointee.

The Department's internal guidance is not available to members of the public.

Sickness Absence

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average number of working days lost per person due to sickness absence in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each of its business areas was in 2003–04. [184674]

Maria Eagle: The information required for 2003–04 is in the table.

	Average working days lost
DWP	12.6
Jobcentre Plus	12.7
The Pension Service	12.1
Child Support Agency	15.6
Disability and Carers	11.9
The Appeals Service	11.2
Corporate centre	10.2

Civil Servants (Staffing Plans)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will provide a breakdown of the estimated civil service staff *(a)* reductions and *(b)* relocations within his Department and its business units in each of the next four years, as set out in the Spending Review. [185060]

Maria Eagle: Following the Spending Review announcement, detailed business and staffing plans continue to be developed across all parts of the Department in order to manage the reduction of 30,000 posts by March 2008, and the planned relocation of work from London and the south east. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State made a written statement to the House on 29 June outlining the first phase of this transformation. We will inform the House as further planning decisions are made.

Unemployment Statistics (Over-50s)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of people between the age of 50 and state pension age who are not working are claiming benefit, broken down by gender; how many of these rely on benefits to make up more than half of their income, broken down by gender; how much is being spent on benefits for this group; and if he will make a statement. [172532]

Mr. Pond: The estimated expenditure on incapacity related benefits, Jobseekers Allowance, other income-related benefits and disability or carer benefits for claimants aged 50 to state pension age is estimated to be £11.6 billion in 2003–04. Total expenditure on all claimants aged 50 to state pension age in 2003–04 is estimated to be £12.5 billion.

In 2001–02, the latest year for which information is available, benefits made up over half of individual income for 82 per cent. of men and 89 per cent. of women, overall 86 per cent. of people, aged 50 to state pension age receiving any benefit other than those with just Child Benefit or Winter Fuel Payment[1] and not working.

The available information on the number of people aged 50 to state pension age claiming benefits, and the number in this age group who are not in work is in the table.

[1] Individual incomes data 2001–02. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit are not considered as benefit income or part of total income.

People aged 50 to State pension age claiming key benefits and estimated numbers not in work

	Men	*Women*	*All*
People claiming key benefits other than Disability Living Allowance November 2003[1]	1,015,600	545,500	1,561,100
As above but excluding cases identified as in work or Income Support cases in residential care	1,002,100	533,800	1,535,900
Estimated number of individuals in private households not in work autumn/winter 2003	1,410,000	1,231,000	2,641,000

[1] Figures include people claiming Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance.

Source:

Number of people claiming benefits—5 per cent. sample of administrative data. Estimated numbers not in work—Labour Force Survey.

Income Thresholds

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the income thresholds used in paragraph 7 of the reply by the Government to the Second Report of the Work and Pensions Committee of Session 2003–04, Cm 6200 are in weekly cash amounts of income *(a)* before housing costs, (i) for the relative low income and (ii) for the absolute low income and *(b)* after housing costs (A) for the relative low income and (B) for the absolute low income. [183821]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the tables.

Weekly cash values for the relative low income threshold by illustrative household type at 2002–03 prices

Household type	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
Couple with no children (equivalised income benchmark)	194	172
Couple with two children aged 5 and 11	283	253
Single with two children aged 5 and 11	207	175
Couple with one child aged 5	235	208
Single with one child aged 5	159	131

Weekly cash values for the absolute low income threshold by illustrative household type at 2002–03 prices

Household type	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
Couple with no children (equivalised income benchmark)	166	140
Couple with two children aged 5 and 11	242	206
Single with two children aged 5 and 11	178	143
Couple with one child aged 5	201	170
Single with one child aged 5	136	107

Notes:

1. Estimates relate to the household's status at the time they were interviewed for the FRS.

2. The threshold '60 per cent. of median' (equivalised weekly household income) is the most commonly used in reporting absolute and relative trends in low income.

3. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using multipurpose grossing factors that control for tenure, council tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to both sampling error, and to remaining variability in non-response which is not corrected by the grossing regime.

4. Equivalised incomes use the McClements equalisation scale.

5. When reporting numbers of individuals in 'relative low income', we apply 60 per cent. of the median income for the year in question; therefore, this threshold changes from one year to the next.

6. When reporting numbers of individuals in 'absolute low income', we take a single level of real equivalised income, which is set at 60 per cent. of the 1996–97 median income, which is £166 before housing costs and £140 after housing costs, at 2002–03 prices. Equivalised income adjusts household income for household size and composition. The corresponding cash values for this absolute threshold, for different family types are shown in the table.

7. All figures are in pounds per week, in 2002–03 prices, rounded to the nearest pound, and are consistent with current National Statistics conventions.

8. The figures relating to absolute and relative low income were derived from "Households Below Average Income—An analysis of the income distribution for 1994–95—2002–03" (HBAI). Copies are available in the Library.

Source:
Family Resources Survey (FRS).

New Deal

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many young people have joined the Young New Deal scheme in each year since its inception. [184308]

Jane Kennedy: The information is in the table.

New Deal for Young People

	Number
1998	212,930
1999	192,290
2000	174,770
2001	162,700

New Deal for Young People

	Number
2002	164,230
2003	171,900
2004	45,120
Total	1,123,930

Notes:
1. All figures are for January to December except 2004 which is January to March.
2. All figures are starts rather than individuals and include people who may have started New Deal more than once.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
4. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source:
DWP Information and Analysis Directorate

HEALTH

Agenda for Change

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 6 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 606W, on Agenda for Change, which of the early implementer-sites are testing the new system for *(a)* community nurses and *(b)* allied health professionals; and if he will make a statement. [184205]

Mr. Hutton: Community nurses are employed in eight of the 12 early implementer sites. Allied health professions are employed in 10 sites.

A list of the sites who are currently testing the system for these staff groups is shown in the table.

Community nurses	*Allied health professions*
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust
Central Cheshire Primary Care Trust	Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership
City Hospitals Sunderland	Central Cheshire Primary Care Trust
Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital National Health Service Trust	City Hospitals Sunderland
Herefordshire NHS Primary Care Trust	Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust
James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust	Herefordshire NHS Primary Care Trust
South West London and St. George's Mental Health NHS Trust	James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust
West Kent and Social Care Trust	Papworth Hospital NHS Trust
	South West London and St. George's Mental Health NHS Trust
	West Kent and Social Care Trust

Care Packages

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have received care packages to enable them to stay in their homes in Greater London in each of the last five years. [179394]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the estimated number of clients who received a community based service following a community care assessment in Greater London for 2000–01 to 2002–03. Data for previous years are not available.

Estimated number of clients receiving a community based service[1] in Greater London[2]

Rounded data

	Number of clients[3]
2000–01	179,000
2001–02	186,000
2002–03	182,000

[1] Community based services includes day care, meals, respite care, direct payments, professional support, transport and equipment as well as home care.
[2] Includes councils with social services responsibilities in inner and outer London.
[3] Care should be taken when comparing data across the years as recording practices, level of completion and quality may have changed.

Chiropody Services (Access)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures he is taking to improve access to chiropody services. [182821]

Mr. Hutton: The Government have taken action to increase numbers of chiropodists working in the national health service and entering training. Between 1997 and 2003, the number of qualified chiropodists employed in the NHS has increased by 16 per cent. and between 1999–2000 and 2003–04, the number of students entering training has increased by 33 per cent. Further increases in the NHS chiropody workforce are

expected as a result of the "Delivering the NHS Plan" forecast for 30,000 more therapists and scientists by 2008 than there were in 2001.

Consultancy Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the NHS on consultancy services in each year since 1996. [182412]

Mr. Hutton: Expenditure by the Department and the national health service on external consultancy services in each year from 1996–97 to 2003–04, is shown in the table. However, it is not possible to separate the figures for consultancy and contract staffing for NHS trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs).

£ million

Financial year	*Department*	*Strategic health authority*	*NHS trust*	*Primary care trust*
1996–97	14.699	[2]22.003	[2]107.152	[4]—
1997–98	12.694	[2]24.838	[2]10.722	[4]—
1998–99	7.332	[2]28.537	[2]93.072	[4]—
1999–2000	8.132	[2]35.056	[2]93.304	[4]—
2000–01	6.531	[2]42.097	[2]105.853	[2]0.948
2001–02	6.800	[2]66.855	[2]125.948	[2]16.090
2002–03	7.266	[2]19.648	[2]149.438	[2]59.154
2003–04	[1]10.031	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—

[1] This is the latest figure included in the accounts, but the accounts have yet to be authorised.
[2] Figures for NHS trusts and PCTs include both contract staffing and consultancy services.
[3] Figures for strategic health authority, NHS trusts and PCTs not yet available for this year.
[4] PCTs were not in existence for these years.

Data Protection

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what data protection rules apply to the transmission of UK health records to health authorities abroad. [184342]

Mr. Hutton: The Data Protection Act 1998 regulates disclosures, including transfers abroad, of health information about identifiable living individuals. Subject to specified exemptions the Act requires data controllers, including national health service organisations, to comply with the eight 'data protection principles' set out in schedule 1, part 1 to the Act. The first and eighth principles are particularly relevant to transfers abroad. Where the foreign transfer is to a 'data processor', for example, any person or organisation processing data on behalf of the United Kingdom data controller, the seventh principle will also be important.

Among other provisions, these three principles respectively provide that such transfers must be fair and lawful; ensure "an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data" and include "appropriate technical and organisational measures" to protect the information.

Deafblind Awareness Week

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to be involved in and mark the celebration of Deafblind Awareness Week. [178618]

Dr. Ladyman: Although I was invited to an event organised by Sense to mark Deafblind Awareness Week, I was unfortunately unable to attend. I recognise the contributions of Sense, Deafblind UK and other organisations in the voluntary sector in raising awareness of the needs of deafblind people.

Dentistry

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have retired from dentistry in each year since 1997 for which figures are available. [180640]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information in the table is from the National Health Service Pensions Agency for the number of pensions awarded in England and Wales where a NHS pension has been claimed prior to the scheme's normal retirement age and at the scheme's normal retirement age. These will include pensions paid on the grounds of ill health, premature retirements following redundancy and voluntary early retirement before age 60 (introduced from 6 March 1995).

All dentists' retirements

	Total dentist pension awards
1997	359
1998	333
1999	322
2000	314
2001	363
2002	375
2003	363

Digital Hearing Aids

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many digital hearing aids were fitted in each of the past seven years in each region of England. [180034]

Dr. Ladyman: The national health service fitted very few, if any, digital hearing aids before September 2000. The modernising hearing aid services project began as a pilot project in September 2000, initially in only 20 sites. In the first 18 months of the project to April 2002, about 30,000 digital hearing aids were fitted. A further 42,000 aids were issued in the year to April 2003; and 80,000 were fitted in the year to April 2004. We are unable to give a breakdown of digital hearing aid provision by region.

Free NHS Treatment (Eligibility)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether there are systematic checks on eligibility for free NHS treatment; [177792]

(2) what assessment has been made of the level of abuse of the NHS by people who have no right to free treatment. [177793]

Mr. Hutton: General practitioner practices need to check details of an individual's residence or previous registration before deciding whether to accept the person as a registered patient, either on a permanent or temporary basis. This is set out in regulations and

guidance. For hospital services, regulations require the National Health Service Trust providing treatment to make

"such enquiries as it is satisfied are reasonable in all the circumstances, including the state of health of the overseas visitor"

to determine a patient's chargeable status. Guidance makes clear that all patients should be asked baseline residency questions and to produce supporting basic evidence.

Following the launch of the consultation on "Proposals to Exclude Overseas Visitors from Eligibility to Free NHS Primary Medical Services", a copy of which is available in the Library, we are undertaking an evidence gathering study that will seek to identify to what extent visitors to England are obtaining free NHS treatment inappropriately. We are proposing to publish the results of this in conjunction with the outcome of the consultation in autumn 2004. In addition, we have just started a study of 12 NHS trusts across the country, including monitoring impact of use by European Union accession countries.

General Practitioners (Night Calls)

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what was the cost to the national health service in payments for general practitioners for maintaining a night call out service for patients in each year from 1974 to 2003. [173636]

Mr. Hutton: In 1974, £18.4 million is recorded has having been spent on payments to general medical service (QMS) general practitioners for out-of-hours responsibilities. In 2003, the total expenditure is recorded as £112.3 million. The full data is shown in the following tables.

Payments for out-of-hours services by general medical practitioners[1] England 1973–74 to 2002–03

	Amount (£000)
1973–74	16,080
1974–75	18,432
1975–76	23,918
1976–77	26,043
1977–78	26,160
1978–79	30,599
1979–80	36,348
1980–81	49,464
1981–82	56,052
1982–83	62,500
1983–84	65,762
1984–85	75,138
1985–86	81,251
1986–87	84,010
1987–88	92,255
1988–89	103,645
1989–90	112,980
1990–91	56,106

	Amount (£)
1991–92	60,399,212
1992–93	59,714,582
1993–94	67,390,011
1994–95	63,081,368
1995–96	82,604,687
1996–97	128,292,714
1997–98	126,587,811
1998–99	127,312,395
1999–2000	129,849,905
2000–01	128,869,310
2001–02	118,638,953
2002–03	112,315,234

Note:

[1] Data for QMS only.

Sources:

1. Figures are taken from the relevant summarised accounts for 1973–74 to 1990–91.
2. Annual financial returns of district and regional health authorities and the special health authorities for the London postgraduate teaching hospitals, 1991–92 to 1995–96.
3. Annual financial returns of health authorities, 1996–97 to 2001–02.
4. Annual financial returns of strategic health authorities, 2002–03.
5. Annual financial returns of primary care trusts, 2000–01 to 2002–03.

Health Care Related Infection

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress in combating health care-related infection in England. [183039]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Infection control within the national health service is improving and there are some excellent examples of good practice in our hospitals. We are determined to bring everywhere up to the standards of the best and the wide range of work under way is set out in "Towards cleaner hospitals and lower rates of infection".

Islington Primary Care Trust

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding has been made available to the Islington Primary Care Trust for each year of its existence to date; and what the projected amounts are for future years. [184724]

Mr. Hutton: Revenue allocations to Islington Primary Care Trust (PCT) from 2003–04 to 2005–06 were announced on 12 December 2002 as follows:

	Amount (£000)
2003–04	248,319
2004–05	272,794
2005–06	298,986

This was the first time allocations were made from the Department direct to PCTs. Prior to this, allocations were made direct to health authorities.

Leeds Community and Mental Health Trust

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets have been set for bed capacity in the Leeds Community and Mental Health Trust; at what level of bed capacity the Trust is operating; and if he will make a statement. [184139]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2002–03, Leeds Mental Health Teaching National Health Service Trust had 608 beds, with an occupancy rate of 79.2 per cent.

Source:
Form KH03, Department of Health.

LIFT Projects

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy whenever possible to use local architects, builders and tradespeople in designing and building local investment finance trust (LIFT) projects in England; and if he will make a statement. [184291]

Mr. Hutton: There is no size limit on firms participating in national health service local investment finance trust. It is a legal requirement to evaluate all competing bids in a transparent manner. Advertising through the *Official Journal* of the European Community means that competition is fair and open and non-discriminatory for all bidders. Contracts will be awarded to the bidders offering best value for money.

Medical Data Exchange (Cuba)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what provisions are in place for exchange of medical data on UK citizens with Cuba. [184341]

Mr. Hutton: The exchange of medical data between the United Kingdom and Cuba must be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the common law duty of confidentiality. When these legal requirements are met, local organisations may establish provisions for exchanging medical data where this is a locally determined business requirement.

Ministerial Travel

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department in the last year for which figures are available. [184528]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain is not readily identifiable and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

All ministerial and civil service travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code, Travel by Ministers, and the Civil Service Management Code, copies of which are available in the Library.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the implications are for current NHS practice of the World Health Organisation's re-classification of myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome as a neurological disorder. [184514]

Dr. Ladyman: The World Health Organisation's international classification of diseases, ICD 10, provides a system of categories for international systematic recording. They are not diagnostic criteria and are not used by clinicians as such. Patients benefit most from a holistic model of care and new services are being developed to provide this. Services have not been designed around the ICD 10 in the past, nor do we expect them to be in the future.

NHS Beds

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital beds there are in the national health service; and what plans he has to change the number. [184044]

Mr. Hutton: In 2002–03 the average daily number of available national health service beds in England was 183,826. This includes acute, geriatric, mental illness, learning disability and maternity beds.

The "NHS Improvement Plan" contains no targets for the total number of NHS beds. However, there is a major hospital building programme under way to deliver on commitments in the "NHS Plan" to improve NHS hospitals. The NHS is on course to exceed the two "NHS Plan" commitments of 100 new hospitals by 2010 and to reduce the age of hospitals such that over 40 per cent. of the NHS estate will be less than 15 years old by 2010.

NHS Posts (E-advertising)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department conducted before deciding to introduce electronic recruitment of NHS job vacancies; and if he will place a copy of the conclusions in the Library. [183130]

Mr. Hutton: A copy of the strategic case prepared by the Department for the procurement of the national health service e-recruitment service has been placed in the Library.

Non NICE-appraised Treatments

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the patient choice initiative will allow patients to be treated with non-National Institute for Clinical Excellence appraised treatments if it is their choice and their clinicians concur. [183987]

Mr. Hutton: From 2008, for planned hospital care, a patient will be able to choose any health care provider which meets the Government's standards for health care in England. The draft standards were published for consultation in the spring and will be published shortly.

The new standards will require any health care organisations providing national health service treatment to conform to nationally agreed best practice or nationally agreed guidance, including National Institute for Clinical Excellence technology appraisals.

Pain Management

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he gives to patients who are in severe pain while awaiting NHS treatment. [184042]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not issue guidance to patients on clinical issues such as this. The patient's general practitioner or another health care professional

should provide guidance and advice on appropriate treatments or measures for reducing pain while waiting for further treatment.

Pharmaceutical Industry

Lawrie Quinn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are employed in the pharmaceutical industry in the UK; and what proportion are employed in *(a)* sales promotion and *(b)* research and development. [183532]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In 2002, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) annual business inquiry showed that there were 83,000 people employed in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals, medicinal chemicals, and botanic products. The ONS business enterprise research and development survey showed that 29,000 people, or 35 per cent., were employed in research and development in the pharmaceutical industry. The Government do not have figures for the percentage of people employed in sales in this sector.

Supporting People Report (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with *(a)* social services and *(b)* NHS bodies in Gloucestershire on the recent Supporting People Report. [184231]

Dr. Ladyman: I have not had any discussion specifically with Gloucestershire social services or national health service bodies, or with any other local social services or health bodies, about "Supporting People". But at the national level I remain in close contact with my ministerial colleagues in the Office of my right hon. Friend, the Deputy Prime Minister, who are in the lead on this important initiative. There is a considerable amount of work going on to take this initiative forward at both national and local levels and we will continue to involve stakeholders in this.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Balkans

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the current security situation in *(a)* Kosovo and *(b)* the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. [184241]

Mr. MacShane: The overall security situation in Kosovo is currently stable but tense. Since March, there continue to be isolated incidents of violence which have been contained by local law enforcement. As a means to enhance the exchange of information on security issues a Kosovo Security Advisory Group has been set up with representatives of all the Kosovo communities, UNMIK and KFOR.

The security situation in Macedonia is stable, but fragile, particularly in the former crisis areas in the north west of the country. We judge that most violence is linked primarily to criminality. However, tensions could escalate as ongoing discussions on a number of issues, in particular the decentralisation process called for by the Ohrid Framework Agreement, come to a head.

We continue to monitor the situation in both Kosovo and Macedonia carefully.

Belarus

Mr. Trend: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the political situation in Belarus and *(b)* whether the forthcoming elections will be free and fair. [184774]

Mr. MacShane: The failure of the Belarussian Government to adhere to European standards in respect of human rights, freedom of expression and democracy in Belarus remains a matter of concern to the Government. It is too early to assess the likely conduct of the elections. We have made clear to the Belarussian Government that we expect the authorities in Minsk to ensure that the elections are free and fair and that international observers will be invited.

Cameroon

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his counterpart in Cameroon concerning *(a)* the preparations of the electoral roll for this year's presidential elections and *(b)* the treatment by the security forces of members of the parliamentary opposition during the demonstration held in Yaounde on 6 July; and if he will make a statement. [183681]

Mr. Mullin: I emphasised the importance of a free, fair and transparent election with President Biya when he visited the UK in March 2004. The UK maintains a constant dialogue with the Government of Cameroon on preparations for the election, including preparation of the electoral roll. We are aware of the incident at the opposition coalition's demonstration in Yaounde on 6 July. We monitor such events carefully.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when a reply will be sent to the hon. Member for Walsall, North's letter of 9 June concerning the entry clearance application at the British High Commission in New Delhi of Mr. Vijay Kumar. [185287]

Mr. Mullin: UK visas replied to my hon. Friend on 14 July. I apologise for the delay.

Cyprus

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on de-mining operations in the buffer zone in Cyprus. [R] [185137]

Mr. MacShane: The Government are supportive of efforts to address this important issue and in our contacts with the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and Turkish Cypriot authorities we have urged them to move forward.

It should also be noted that the European Commission is funding a de-mining project in Cyprus. This project is drawing on UK expertise and is partly funded by a UK contribution.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement about the number of Turkish troops in Cyprus. [185156]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* We have no precise figures of our own. Current estimates are in the region of 25,000.

The UN Secretary General's settlement plan provided for a phased withdrawal that would ultimately have allowed for the presence of 950 Greek troops in the south and 650 Turkish troops in the north. The rejection of the plan by the Greek Cypriots means this will not now take place.

Any steps taken now to reduce existing troop levels would be welcome.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with Turkey concerning the extension of the Turkey/EU customs agreement to Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [R] [185138]

Mr. MacShane: The British Government, through a combination of direct ministerial contact and exchanges between British and Turkish officials in London, Ankara and Brussels, maintains a close dialogue with the Turkish Government on a wide range of issues related to Cyprus. The extension of the EU-Turkey customs union to all those EU member states who joined the EU on 1 May is one such issue. Implementation of the customs union is important to the effective functioning of the single market.

I am glad to say that Turkish Foreign Minister Gul wrote on 10 June to the European Commission saying Turkey would take all measures to ensure functioning of the customs union from 1 May.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the Foreign Office spent on *(a)* advertising and *(b)* public relations consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [184502]

Mr. Straw: In FY 2002–03—the most recent year for which audited figures are available—separately identifiable expenditure by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) on UK advertising totalled £743,783. Of this, £716,234 related to media spend on advertising for recruitment purposes. The balance related to consular media advertisements which aimed to raise awareness among the British public of the importance of being properly prepared before travelling overseas and to advertising of the FCO's public open days. The total figure is based on the final accounts for FY 2002–03 and replaces the figure which I supplied to the right hon. Gentleman on 7 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 411W, which drew on provisional calculations. I apologise to the right hon. and learned Gentleman for the fact that this was not made clear in my previous answer.

The FCO's central expenditure on public relations consultancy in FY 2002–03 totalled £291,971. Of this, £268,862 was paid to a single agency for work on the Consular awareness-raising campaign, 'Know Before You Go'.

The FCO's overseas posts and its non-departmental public bodies also commission advertising and occasionally employ public relations consultants, but details are not recorded centrally. Information about the costs incurred by these activities could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Records of expenditure by the FCO's expenditure on advertising and public relations consultants in FY 1996–97 are not held centrally. Figures for that year could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost was of running Foreign Office canteen facilities in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [184507]

Mr. Straw: In 1996–97, the cost of providing catering to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was £160,258.31.pa In 2003–04, the latest year for which figures are available, the cost of providing catering to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was £184,201.59.

The figures provided are based upon the subsidy paid to the catering contractor, in each of the years, for the provision of the service in London and Hanslope Park. During the period concerned, there have been changes to the nature of the service provided. In 1996–97, the service in London consisted of one restaurant, one shop and one snack bar. In the intervening years, the snack bar has become a cafeteria with a much wider variety of food on offer.

Diego Garcia

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when a representative of his Department last visited the US prison facilities on Diego Garcia. [184202]

Mr. Rammell: The only United States prison facilities on Diego Garcia are those established under United States Service law for the detention, as authorised by that law, of members of the United States armed forces and any accompanying civilian personnel and dependants. There is no record of any member of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office visiting those facilities. The US have made it clear that the British Indian Ocean Territory Commissioner's Representative on Diego Garcia would be permitted to visit at any time.

EU Presidency

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the main issues are which the Government intend to focus on during the UK's presidency of the European Union. [184260]

Mr. MacShane: The overall Council Agenda for 2004–06 is set out clearly in the Multi-Annual Strategic Programme (MASP), copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House. The agenda for the UK

Presidency will be determined, to a large extent, by the agenda we inherit from preceding Presidencies and their progress on the dossiers identified in the MASP. The Government are in the process of detailed planning and discussion within and between Departments at ministerial and official level to identify detailed policy themes for the UK Presidency, within the context of that broader agenda.

General Affairs and External Relations Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the outcome was of the General Affairs and External Relations Council held on 12 to 13 July; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [184432]

Mr. MacShane: The information is as follows:

Outcome of the 12 July 2004 General Affairs and External Relations Council

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I represented the UK at the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in Brussels on 12 July.

Conclusions were agreed on Afghanistan, Western Balkans, Sudan, Iraq and Asia-Europe.

General Affairs Session

Presidency Work Programme

The Presidency presented its work programme for the second half of 2004. Five priorities are identified in the work programme:

Making a success of enlargement;

Strengthening the European economy and reducing the administrative burden;

The area of freedom, security and justice;

The Union's future financial and budgetary structure: Agenda 2007;

The EU's role in the world: an effective, coherent and committed external policy.

Constitutional Treaty

The Council decided that signature of the EU's Constitutional Treaty will take place in Rome on 29 October.

Progress of Work in Other Council Configurations

The Council took note of a progress report from the Presidency on work under way in the Council's other configurations (the Justice and Home Affairs Council, the Trade Council, Economic and Financial Affairs Council, the Transport and Communications Council and the Agriculture and Fisheries Council.)

Relations With Ukraine

The Council took note of the Presidency's work plan regarding implementation of the EU's Common Strategy on Ukraine.

The Commission is expected to submit a formal proposal for an action plan to the Council in September 2004. This should lead to a comprehensive plan, which at the same time identifies clearly a limited number of key priorities and offers real incentives for further reform.

The current Common Strategy on Ukraine expires in December 2004.

Visas—Russia

The Council decided to authorise the Commission to begin negotiations with the Russian Federation on facilitation of the issuance of short-stay visas to EU and Russian citizens.

United Nations

The Council approved a paper on the European Union's priorities for the 59th session of the United Nations General Assembly. The emphasis of these priorities is to uphold and develop international law, and to effective multilateralism.

External Relations Session

WTO/DOHA Development Agenda

The Council took note of the presentation made by Commissioner Lamy on the current state of the negotiations. The Council underlined the importance of reaching a satisfactory agreement at the WTO General Council at the end of July on the negotiating frameworks for agriculture, non-agricultural market access, the Singapore Issues, and development. The Council agreed to hold a special session of the Council in Brussels, which is foreseen for the 26 July 2004, with a view to establishing an EU position.

Iraq

The Council met the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Mr. Zebari, who indicated the areas in which he hoped the EU would be able to make a visible contribution to the political, economic and social reconstruction of his country. The Council welcomed this opportunity to discuss the future of Iraq with Mr. Zebari, and looked forward to deepening political engagement with Iraq. The Council warmly welcomed the restoration of sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government that took place on 28 June. It reaffirmed its support for the people of Iraq and the fully sovereign Iraqi Interim Government. Conclusions were agreed.

Middle East Peace Process

The Council examined the situation in relation with the Middle East Peace Process following in particular the Advisory Opinion rendered by the International Court of Justice on 9 July concerning

"Legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the occupied Palestinian Territory".

Asia-Europe

The Council discussed the way ahead on preparations for the ASEM Summit and adopted conclusions.

Sudan

The Council expressed grave concern at the situation in Darfur and continued to emphasise the importance of humanitarian access, human rights and security. The Council called upon member states and other actors of the international community to substantially increase their support to the humanitarian relief effort under way. The Council welcomed the active involvement of the international community. The Council welcomed the efforts to address this issue at the UN Security Council. Conclusions were agreed.

Western Balkans

Serbia and Montenegro: The Council welcomed the outcome of the recent presidential elections in Serbia. It encouraged all democratic forces to work together in order to accelerate political and economic reforms, to fulfil all international obligations, including full co-operation with ICTY.

Serbia and Montenegro/Kosovo: The Council confirmed that the new Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Kosovo, Mr. Soren Jessen-Petersen, will have the full support of the European Union.

Bosnia and Herzegovina/ICTY: The Council strongly supported the measures announced on 30 June by EUSR and High Representative Paddy Ashdown to help ensure that Bosnia and Herzegovina co-operates fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: The Council expressed its gratitude to the outgoing EU Special Representative, Mr. Soren Jessen-Petersen, for his vital contribution to the consolidation of peace and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It appointed ambassador Michael Sahlin as his successor, who will take up the position of EUSR on 1 August 2004.

Conclusions were agreed.

Afghanistan

The Council welcomed the decision announced by the Joint Electoral Monitoring Body (JEMB) to hold presidential elections in Afghanistan on 9 October 2004. These elections are a key requirement under the Bonn Agreement of December 2001 and represent a new milestone in the process of constructing a democratic, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. Conclusions were agreed.

European Security and Defence Policy

EU military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Council adopted a Joint Action on the European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This follows the decision by NATO to conclude its successful SFOR-operation and the adoption by the United Nations Security Council of Resolution 1551. Major General A. David Leakey (UK) was appointed EU Force Commander.

European Union Special Representative in BiH

The Council adopted a Joint Action revising the mandate of the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paddy Ashdown.

European Defence Agency

The Council formally adopted a Joint Action establishing an Agency in the field of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments—to be known as the European Defence Agency.

Honduras

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made to the Government of Honduras on the murder in June this year of 29 Honduran children and young people. [184298]

Mr. Rammell: We have not made specific representations to the Honduran Government about the deaths of 29 children and young people in June as reported by Casa Alianza, the leading NGO in Central America dealing with child protection.

We have a regular and on-going dialogue with the Government of Honduras and with NGOs on the issue of child protection. We are currently co-funding an investigation into the juvenile justice system in Honduras, run by the University of Essex's Children's Legal Centre. The study, for which our Ambassador has secured the full support of the Honduran Government, will make recommendations to improve juvenile justice and child protection in line with Honduras's commitments to international human rights norms.

I also refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 8 July 2004(*Official Report*, column 851W) which describes dialogue we have had with the Honduran Government bilaterally and with EU partners.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he was informed that SIS had withdrawn reporting from the source who claimed that production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable. [185655]

Mr. Straw: I became aware of the withdrawal of this reporting when I agreed, in response to a request from SIS on 8 September 2003, that the reports in question should be disclosed to the Intelligence and Security Committee.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisers. [185461]

Mr. Straw: None. There are only two Special Advisers in post.

Marine Wildlife Conservation Bill

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his statement in the debate on European Affairs of 16 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 786–7, what steps he has taken personally to pursue the substance of the Bill on Marine Wildlife Conservation put forward by the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Randall); and if he will make a statement. [184177]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has asked me to reply.

As my hon. friend knows, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs leads on this issue. We note, however, that the Private Members Bill on Marine Wildlife Conservation put forward by the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Randall) has been tabled for second Reading on Friday 15 October.

Regeneration Projects

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much money the European Union has provided to regeneration projects in each member state in *(a)* 1990, *(b)* 1995, *(c)* 2000 and *(d)* 2004. [184263]

Mr. MacShane: The Commission does not produce specific figures for funds spent on regeneration projects. However, figures for the overall spends on structural and cohesion funds across EU member states in 1990, 1995 and 2000 are set out in the following table. The figures for 2004 have yet to be released. Figures for 1990 and 1995 are in ECU millions and for 2000 in € millions.

Country	*1990*	*1995*	*2000*
Belgium	154.903	178.59	1,829
Denmark	76.66	104.40	745
Germany	511.261	3,039.76	28,156
Greece	1,171.523	2,714.68	20,961
Spain	2,836.067	6,076.89	43,087
France	1,231.601	1,663.61	14,794
Ireland	730.087	996.85	3,088
Italy	1,624.853	2,353.29	28,484
Luxembourg	10.139	11.75	78
Netherlands	142.867	241.16	2,635
Portugal	1,067.048	1,527.70	19,029
United Kingdom	1,107.894	1,637.10	15,635
Austria	—	343.97	1,473
Finland	—	353.34	1,908
Sweden	—	309.36	1,836

Security Wall (Israel)

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his EU counterparts concerning the Israeli High Court ruling on human rights breaches since the construction of the security wall in relation to the EU-Israel Association Agreement. [184296]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no discussions with his EU counterparts on the Israeli High Court ruling on human rights breaches since the construction of the security wall in relation to the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

Spending Review

Mr Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the oral statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Monday 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1129–39, on the spending review, what percentage of the 1.4 per cent. spending increase allocated to his Department will be given back to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the form of departmental assets to be sold off under his £30 billion Government asset sale. [185004]

Mr. Straw: None. We have an agreed asset-recycling programme with Her Majesty's Treasury which allows the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to reinvest estate sales receipts, primarily for the modernisation of the estate both overseas and in the UK.

Sri Lanka

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government has made to the Government of Sri Lanka regarding the break-in at the office of the National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka on 3 July 2004. [184318]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have not made representations to the Government of Sri Lanka regarding this specific incident. Our High Commission in Colombo continues to urge the Sri Lankan authorities to ensure that those responsible for attacks such as this are brought to justice, and that the rights of all religious minorities in Sri Lanka are respected.

UK Foreign Direct Investment

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how the UK's foreign direct investment has changed since the European Union enlargement. [184256]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It is too early yet to draw any meaningful conclusions.

Vietnam

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Vietnam; and what representations he has made with regard to the treatment of Christians, with particular reference to evangelicals. [184226]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have regular discussions with the Vietnamese Government on a range of issues, including religious freedom and other human rights issues. We are deeply concerned at the severe restrictions on some Protestant groups in Vietnam, especially ethnic minority Protestants in the Central Highlands region.

We regularly raise our human rights concerns. I raised during my visit to Vietnam in March again the situation in the Central Highlands with the President of Vietnam during his official visit to the UK. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary also raised our human rights concerns in Vietnam the same day with the Vietnamese Foreign Minister.

With EU partners, we also participate in a regular human rights dialogue with Vietnam. The most recent EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue meeting took place on 22 June and was attended by our Ambassador in Hanoi. We raised freedom of religion and the situation of the Protestants in Vietnam.

We will continue to raise our concerns at every suitable opportunity.

Visas

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what criteria are used by entry clearance officers overseas to assess the personal guarantee of an hon. Member that an applicant will abide by the terms of their visa and return to the country of origin. [183490]

Mr. Mullin: It is not our policy to ask hon. Members for personal guarantees as such personal guarantees are not enforceable in UK law. However, assurances given by an hon. Member reflecting close personal knowledge of a sponsor or applicant would be taken into account by the Entry Clearance Officer considering an application in conjunction with other available evidence.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what authority entry clearance officers offer to overturn a decision to refuse a visa in return for a personal guarantee from an hon. Member that the applicant will abide by the terms of the visa. [183491]

Mr. Mullin: Entry Clearance Officers have no authority to overturn a decision to refuse a visa in return for a personal guarantee from an hon. Member that the applicant will abide by the terms of the visa.

However, an Entry Clearance Officer or Entry Clearance Manager reviewing a decision to refuse a visa would take into account subsequent representations made by an hon. Member. These might, in a borderline case, help to satisfy him or her that the relevant requirements of the Immigration Rules were met and he might therefore be prepared to overturn the refusal.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when a reply will be sent to the hon. Member for Walsall North's letter of 3 June to the Department for Work and Pensions, which was transferred to her Department on 10 June. [185288]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My hon. Friend the Member for Walsall North was sent a reply to his letter on 19 July 2004.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 684W, on Royal Mail, when she expects Royal Mail to reply to the hon. Member for Gordon; and if she will make a statement on the average time taken for Post Office Ltd. and Royal Mail to write to hon. Members when her Department redirects parliamentary questions to them. [185353]

Mr. Timms: Royal Mail and Post Office Ltd. make every effort to issue replies to hon. Members within five working days of receiving our request for information.

It would appear that due to an administrative error the hon. Member's inquiry of 22 April 2004 was not passed on to Mr. Crozier's office at Royal Mail for a direct reply. This has now been done and a response will be sent direct to the hon. Member within the next few days.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department spent on *(a)* head-hunters and recruitment consultants and *(b)* management consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [185376]

Ms Hewitt: In 2002–03, £0.9 million was spent on head-hunters and recruitment consultants and £19.4 million was spent on General Business consultants. Similar information for 1996–97 is not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost of running the Department's canteen facilities was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185378]

Ms Hewitt: The information is as follows:

(a) In financial year 1996–97 the direct cost of running the Department's staff restaurant facilities in its main HQ buildings was about £325,000.

(b) Since June 2000, the Department's staff restaurant facilities have operated on a zero (nil) cash subsidy basis.

EU Structural Funds

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 64W, on European Union Standard Funds, what actual expenditure was against those allocations for each year between 2000 and 2003. [185595]

Jacqui Smith: European Structural Fund expenditure under the 2000–06 programmes is monitored on an annual basis. Under current regulations, each year's allocation has to be spent by the end of the second year following the year of allocation.

Due to the late start of the Objective 2 programmes, only the Objective 1 and 3 programmes were required to spend their 2000 allocations by the end of 2002. For the UK Objective 1 programmes a total of £622.3 million had to be spent and for Objective 3 the figure was £402.1 million. These overall targets were achieved. The targets for the end of 2003 included both the 2000 and 2001 allocations for the Objective 2 programmes. A total of £3,150 million had to be spent and this figure was surpassed by £308 million.

MOX Shipments

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of the time and person power of the Office for Civil Nuclear Security will be committed to overseeing the security of the British registered PNTL nuclear transport ships in their mission to transport plutonium-based MOX test assemblies from France to the United States. [185551]

Mr. Timms: Staff in the Office for Civil Nuclear Security will spend whatever proportion of their time is necessary to review the draft Transport Plan with a view to its approval and, if approved, to oversee its implementation. The resources required cannot be firmly estimated in advance but I would expect them to account for no more than a moderate proportion of total OCNS resources.

Regional State Aid

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place the initial member state response to the EU Commission proposals on regional state aid in the Library. [185576]

Jacqui Smith: The Government's response to the Commission's proposals for reform of regional state aid is due to be issued imminently. We will be making our response public. It will be placed on the Department's website and copies will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimates have been made of the costs of concrete production for the purpose of wind power generation. [184106]

Mr. Timms: A number of studies have estimated the overall environmental cost of building wind power generation. For example, the British Wind Energy Association states that the average wind farm in the UK will pay back the energy used in its manufacture within three to five months, and over its lifetime a wind turbine will produce over 30 times more energy than was used in its manufacture. This compares favourably with coal or nuclear power stations, which take about six months.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to increase the amount of renewable energy sources within London. [184285]

Mr. Timms: The Department and the Government Office for London are working closely with the GLA in taking forward the implementation of the Mayor of London's Energy Strategy, which the Government has welcomed.

London will benefit from the range of measures the Government has put in place to deliver its target of 10 per cent. of electricity supply from renewable sources by 2010: including Renewables Obligation on suppliers, grant support and exemption from climate change levy.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the range of the capital grant support available for renewable energy projects in the areas of *(a)* biomass, *(b)* photovoltaics and *(c)* solar water heating. [185398]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Biomass—DTI and the Big Lottery Fund have allocated 66 million through the Bioenergy Capital Grants Scheme to encourage the efficient use of biomass, and particularly energy groups, for energy production by stimulating the early deployment of biomass fuelled heat and electricity generation projects.

(b) Photovoltaics—The £25 million Photovoltaic Major Demonstration Programme offers grants to householders, public bodies, small to medium enterprises and larger bodies for the installation of PV panels. Householders can get a grant of up to £3,000 and £4,250, dependent on size and type of installation. For public bodies, small to medium enterprises and larger bodies grants between 40 per cent. and 60 per cent. are available on a competitive basis, assessed independently at selection panels.

(c) Solar Water Heating—Grants are available through the Clear Skies initiative; householders can get a grant of £400 towards the cost of an installation. Community and not-for-profit groups can get a grant of 50 per cent., up to a maximum of £100,000, towards the cost of installation. This is done through a competitive application process, at independent assessment panels, on a round by round basis. The £10 million Clear Skies initiative was launched in January 2003 in order to promote the uptake of a number of renewable technologies including solar heating panels. Further details of the initiative, including grant levels for all the technologies supported, can be found on the website at www.clear-skies.org.

The Scottish Executive has its own parallel scheme, the £3.7 million Scottish Community and Household Renewables Initiative, which also offers grants for the installation of solar water heating panels. Householders can get a grant of 30 per cent. up to a maximum of £4,000 for a solar water heating installation. Community organisations can get a 100 per cent. grant up to a maximum of £100,000. Community applications are assessed on essential and desirable criteria and large-scale projects may also be subject to independent technical assessment.

Further details can be found on the website www.est.co.uk/schri.

Rural Post Offices

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how much money has been spent in the last year on supporting rural post offices; [185539]

(2) what plans she has for the funding of the rural post office network after 2006. [185476]

Mr. Timms: The Government have made available £450 million to maintain the rural network up in the first instance until April 2006.

The Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU) report on the future of the post office network recommended that the Postal Services Commission should advise the Government on the main options for the policy framework after 2006. The Government are currently considering that policy advice and will take decisions on the shape of the rural post office network after 2006 in good time to allow for a smooth transition from the current support arrangements.

Scientific Research Funding

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her Department's policy is on funding for scientific research bodies. [184577]

Ms Hewitt: My Department funds world-class research with the aim of making the UK one of the most competitive locations for science, research and development and for innovation in the world.

The Government's policy is set out in more detail in the "Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–14", published as part of this year's Spending Review. Spending for the current period is set out in the "Science Budget 2003–04 to 2005–06" copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

South-West Regional Development Agency

Diana Organ: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the South-West Regional Development Agency's budget has been spent on projects or programmes in Gloucestershire in the last three years. [181309]

Jacqui Smith: I understand that the South West of England Regional Development Agency incurred expenditure of £44 million for projects in Gloucestershire in the years 2001-04. This represents 13 per cent. of SWRDA's total programme budget for these years. This figure does not, of course, capture the total percentage of SWRDA's project and programme expenditure that benefits the county, as Gloucestershire also benefits substantially from a range of regional projects and programmes funded by SWRDA, where expenditure is not directly attributable to individual county areas.

Tyres

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many tyres were *(a)* purchased, *(b)* reused and *(c)* disposed of by (i) landfill, (ii) incineration, (iii) illegal fly-tipping and (iv) other means in each year since 2001. [184854]

Mr. Timms: DTI compiles figures on behalf of the Used Tyre Working Group on used tyre recovery and disposal.

Statistics on replacement tyre sales are provided as follows by the British Rubber Manufacturers' Association and the Imported Tyre Manufacturers' Association. The figures for 2003 are expected to be received shortly. While these sources represent the majority of activity in this sector, there are other, diverse, routes to market and for this reason the figures should be viewed as indicative, rather than absolute. A similar caution applies to the information relating to used tyre disposal and recovery.

Replacement tyre sales	*2001*	*2002*
Units	24,870,298	25,485,101
Tonnes	234,250	240,000

A figure for total used tyres arisings also needs to take account of various reuse tyres, not included in the figures above, including retreads and part-worns, tyres on end of life vehicles and imports of used tyres.

Used tyre arisings	*2001*	*2002*
Units	52,832,000	47,169,500
Tonnes	481,500	447,000

Tonnes

	2001	*2002*
Reused	117,650	105,100
Energy recovery[1]	40,000	48,000
Other recovery	132,850	147,400
Total	290,500	300,500

[1] Figures relate solely to the use of tyres as fuel in cement kilns.

Not all industry returns have yet been received to enable presentation of the 2003 figures, but it is estimated that the use of tyres in cement kilns rose to almost 80,000 tonnes and other recovery approached 190,000 tonnes.

Tyres disposed of to landfill arise from two principal channels, retail outlets and end of life vehicles (ELVs). In the former case, figures show a sharp drop from over 87,000 tonnes in 2001 to around 42,000 tonnes in 2002. The 2003 figures are expected to show a further significant diversion of tyres away from landfill disposal. Tyres are also disposed of to landfill as part of automotive shredder residue. The figures for 2001 and 2002 are similar at around 57,000 tonnes, although it should be noted that this total derives from an assumption that all ELV tyres not reused as part-worns or retreads are disposed of in this way.

For both 2001 and 2002 this leaves around a 10 per cent. gap between estimated tyre arisings and stated recovery and disposal. The difference may be due to a number of factors including over-reporting of arisings and under-reporting of recovery and disposal, together with any tyres that are stored or are otherwise not consigned for immediate treatment.

Tyre fly-tipping takes a number of forms, including that dealt with by landowners and local authorities as well as those tyres that are dumped on the forecourts of tyre retail premises, and there are, as yet, no overall figures quantifying this illegal activity. However, The Environment Agency (EA) estimates that £1.65 million is spent annually by local authorities on tyre related fly-tipping. In addition, a joint Defra/EA report estimated that 8,700 tonnes of tyres were fly-tipped on agricultural land in 2001, equating to a cost of £1.3 million. There are a range of other affected landowners including British Waterways, Railtrack and the National Trust. In addition, there is fly-tipping on tyre retail premises where the retailer will subsequently meet the costs of disposal. A third of respondees to a 2003 survey by the representative body for tyre retailers reported that they had been subject to tyre fly-tipping. Since April 2004, Flycapture, a web-based fly-tipping database for England and Wales managed by the EA on behalf of Defra, has been operational. The database, populated with information provided by both the EA and local authorities, provides a systematic basis for the collection of information relating to all fly-tipped wastes, including tyres.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with Labour Members of the European Parliament about the Working Time Directive. [185541]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have had several discussions on working time with Labour MEPs as well as those from the main parties both in person in Brussels and by telephone. I have also discussed working time with MEPs from other member states. My officials also have kept in contact with MEPs and provided written briefings on the Government's position.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with representatives of British industry about the Working Time Directive. [185542]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government regularly meet representatives from British industry to discuss a wide range of issues, including employment law and the operation of the Working Time Directive.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much his Department spent on *(a)* mobile telephone costs, *(b)* hospitality and *(c)* taxi costs in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [185553]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Total mobile telephone costs for the Department, which covers costs for the Court Service, the Public Guardianship Office and DCA Headquarters for 2003–04 is £295,742.

(b) Total hospitality (entertainment) costs for the Department, which covers costs for the Court Service, the Public Guardianship Office and DCA Headquarters for 2003–04 is £79,050.

Information on 1996–97 is not readily available.

(c) It is not possible for the Department to provide the full detailed information requested without incurring disproportionate cost.

The Department has published rules for official travel in its staff handbook and all travel complied with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total cost of printing departmental headed notepaper was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185554]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Constitutional Affairs also replies on behalf of its Associated Offices and the Court Service.

The Department's expenditure on departmental headed notepaper in 2003–04 was £7,738.

Expenditure on notepaper during 1996–97 is included in general stationery costs and cannot be separately identified.

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much his Department spent on *(a)* head-hunters and recruitment consultants and *(b)* management consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [185556]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Constitutional Affairs also replies on behalf of its Associated Offices and the Court Service.

(a) The term "head-hunters and recruitment consultants" is taken to refer to the use of specialist agencies in recruitment to key posts and public appointments.

(i) In 2003–04 the Department's expenditure on recruitment consultants was £414,827. The majority of this concerned the establishment of the new agency (HM Courts Service) and lay members of the 42 new local Courts Boards.

(ii) In 1996–97 information on the use of recruitment consultants was not collated centrally and could now be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

(b) The Department's net expenditure with management consultants in the financial years 1996–97 and 2002–03 was £1.09 million and £5.75 million respectively. (Expenditure is only collected on an annual basis and the figure for 2003–04 is not yet available.)

This increase in expenditure reflects the wide-ranging and fast-paced programme to modernise the Department's work, to increase efficiency, provide better customer service, and value for money for the taxpayer.

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the costs of running his Department's canteen facilities were in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185557]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Constitutional Affairs also replies on behalf of its Associated Offices and the Court Service.

"Canteen Facilities" is taken to mean facilities provided primarily for use by the Department's staff. This approach is consistent with the definition used in previous questions.

(a) The Department operated several staff canteens at various locations during 1996–97 but the running cost of these facilities can only be separated out at disproportionate cost to the Department.

(b) At present the Department operates only one staff canteen, in its London headquarters where there is a concentration staff.

Visitors to the building also use the facility.

Income from sales is used to offset the cost to the Department. However, there is a need for a subsidy, the cost of which was £94,791 in 2003–04.

Departmental Staffing

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff are employed in the Department, broken down by work category. [185375]

Mr. Lammy: The Department does not hold information broken down by work category. However, data on staffing levels in the civil service are collected from Departments and agencies twice-yearly, in April and October. Headline figures are published under National Statistics guidelines via a press notice. Those for October 2003 were published on 22 April 2004. A copy of the press notice, accompanying media brief and supporting tables is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/news/2004/040422_latest_asp/ these documents are also placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

More detailed information on the civil service is published annually in 'Civil Service Statistics', copies of which are laid in the Libraries of both Houses. The last edition, based on April 2002 data, was published in July 2003. The next edition, based on April 2003 data, is due to be published at the end of July 2004.

The Cabinet Office publishes information on non-departmental public bodies in its annual publication 'Public Bodies'. The information includes details of the number of staff employed by each NDPB at 31 March each year. 'Public Bodies 2003' was published in 16 July 2003. Copies of 'Public Bodies' published each year since 1997 are available in the Libraries of both Houses. http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/agencies-publicbodies.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the reasons are for changes in staff numbers in *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the National Archives and *(c)* the Northern Ireland Court Service between 1998–99 and 2003–04. [185373]

Mr. Lammy: The reasons for changes in staff numbers between 1998–99 and 2003–04 for the following are:

(a) The Department for Constitutional Affairs

During the period we recruited an extra 700 staff to support the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA) and its work of processing asylum appeals.

We have also seen an increase in the Court Service due to an increase in workload including sitting days.

(b) The National Archives

Changes in staff numbers in the National Archives are due to the increase in service provision to the public and Government Departments.

(c) Northern Ireland Court Service

Staff numbers in the Northern Ireland Court Service have changed between 1998–99 (628 staff) and 2003–04 (757 staff) as a direct response to delivering the Government's agenda to modernise the delivery of justice. This included responding to the recommendations of the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice Review which significantly reforms criminal justice in Northern Ireland. Other influencing factors include the Court Service's modernisation programme which will enhance the delivery of frontline services.

Information Commissioner

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the costs of staff employed in the Office of the Information Commissioner were in the last year for which figures are available; and what the costs are of the new offices in *(a)* Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Northern Ireland in this financial year. [185372]

Mr. Lammy: Staff costs for the year ended 31 March 2004 were:

£

	Amount
Salaries	3,804,953
Social security costs	278,965
Other pension costs	481,345
Temporary agency staff	114,241
Total	4,679,504

Costs for the new offices in *(a)* Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Northern Ireland in 2004–05 are budgeted to be:

£

	(a)	*(b)*	*(c)*	Total
Staff cost	65,005	65,005	65,005	195,015
Travel and subsistence	20,500	20,500	20,500	61,500
Consultancy	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
Library and subscriptions	1,500	1,500	1,500	4,500
Stationery	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
Accommodation	20,000	20,000	20,000	60,000

TREASURY

Barnett Formula

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the growth was in public expenditure between 2000–01 and 2003–04 *(a)* which was used as comparable spending with Scotland for the purposes of the Barnett Formula, *(b)* for Barnett comparable spending in Scotland and *(c)* in the North East for programmes which were comparable with the Barnett Formula compensation programmes in Scotland. [185594]

Mr. Boateng: Information on identifiable public spending in Scotland and the North East is published in Chapter 8 of Public Expenditure Spending Analyses (Cmd. 6201). The basis of the Barnett formula comparability factors used for the 2004 Spending Review was published in the Statement of Funding Policy in July 2004 and for the 2002 Spending Review in July 2002. The Barnett formula is used to determine increases in spending of the devolved administrations, rather than the levels of spending in English regions.

Civil Service Employment

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the net number is of civil service posts created since 1997 *(a)* in front-line services and *(b)* elsewhere (i) in each Government Department and agency and (ii) in total. [185368]

Mr. Boateng: Details of civil service statistics for each Government Department and agency can be found at the following website: http://www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics/css.htm.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the cost of early retirement and redundancy packages *(a)* in total and *(b)* in each Department for those civil servants whose posts are abolished pursuant to his announcement on 12 July 2004. [185370]

Mr. Boateng: All retirement and redundancy plans are developed and costed on a departmental basis—this is still being planned. The Efficiency Challenge Fund will help support departments, and Cabinet Office is providing a brokerage service to assist with the management of these workforce changes.

Education Maintenance Allowance (Benefit Entitlement)

Mr. Best: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reasons *(a)* parents of A-Level students aged 16 to

19 years receiving education maintenance allowance are eligible for child benefit and child tax credits and *(b)* parents of children aged 16 to 19 years receiving education maintenance allowance studying for college-based vocational qualifications are not eligible for child benefit and child tax credit. [185388]

Dawn Primarolo: The parents of all students aged 16 to 19 who are undertaking courses of full-time, non-advanced education in respect of academic or vocational qualifications and who are receiving educational maintenance allowance will be eligible for child benefit and child tax credit.

However, the Government are aware of the disparity in support to parents of children in full time education and unwaged training and intend to extend entitlement to child benefit and child tax credit for these young people at the earliest opportunity.

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, Central (Mr. Cousins) on 6 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 623W.

EU Withdrawal (Costs)

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will commission and publish a study into the costs of UK withdrawal from the EU, which includes the economic and social impact on each region and nation of the UK. [184369]

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the effects on the UK economy of membership of the European single market. [184526]

Ruth Kelly: The assessment of the five economic tests, published 9 June 2003, states,

> "With more than half the UK's trade with the EU and increasing integration of product, labour, and capital markets, the UK's economic interest is best pursued through a deepening cooperation with other European countries as part of the Government's commitment to strong EU and successful EMU."

The Treasury estimates that 3 million jobs in the UK are linked, directly and indirectly, to the export of goods and services to the European Union.

International Economy

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the international economy. [185981]

John Healey: On 3 June, in recognition of the pressures in the oil market and because of a shortage of oil supply to meet demand, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that we would be reviewing progress of the annual fuel duty increase planned for 1 September.

The Government's focus since 3 June has been on OPEC and oil producers and their responsibilities to meet their own targets on sustainable oil prices, and we have sought to await the outcome of this month's OPEC Ministers meeting before making a further statement. I will give further details of discussions and progress to Members of the House when I appear before the Treasury Select Committee tomorrow.

With the next meeting of OPEC Ministers now moved from July to September, and in light of the continuing uncertainty in the oil market, we have decided to keep the planned increase, including for sulphur-free fuel and rebated fuels, under review, and will report back further at the time of the pre-Budget report. Because of its environmental benefits the Government remain committed to the introduction of sulphur free fuel, and will be in discussion with the industry over its availability across the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will also report back on this issue at the time of the pre-Budget report.

Network Rail Debts

Mr. Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer who will guarantee the debts of Network Rail after the abolition of the Strategic Rail Authority; and whether they will now count as part of the Government's borrowing requirement. [185431]

Mr. Boateng: When it is wound up, the SRA's duties and financial obligations, including those in support of Network Rail's borrowing, will transfer to the Department for Transport. This will not affect the classification of Network Rail or its debt.

Pay Systems

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library the most recent review of *(a)* his Department's pay systems, *(b)* the pay systems of the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible and *(c)* the departmental equal pay action plan. [181355]

Ruth Kelly: Information on the most recent reviews of pay systems of the Chancellor's Departments and of their equal pay action plans has been deposited in the Library. The Chancellor is not responsible for any non-departmental public bodies.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the spending review will be of special advisers. [185481]

Mr. Boateng: Special advisers are appointed by Ministers, with the approval of the Prime Minister, in accordance with Article 3(2) of the Civil Service Order in Council 1995 (as amended).

Spending Review 2004 published planned reductions in civil service and public administration posts of 84,150 by 2008, including the redeployment of 13,550 to front line posts/activities. Details of these reductions are a matter for individual Departments. Progress on meeting the efficiency targets will be publicly reported so that the Government are accountable for the results. Departments will report progress through their departmental reports and on their website.

Spending Review

Sir Patrick Cormack: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his Statement of 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1131, on Spending Review, if he

will list the £30 billion worth of asset sales included in the objective; and when he expects the sales to be completed. [184867]

Mr. Boateng: The £30 billion objective for asset sales covers the period to 2010 and relates to the public sector as a whole. While decisions on specific asset disposals are for individual Government Departments and local authorities, these decisions will be informed by the work that Chancellor has commissioned from Sir Michael Lyons.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the differences between planned administration expenditure by department in Table 2.3 of the 2004 Spending Review Report and Table 5.1 of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2004. [184706]

Mr. Boateng: The administration budgets in table 2.3 of the 2004 Spending Review are net of all income departments generate through their administrative expenditure. The figures in Table 5.1 of the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2004 are only net of the element of this income that forms part of other departments' administration costs.

Figures published in the Spending Review take account of reclassifications implemented in line with the recommendation of made by Sir Peter Gershon.

Tax Credits (Compensatory Payments)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit compensation claims have been *(a)* submitted and *(b)* upheld since April 2003; and what the (i) average and (ii) total value is of compensation payments made. [185054]

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 23 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1411W, what the value of compensatory payments made to those receiving tax credits was in the last financial year. [185675]

Dawn Primarolo: A total of 10,800 compensation payments for tax credits were authorised in 2003–04. This represents about one eighth of one per cent of all claims received for tax credit awards. The total value of these payments was £370,000, and the average payment was £34. 255 claims were refused.

Tobacco Smuggling

David Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions he has had on making the UK a co-signatory to the Anti-Contraband and Anti-Counterfeit Agreement and General Release reached on 19 July between the European Community, Philip Morris International and subsidiary companies; [185503]

(2) what recent discussions Her Majesty's Customs and Excise have had with *(a)* Philip Morris International, *(b)* British American Tobacco, *(c)* Imperial Tobacco and *(d)* Gallaher Group plc on the status of the Memorandum of Understanding on the smuggling of tobacco products which these companies have with the Government; [185483];

(3) what discussions he has had with OLAF, the European Anti-fraud Office, concerning the agreement on tobacco smuggling recently reached between the European Council and Philip Morris International. [185486]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise have Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with British American Tobacco, Imperial Tobacco and Gallaher. As part of these, Customs meet regularly to discuss developments in the illicit market including the status of the MOUs.

Although Customs do not currently have an MOU with Philip Morris International (PMI), as their products have much less significance in either the licit or illicit UK tobacco market, they meet regularly to discuss developments in the illicit market.

The UK was not part of the European action taken against PMI in August 2001.

There have been no discussions on making the UK a co-signatory to the Anti-Contraband and Anti-Counterfeit Agreement.

David Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans there are to bring the Memorandum of Understanding on tobacco smuggling in line with the terms of the Anti-Contraband and Anti-Counterfeit Agreement and General Release reached on 9 July between the European Council and Philip Morris International. [185485]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise have Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) in place with the main UK tobacco manufacturers, the first of which was agreed in July 2002. Since its peak in 2000–01, the illicit cigarette market has been successfully reduced by more than 2.5 billion sticks per annum and the incidence of UK manufactured cigarettes being smuggled into the UK has fallen markedly from about 75 per cent. of large seizures to 31 per cent. in 2002–03.

Customs regularly assess the size and composition of the illicit cigarette market in the UK and take the measures they consider will continue their successful strategy of reducing smuggling. We will assess the detail of the Anti-Contraband and Anti-Counterfeit Agreement and consider whether we would wish to become a co-signatory to the Agreement.

Working Tax Credits (Recovery of Overpayments)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the number of low paid workers who give up work due to inability to afford child care places consequent on the reclaiming of overpaid working tax credits; and what his assessment is of the impact on business. [184718]

Dawn Primarolo: The data available to the Inland Revenue do not include information about the reasons for individual tax credits recipients moving out of work.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Andersonstown News Group

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the *(a)* nature and *(b)* extent of the application for funding made by the Andersonstown News Group to Invest NI. [185371]

Mr. Gardiner: The Andersonstown News Group approached Invest NI to request assistance for a project to publish a new national daily newspaper at an estimated investment cost of circa £3 million. The project anticipated the creation of up to 41 new jobs, 35 of which were to be based at the Group's offices in West Belfast and six in new offices to be established in Monaghan Town, in the Republic of Ireland. The company anticipated that 50 per cent. of the sales revenue would be generated in the Republic of Ireland.

A commercial appraisal of the project has been completed by independent consultants. In line with Part II, Paragraph 13 (Third party's commercial confidences) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, it would be inappropriate to disclose further information.

Common Funding Formula

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the common funding formula. [184215]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department plans to consult schools on the final proposals for the Common Funding Formula over the next few months, with the aim of implementing Common Funding in April 2005.

Consultancy Contracts

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list in respect of each Department, agency and non-departmental public body in Northern Ireland the consultancy contracts that they have entered into in each of the last three financial years, together with a statement about the purpose of each contract and its cost to public funds. [181175]

Mr. Pearson: Information about all consultancy contracts entered into by Departments, agencies and non-departmental public bodies in Northern Ireland and related costs is not held centrally and could be obtained from individual bodies only at disproportionate cost. Information on consultancy contracts awarded by the Central Procurement Directorate on behalf of public bodies in Northern Ireland is held by that Directorate and a copy has been placed in the Library.

Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what public consultation was undertaken in Northern Ireland by his Department in relation to the introduction in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill of non-jury trials for those unfit to stand trial; and if he will make a statement. [183667]

Mr. Spellar: There are no measures in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill that provide for non-jury trials for those unfit to stand trial. However, clauses 22 and 23 of that Bill relate to pre-trial hearings on fitness to plead and will give the judge, rather than jury, the responsibility for determining fitness to plead on mental health grounds.

Based on a recommendation of the Auld Review of the Criminal Courts, the opportunity arose through the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill to apply this valuable measure to Northern Ireland. Given the timetable of the Bill and the opportunity presented, a public consultation was not possible.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consultations took place between his Department and the Home Office in relation to the introduction in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill of non-jury trials for those unfit to stand trial in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [183606]

Mr. Spellar: There are no measures in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill that provide for non-jury trials for those unfit to stand trial. However, clauses 22 and 23 of that Bill relate to pre-trial hearings on fitness to plead and will give the judge, rather than jury, the responsibility for determining fitness to plead on mental health grounds.

My officials have been and continue to be in close contact about provisions that fall within the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill, including those which relate to non-jury pre-trial hearings on fitness to plead.

Home Office officials have advised my officials of developments in relation to this measure and both Departments have worked closely together to keep the arrangements for Northern Ireland in line with those proposed for England and Wales and to ensure that this valuable provision is applied within Northern Ireland.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what public consultation was undertaken in Northern Ireland by his Department in relation to the introduction of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill of restraining orders on acquittal; and if he will make a statement. [183604]

Mr. Spellar: The Government's proposal to improve restraining orders and extend their availability in Northern Ireland was included in the Northern Ireland domestic violence consultation paper "Tackling Violence at Home".

The public consultation period ran from mid October to mid December 2003 in addition to which my officials carried out 11 workshops across Northern Ireland on the proposals contained in the consultation document. The proposal to make restraining orders available on acquittal was highlighted at each of these workshops. In addition to comments made at these sessions some further 70 written consultation responses were received.

The responses were unanimously in agreement with extending the use of restraining orders, especially for offences of violence against the person. Respondents considered that this provided extra support and protection to victims.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consultations took place between his Department and the Home Office in relation to the introduction in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill of restraining orders on acquittal in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [183605]

Mr. Spellar: Officials from both the Home Office and Northern Ireland Office are represented on the UK-wide Domestic Violence Virtual Group which was established to shadow the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic Violence, of which my colleague, Angela Smith, MP (the Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland) is a member.

The work of the Domestic Violence Virtual Group has consequently ensured that consultation on domestic violence issues is continuous between officials of both the Northern Ireland Office and the Home Office.

In addition my officials continue to be in close contact with the Home Office about issues arising from and relating to the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill. Both Departments have been in consultation and discussion regarding the introduction of restraining orders on acquittal at each stage of the drafting and parliamentary processes.

Employer's Liability Insurance

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will assess the effects of the removal of employer's liability compulsory insurance requirements on Northern Ireland's smallest-owner-operated limited companies; and if he will make a statement. [184937]

Mr. Gardiner: At national level the Department for Work and Pensions is currently reviewing the Employer's Liability Compulsory Insurance regulations (ELCI) in respect of those limited companies in the UK where the owner is the only employee. If a decision is made to remove the requirement for ELCI from limited companies in the UK where the owner is the only employee, then a formal consultation will take place in the autumn with any legislative change expected in the UK early in 2005. The Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment will be closely involved in implementing the process.

European Parliamentary Elections

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many voters were turned away from polling stations in Northern Ireland at the recent European parliamentary elections for not having valid photographic identification. [179494]

Mr. Spellar: 2,622 electors were originally turned away having arrived at a polling station without valid photographic identification. 1,123 of those electors subsequently returned before the close of poll with an alternative, correct form of ID and were able to cast their vote. The remainder of this total—1,499 electors—were unable to vote because of a failure to produce valid identification.

The totals recorded are as follows.

Constituency	*Number originally turned away for invalid ID*	*Number of these not returning*
Belfast East	106	69
Belfast North	113	68
Belfast South	92	46
Belfast West	157	82
East Antrim	96	57
East Londonderry	143	86
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	200	108
Foyle	218	114
Lagan Valley	93	55
Mid Ulster	233	138
Newry and Armagh	200	108
North Antrim	224	134
North Down	81	54
South Antrim	124	74
South Down	145	86
Strangford	103	58
Upper Bann	151	71
West Tyrone	143	91
Total	2,622	1,499

Harassment

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what precise conduct of the employee of the Department of Education in Northern Ireland found guilty in May 2001 of harassing a colleague, was deemed by the Department to have constituted the harassment; and whether this information was made known to the employee at the time the charge was levelled. [185152]

Mr. Gardiner: Following a thorough and impartial investigation the individual to whom the hon. Member's question refers was found to have acted in an inappropriate manner during a meeting with a colleague that caused the individual to feel upset and intimidated.

The specific actions that were deemed to be inappropriate conduct were:

(a) To ignore a member of staff in a distressed condition, and

(b) To continue with a particular line of questioning and critical personal observations.

The person to whom the hon. Member's question refers was informed of the charge on 21 May 2001, when a formal written statement defining the disciplinary charge was issued, and subsequently on 24 February 2003 in a written response to correspondence from a Member of the Legislative Assembly in Northern Ireland.

Housing Executive Properties

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what proportion of former Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties that are retained by the initial owner but are now privately rented were rented within *(a)* three years, *(b)* five years, *(c)* seven years and *(d)* 10 years of the purchase; [183507]

(2) what proportion of former Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties are retained by the initial owner but are now privately rented. [183512]

Mr. Spellar: The Housing Executive is unable to provide the information. The consultation document launched on 18 May 2004 proposing amendments to the House Sales Scheme and the extension of the statutory Right to Buy Scheme to Housing Associations tenants sets out a range of measures to encourage the retention of properties in the social rented sector.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many former Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties bought initially with a discount have been resold; and of these, what proportion were resold within *(a)* three, *(b)* five, *(c)* seven and *(d)* 10 years. [183511]

Mr. Spellar: The information is not readily available. The issue of discounts is covered in the consultation document launched on 18 May 2004 proposing amendments to the House Sales Scheme and extending the statutory Right to Buy Scheme to Housing Associations tenants.

Job Losses (Civil Servants)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants in Northern Ireland, broken down by Department, he anticipates will lose their jobs as a consequence of the Comprehensive Spending Review; and how he expects frontline services will be affected. [185084]

Mr. Pearson: I am committed to delivering efficiency gains for public services that at least match the 2.5 per cent. a year figure announced by the Chancellor in the SR2004 Spending Review outcome. All the money released through greater efficiency will be retained in Northern Ireland for reinvestment in priority front line services to the public. There is scope in Northern Ireland, as elsewhere, to reduce the number of posts involved in back office and related areas, so that more people and money can be reallocated to front line services.

The detailed implications for Northern Ireland are being considered as part of our own efficiency review which is ongoing. The conclusions of this work, together with the implications for civil service posts, will be contained in our Draft Priorities and Budget, to be published in September 2004.

Lance Bombadier Restorick

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what advice about IRA operations was given by the RUC's Tasking Control Group (South) to members of the security forces before Lance Bombadier Restorick's death in January 1997; [183674]

(2) what measures were taken by the security forces once it became known that an IRA operation was likely in the Bessbrook area in January 1997; [183675]

(3) what knowledge the RUC had of future IRA operations in the Bessbrook area before the death of Lance Bombadier Restorick in January 1997. [183676]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Ombudsman has agreed to investigate the issues surrounding the allegations, therefore, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further.

Public Transport (Disabled People)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the cost of providing free public transport for the disabled in Northern Ireland. [184062]

Mr. Spellar: Free travel on scheduled public transport is available to people who are registered blind and to people in receipt of a War Disablement Pension who have been assessed as being more than 20 per cent. disabled. During the financial year 2004–05 it is estimated that the cost of providing such concessions will amount to £320,000.

In addition, free travel is available to all Northern Ireland residents aged over 65 years of age, 57 per cent. of whom consider themselves to have a limiting long-term illness. During the financial year 2004–05, I estimate that the cost of providing free travel to that proportion of older people will be around £7.8 million.

Since 1 April 2004, half fare concessions have been available under the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme to people who:

are in receipt of either mobility component of Disability Living Allowance;

have had a driving licence refused or revoked for medical reasons;

are registered with a Health and Social Services Trust as being partially sighted;

are known to a Health and Social Services Trust as having a learning disability.

The Department for Regional Development has estimated that the operating costs for these four groups of people for the financial year 2004–05 will be £205,000, at current fare levels. The estimated cost of changing the Concessionary Fares Scheme to provide free-fare travel, rather than half fare concessions, to these groups would be likely to cost around £500,000 per annum in addition to set-up costs.

I therefore estimate that the cost of providing free travel on scheduled public transport to people with disabilities would be in the region of £8.62 million in the current financial year. However, there are currently no plans to further extend the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme to provide free public transport for the four groups of people who have received half fare concessions since April 2004.

Translink

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when Translink expects the first of its new trains to begin service. [185154]

Mr. Spellar: The first of the new trains is expected to be introduced to passenger service in October 2004.

Ulster Volunteer Force

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will recognise the Ulster Volunteer Force as a Unionist paramilitary group; and if he will make a statement; [169174]

(2) when he will answer the question of 23 April from the hon. Member for Portsmouth South, ref 169174, about the Ulster Volunteer Force. [185216]

Mr. Pearson: I am sorry for the delay in replying.

There is no paramilitary group categorised as Unionist. The more accurate terminology is Loyalist. The Government's overall judgment is that the ceasefire of the Ulster Volunteer Force remains in place.

United States (Ministerial Representations)

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what representations he has made to the United States Administration to prevent Sinn Fein representatives entering the USA under the provisions of the Patriot Act following the first report of the Independent Monitoring Commission in April; [182970]

(2) what representations he has made to the State Department in the USA to place *(a)* the Provisional IRA, *(b)* Sinn Fein and *(c)* the Ulster Volunteer Force on the list of designated foreign terrorist organisations following the first report of the Independent Monitoring Commission in April. [182971]

Mr. Pearson: None.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Administration Fees

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been *(a)* budgeted for and *(b)* spent on administration fees by his Department in the last three years. [184144]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was created following the Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. The following table shows the Office's budget and expenditure for administration costs for the financial years 2002–03 and 2003–04 and the budgets for 2004–05.

£000

	2002–03[1]	2002–03[2]	2003–04[1]	2003–04[2]	2004–05[1]
ODPM(C)	180,011	171,648	177,075	173,737	181,352
Government offices	110,534	109,507	135,205	133,835	115,020
Executive agencies	43,593	42,584	37,505	35,510	39,475
Total	334,138	323,739	349,785	343,082	335,847

[1] Budget
[2] Expenditure

The budget figure in 2004–05 for the Government Offices is lower than in previous years, as additional work undertaken for Other Government Departments is agreed on an annual basis and the budgets transferred in year.

Arm's Length Management Organisations

Mr. David Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list arm's length management organisations which have achieved 3-star status. [184236]

Keith Hill: Five arms length management organisations have achieved 3-star status. These are Ashfield Homes, Brent Housing Partnership, Carrick Housing, Derby Homes and City West Homes (Westminster).

Audit Commission

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* estimated running costs and *(b)* total expenditure of the Audit Commission (i) has been in each year since its creation and (ii) is expected to be in (A) 2004–05 and (B) 2005–06. [184980]

Mr. Raynsford: This is an operational matter for the Audit Commission and I will ask the Chief Executive to reply.

Council Tax

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of pensioner households in England paid the full council tax in 2002–03. [184494]

Mr. Raynsford: The requested information is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average council tax was in England in each year from 1993 to 2003. [184559]

Mr. Raynsford: The requested information is in the table.

£

	Average band D area council tax	Average council tax per dwelling
1993–94	568	456
1994–95	580	473
1995–96	609	498
1996–97	646	525
1997–98	688	564
1998–99	747	614
1999–2000	798	656
2000–01	847	697
2001–02	901	741
2002–03	976	804
2003–04	1,102	908

Departmental Accounting Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister who the Finance Director of *(a)* his Office and *(b)* Ordnance Survey is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183430]

Phil Hope: Andrew Lean is the Finance Director for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. He is currently studying for an Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) Diploma in Financial Management. The Office's first resource accounts for 2002–03 were not qualified.

Alastair Matthews has been the Finance Director of Ordnance Survey since July 2003. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. The Ordnance Survey's Annual Accounts have been qualified on the same basis in each of the five years up to and including 31 March 2004. The qualification relates to a difference of opinion between the National Audit Office and Ordnance Survey as to whether the National Geographic Database should be capitalised on Ordnance Survey's Balance Sheet.

Departmental Annual Reports

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many copies of his Department's, and predecessor Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183841]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its executive agencies were created on 29 May 2002. Both Annual Reports issued since this date have been published by The Stationery Office (TSO Ltd.). The number of copies they printed and sold, and the revenue they made is commercial in confidence and hence the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not know these details.

The costs to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister—and its principal predecessor Departments—for the past four financial years are set out as follows. Given Departmental changes, the costs of publication for the years 1997–2000 could be identified only at disproportionate cost.

The Department for Environment, Transport and Regions Annual Report cost circa £52,000 in 2000–01;

The Department for Transport, Local Government and Regions's Annual Report cost circa £38,000 in 2001–02; and

the first annual report for the Office of the Deputy prime Minister, publishing in May 2003, cost circa £17,000;

the second annual report for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, publishing in April 2004, cost circa £49,000.

Departmental Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its predecessor Department and *(c)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183907]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed on 29 May 2002.

(a) The travel and subsistence costs incurred by civil servants in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in each financial year are as follows:

	£
2002–03	3,156,223
2003–04	3,187,321

(b) Information for the predecessor Department could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

(c) In the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's three executive agencies, (i) the Fire Service College, (ii) the Planning Inspectorate and (iii) the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, travel and subsistence costs were as follows:

(i) The Fire Service College:

	£
1999–2000	181,291
2000–01	176,313
2001–02	121,095
2002–03	120,127
2003–04	150,352

Figures for 1997–98 and 1998–99 are not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

(ii) The Planning Inspectorate (figures rounded to the nearest £100,000):

	£
1997–98	2,200,000
1998–99	1,900,000
1999–2000	2,100,000
2000–01	2,400,000
2001–02	2,400,000
2002–03	2,700,000
2003–04	2,600,000

(iii) The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (figures rounded to the nearest £1,000):

	£
1997–98	39,000
1998–99	39,000
1999–2000	46,000
2000–01	57,000
2001–02	48,000
2002–03	46,000
2003–04	42,000

All travel is undertaken fully in accordance with the rules set out in the Civil Service Management Code.

East End of London (Development)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much will be spent on the development of east end areas in London in 2004–05. [184286]

Keith Hill: Through projects approved to date under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Thames Gateway Programme it is expected that some

£40 million will be spent in the east end of London during 2004–5. This funding will help to regenerate existing communities and open up new opportunities for housing and employment.

In addition to this there will be further investment by the Housing Corporation. I have asked, the Chief Executive, Jon Rouse to write to the hon. Member separately on this.

Homelessness

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homelessness applications have been accepted in Northampton in each of the last five years. [184842]

Phil Hope: Information about English local authorities' activities under homelessness legislation is reported to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on quarterly P1E housing activity returns. The total number of decisions made and the number of these accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need, as reported by Northampton borough council during the past five years, is tabled as follows.

Decisions taken by Northampton borough council in respect of applications by homeless households

	Decisions	*Acceptances*[1]
1999–2000	1,146	369
2000–01	1,120	430
2001–02	849	286
2002–03	1,066	414
2003–04	1,028	420

[1] Acceptances refer to eligible households found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category

Source:

ODPM quarterly P1E homelessness returns

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homelessness applications have been accepted in Portsmouth in each of the last five years. [184315]

Phil Hope: Information about English local authorities' activities under homelessness legislation is reported to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on quarterly P1E housing activity returns. The total number of decisions made and the number of these accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need, as reported by Portsmouth City Council during the past five years, is tabled.

Decisions taken by Portsmouth City Council in respect of applications by homeless households

	Decisions	*Acceptances*[1]
1999–2000	1,871	547
2000–01	1,906	529
2001–02	2,500	655
2002–03	2,826	804
2003–04	2,040	760

Notes

[1] Acceptances refer to eligible households found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category

Source:

ODPM quarterly P1E homelessness returns

House Prices/Incomes Ratio

Mr. Gray: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the house price to incomes ratio is in each region; and what plans he has to boost affordable housing investment in the South West. [185182]

Keith Hill: The latest data on property prices to earnings ratios are set out in the following table. The substantially increased funding for affordable housing announced in the Spending Review will, along with significant improvements in efficiency, provide 10,000 (50 per cent.) more social rented homes a year by 2007–08. More than 40,000 homes will also be provided in the next three years for essential public sector workers and through other low cost home ownership schemes. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is looking at how funding will be split between regions to reflect housing needs and our national housing priorities and targets.

	Average property price (£)[1]	*Average annual earnings (£)*[2]	*Ratio of property prices to earnings*
East of England	166,103	26,545	6.26
East Midlands	117,228	22,932	5.11
London	242,782	31,532	7.70
North East	85,702	21,017	4.08
North West	96,405	22,964	4.20
South East	196,027	28,037	6.99
South West	162,587	23,400	6.95
West Midlands	123,313	22,879	5.39
Yorkshire and the Humber	98,109	22,304	4.40
England	150,947	25,297	5.97

[1] January–June 2003.

[2] April 2003.

Sources:

Property prices: Land Registry Earnings: Office for National Statistics, New Earnings Survey

Housing Corporation Rural Programme

Mr. Gray: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he plans to retain the ring-fenced rural programme of the Housing Corporation available to new starts in settlements of fewer than 3,000 people. [185194]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister current target—to provide at least 3,500 new affordable homes in communities with fewer than 3,000 people—covers the period 2004–06 (and early indications show that this is likely to be exceeded). From 2006–07 targets will be determined regionally based on advice from the Regional Housing Boards.

Housing Stock Transfers

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what evidence his Department has collated to support its conclusions that *(a)* it is more cost effective to improve a house when the improvements are conducted by a housing association or an arm's length management organisation rather than by a local housing authority and *(b)* the transfer of local authority housing stock into alternative management and/or ownership results in higher levels of tenant satisfaction. [184121]

Keith Hill: The information is as follows.

(a) The Public Accounts Committee's 40th report: Improving Social Housing through Transfer published in July 2003 contains supplementary evidence provided by the office on the value for money of stock transfer. This assessment carried out in April 2003 used guidance in the 2003 Treasury Green Book "Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government" which took effect on 1 April 2003. As stated in our response to ODPM: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee's Report on Decent Homes, evidence is also available on inspection ratings of ALMOs following their first six months of operation compared with their previous inspections as local authority managed housing departments.

Together with the Housing Corporation, we are currently considering the most appropriate approach for future monitoring and evaluating the transfer programme, and parallel work is underway for the ALMO programme. Each monitoring/evaluation system will be tailored to the particular circumstances of each programme, but will also collect consistent data so that it is possible, in the longer term, to provide a comparative assessment of decent homes delivery, value for money, and tenant satisfaction across the different programmes.

(b) Housemark's January 2004 report showed 79 per cent. of transfer tenants were satisfied with their landlord compared to 74 per cent. for council tenants.

As the ALMO programme did not start until 2002, there are no reliable data available to demonstrate whether levels of participation and satisfaction are improving.

Housing Investment

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to meet Regional Planning Guidance targets of 6,000 to 10,000 new affordable homes per year established in 2001 for the South West. [183990]

Keith Hill: Policy of the Office Deputy Prime Minister—as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3—is not to set region-wide targets or quotas for affordable housing. Targets are more appropriately set at the local level as they are, necessarily, derived from local circumstances and assessments. The figures set out in Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) are, therefore, not a target but an indicator against which the provision of affordable housing can be monitored. Better quality information than currently available is needed to assess how we are progressing against this indicator. However, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does know that we are not yet providing sufficient affordable homes. That is why the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has accepted Kate Barker's recommendation that there should be a step-change in housing supply. Over the coming months, we will be consulting on a package of proposals designed to achieve this, including the provision of independent advice to the Regions, which should improve significantly our ability to deliver and monitor the provision of affordable homes. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is also committing more resources to the delivery of affordable homes—the 2004 Spending Review will allow us to increase new social house building by 50 per cent.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the departmental expenditure limit for housing was in 2003–04. [184124]

Phil Hope: Housing programmes, including the growth areas, comprised £4.022 billion of the Office of the Deputy prime Minister's final departmental expenditure limit for 2003–04.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to allow arm's length management organisations access to borrowing to meet the decent homes standard. [184568]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no current plans to change the current arrangements under which local authorities carry out the borrowing necessary for their Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) to meet the decent homes standard. ALMOs are unable to borrow direct because, as managers of the local authority's stock, they have no assets on which to secure a loan.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding has been made available in each of the last three years under the Supporting People programme to each of the housing authorities in Somerset. [184636]

Phil Hope: The Supporting People programme went live in April 2003. Prior to this date the Government contributed towards the administration costs of administering authorities in establishing the programme.

For 2003–04 and 2004–05 Supporting People grants have been given for both administration and programme costs. Budgets for 2005–06 to 2007–08 have not yet been finalised. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister plans to announce individual allocations to administering authorities for 2005–06 to 2007–08 in the autumn. Supporting People grants are paid direct to county councils and unitary authorities not district authorities.

The following table sets out the Supporting People grant funding over the last three years for each of the housing authorities in Somerset:

£

Grants	*Bath and North East Somerset*	*North Somerset District*	*Somerset*
2002–03			
Administration	190,412	170,885	369,694
Programme	—	—	—
2003–04			
Administration	211,383	198,798	455,878
Programme	4,389,642	6,437,692	21,430,845
2004–05			
Allocated Administration	185,000	174,217	472,697
Programme	4,299,069	6,294,582	21,133,324

Mr. Flook: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* affordable homes and *(b)* homes for rent have been built by (i) Taunton Deane borough council and (ii) housing associations in Taunton Deane in each of the last seven years. [184639]

Keith Hill: Figures for affordable homes built are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Based on data reported by Taunton Deane council and the National House-Building Council, the number of council and registered social landlord dwellings that have been built within Taunton Deane in the last seven financial years are shown in the following table:

	(i) Taunton Deane	*(ii) Registered Social Landlords*
1997–98	0	20
1998–99	0	111
1999–2000	0	79
2000–01	0	44
2001–02	0	34
2002–03	4	51
2003–04	0	23

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many social housing units he expects to be built in the south Midlands growth area as a result of the extra finance for housing announced as part of the Government's three-year spending plans; [184696]

(2) what proportion of funds for affordable housing announced as part of the spending review will go to the south Midlands growth area. [184697]

Keith Hill: The additional funding provided in the Spending Review will, along with efficiency improvements, produce 10,000 extra social rented homes a year by 2007–08. Decisions have not yet been taken on how Regional Housing Pot funding for 2006–07 and 2007–08, including the additional funding for affordable housing, is split between regions. This needs to reflect the different pattern of needs across regions and the Government's national housing priorities, including development of the growth areas, and targets. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is aiming to complete this work, which raises some complex issues, by the end of the year. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will announce decisions on allocation of funding within regions next summer in the light of recommendations from Regional Housing Boards, which are due in May next year.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding was made available to the London Borough of Islington for each year since 1997 for housing capital work, broken down by *(a)* housing capital authorisation, *(b)* authority to use capital receipts for housing capital work, *(c)* authority for stock-transferred estates to undertake capital work, *(d)* allocations to housing associations for work within the borough, *(e)* authority for work to be carried out by the arm's length management organisation; and *(f)* what projected funding in future years is in each of these categories. [184725]

Keith Hill: The information is as follows:

(a) is comprised of a number of different elements as shown in the following table.

£000

	Housing Supported Capital Expenditure[1]	*Major Repairs Allowance*	*Disabled Facilities Grant*	*Cash Incentive Scheme*
1997–98	12,708	—	136	2,240
1998–99	17,214	—	124	1,524
1999–2000	18,019	—	131	—
2000–01	28,415	—	142	—
2001–02	12,651	25,434	212	—
2002–03	14,970	25,030	237	—
2003–04	13,607	25,477	360	—
2004–05	13,843	23,966	389	—

[1] Previously known as Annual Capital Guideline, includes private sector renewal and capital receipts initiative allocations; figures up to 2002–03 include an allowance for spending financed from the authorities' capital receipts.

(b) As a with-debt authority, Islington were allowed to use the useable part of the capital receipts they generated for any capital purpose they saw fit, including housing capital work.

(c) Islington received £22.69 million of Estates Renewal Challenge Fund funding after the transfer of two schemes in September 1999.

(d) is comprised of three different elements, as detailed in the following table.

£000

	Approved Development Programme	*Starter Home Initiative*	*Local Authority Social Housing Grant*
1997–98	9,130	—	9,192
1998–99	14,318	—	200
1999–2000	5,800	—	223
2000–01	9,815	—	1,048
2001–02	10,313	—	2,761
2002–03	24,906	597	1,541
2003–04	34,187	3,183	[1]—
2004–05	[2]56,696	[3]—	—

[1] Local Authority Social Housing Grant abolished with effect from 1 April 2003.

[2] 1997–98 to 2003–04 is spend, 2004–05 is allocation.

[3] No figures for 2004–05 available yet.

(e) Islington has been awarded provisional ALMO funding of £24.9 million for 2004–06. Release of this funding is conditional on the ALMO achieving at least a two star rating from the Housing Inspectorate when it is inspected later this year.

(f) A provisional allocation of £16,273,000 has been made for 2005–2006. No other indications for projected funding in future years exist at this time.

Llew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to order an environmental impact assessment of the additional home construction he announced on 13 July 2004. [184821]

Keith Hill: Proposals for new housing development projects are subject to the requirements of the planning system. Decisions on the need for environmental impact assessment for such proposals will be taken at the appropriate by the relevant local planning authority in accordance with the requirements of Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended) on the effects on the environment of certain public and private project which is given

effect in England by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (England and Wales) 1999.

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* affordable homes and *(b)* homes for rent have been built in Northampton in each of the last five years. [184865]

Keith Hill: Figures for affordable homes built and homes for rent built are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Based on data reported by Northampton council and the National House-Building Council, the number of registered social landlord and council dwellings that have been built within Northampton in the last five financial years are shown in the following table:

	Number
1999–2000	26
2000–01	51
2001–02	0
2002–03	0
2003–04	83

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what account he will take of the information on housing in the South West in the National Housing Federation's booklet, "The Evidence Update", when making future housing investment decisions about the South West region. [185387]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister welcomes the work that the National Housing Federation (NHF) have done for their recent reports on housing needs in the South East and South West. The general picture on housing pressures and the affordability of home ownership is in line with our analysis which under-pinned discussions of funding for affordable housing in the 2004 Spending Review. Officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime will be meeting with the NHF shortly to discuss these reports.

The NHF South West is represented on the South West Housing Body Steering Group and as such they will play a key role in the development of the region's new Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) due for publication in early 2005. The RHS will reflect all relevant evidence from a variety of sources and will form the basis for the housing body's recommendations to Minister's on the distribution of housing resources within the region.

Local Authority Building Control

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the 2003 annual monitoring report on the costs of local authority building control functions. [183682]

Phil Hope: No. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government carry out an annual monitoring exercise whereby local authorities in England and Wales are asked voluntarily to provide a return stating their total charges income and costs in carrying out their prescribed building control functions under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998, but formal 'annual monitoring reports' are not prepared. The information derived from the annual returns is primarily used for internal monitoring purposes, although it is shared with the Local Government Association (LGA). Moreover, a commitment has been given to individual local authorities and the LGA that the annual monitoring exercise will be carried out on an in-confidence basis. This arrangement is currently being reviewed in the light of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which comes fully into force on 1 January 2005.

Market Towns Initiative (Harwich)

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding has been spent in the Harwich constituency from the Market Towns Initiative. [185000]

Keith Hill: Expenditure in Harwich under the Market Towns Initiative for the period 2002–05 was forecast to be £288,884; actual expenditure to date stands at £254,157.

These figures relate to investment delivered through the Regional Development Agency. The amount of additional funding and resources estimated to have been levered into Harwich to supplement market towns investment through the RDA is £1.5 million, derived from supporting partners including English Heritage (HERS fund); Countryside Agency; Sport England and Lottery.

Mobile Phone Masts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations he has received regarding the placing of mobile phone masts near schools and hospitals. [185421]

Keith Hill: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost as it is not possible from the central recording systems to accurately identify all of representations received that included the issues of the placing of mobile phone masts near schools and/or near hospitals.

Multi-occupancy Housing

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department is taking to combat *(a)* overcrowded and *(b)* dangerous multi-occupancy housing. [182162]

Keith Hill: Local authorities have powers in the Housing Act 1985 to deal with overcrowded or unfit Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Section 352 of the Act gives local authorities powers- to require works to be carried out to render an HMO suitable for the number of occupants. In addition section 354 permits local authorities to limit the number of occupants in an HMO to the number which the authority considers it to be suitable for. A failure to comply with a direction or notice under these sections is a criminal offence. These provisions are to be replaced by new measures in the Housing Bill.

The Bill includes provisions for a new Housing Health and Safety Rating System which will replace the current fitness standard and will enable authorities to take action to deal with health and safety hazards in all

housing including HMOs. The Bill also includes provision for mandatory licensing of large HMOs, and local authorities will have powers to introduce additional licensing to tackle the smaller HMOs. In order to obtain a licence, the landlord will be required to satisfy the local authority that he, or the manager of the property, is a fit and proper person and the house is reasonably suitable for the permitted number of occupants. It will be a criminal offence to operate an HMO without a licence if it is required to be licensed or to permit such an HMO to be occupied by more persons than are permitted under the licence. In addition, local authorities will have powers to make management orders on individual HMOs that are not subject to licensing, if a tribunal agrees that it is necessary to make the order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents or other persons occupying properties in the vicinity.

Under the Housing Bill, the Secretary of State and the National Assembly for Wales will have power to amend by Order the statutory overcrowding standards in Part 10 of the 1985 Act and also the provisions in Part 4 of the Bill under which local authorities may serve notices to tackle overcrowding in HMOs. I will be consulting later this year on the ways in which this power might be used.

Northern Way Growth Strategy

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the number of new houses need to fulfil the Northern Way growth strategy. [185282]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has asked the three northern Regional Development Agencies to produce a joint plan for driving sustainable economic growth in the north and that will be published shortly. This plan will also examine the links between housing and economic growth in the north. Until we have sight of this it will be premature to speculate on the number of new houses needed to fulfil the Northern Way growth strategy.

Regional Assembly Referendums

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* meetings and *(b)* correspondence his Department has had since 10 June with the Electoral Commission concerning the regional assembly referendums; and if he will place copies of such correspondence in the Library. [182347]

Mr. Raynsford: As part of a regular series of meetings, officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister met with officials from the Department of Constitutional Affairs and the Electoral Commission on 28 June to discuss the regional assembly referendums.

Since 10 June, officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and those at the Electoral Commission have continued to exchange e-mails on technical issues related to the referendums orders, notably about counting officers' fees and charges, due to changes in the number of assistance and delivery points.

There was also a meeting and some correspondence between an official from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission on when the referendums orders should be laid and consequently the timing of the referendums. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister side of that correspondence has been placed in the Library of the House.

In addition, I wrote to Sam Younger on 15 June, and an official from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister wrote to the Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission on 6 July, with regard to the text of the ballot paper and the explanatory material for the local government options in the forthcoming referendums. Again, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's side of that correspondence has been placed in the Library of the House.

Solar Panels

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to reduce the UK's carbon emissions through the introduction of a requirement in building regulations to fit solar panels to all new developments. [185439]

Phil Hope: The Building Regulations set functional requirements rather than specifying particular ways of showing compliance. This enables builders to develop their own ways of complying with the requirements, using conventional or new technologies as appropriate. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is reviewing the energy efficiency provisions in line with the commitments made in the Energy White Paper and the prospective higher standards that we aim to bring into effect in 2005 will make systems like solar panels more attractive. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister shall be announcing consultations on the proposed amendments on 21 July.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the spending review will be of special advisers. [185479]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Member for Brent South (Mr. Boateng) today at column 190W.

Supporting People

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding has been made available in each of the last three years under the Supporting People programme to *(a)* Portsmouth City Council, *(b)* Southampton City Council and *(c)* Hampshire County Council; and what the projected funding is for each of the next three years. [184309]

Phil Hope: The Supporting People programme went live in April 2003. Prior to this date the Government contributed towards the administration costs of Administering Authorities in establishing the programme. For 2003–04 and 2004–05 Supporting People grants have been given for both administration and programme costs. Budgets for 2005–06 to 2007–08 have not yet been finalised. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister plans to announce individual allocations to Administering Authorities for 2005–06 to 2007–08 in the autumn.

£

Grants	Portsmouth city council	Southampton city council	Hampshire county council
2002-03			
Administration	202,412	195,805	619,499
Programme	—	—	—
2003-04			
Administration	237,195	274,415	815,418
Programme	9,744,076	11,521,802	33,634,572
2004-05			
Allocated administration	225,105	253,267	888,620
Programme	9,570,871	11,436,573	33,506,365

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the impact of the Supporting People programme in (i) Portsmouth and (ii) the rest of Hampshire; and if he will make a statement. [184310]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not commissioned any research to evaluate the impact of Supporting People in Portsmouth and Hampshire.

Surplus Land

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what plans *(a)* he and *(b)* English Partnerships have to (i) publish, (ii) make available for public inspection, (iii) place in the Library and (iv) place on line with full public access English Partnership's register of surplus public sector land; [183838]

(2) if he will list the *(a)* location and *(b)* size in hectares of each site in the register of surplus public sector land; and what the total (i) size in hectares of all such sites and (ii) number of sites is in each Government office region. [183839]

Keith Hill: The Register of Surplus Public Sector Land has been set up to enable Government Departments and their sponsored bodies to share information about the availability of land before it is released on the open market for disposal. The Register is part of new arrangements introduced to make better use of, and to deal with the disposal of, public sector land. This followed a review by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and HM Treasury. The Register is operated by English Partnerships.

The Register provides a mechanism for Government Bodies to ensure that public assets surplus to their individual needs can be put to effective use within the public sector and to identify suitable sites to meet their own operational requirements. It is helping to deliver the policies set out in the Governments Plan for Sustainable Communities (February 2003).

There are no plans for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister or English Partnerships to publish or make publicly available information about individual sites on the Register. In many cases the information provided for the Register is confidential for commercial reasons. It is for the owners of individual sites to determine if information is made publicly available.

CBRN Training

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what training has been given to emergency services personnel in respect of coping with a potential chemical biological radiological nuclear incident. [184605]

Mr. Raynsford: Primary responsibility for mass decontamination in the event of a CBRN incident has been given to the fire and rescue service, through the New Dimension programme of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The Government have provided a range of equipment to the fire and rescue service to improve its ability to cope with such an event, and are fully funding training to use this equipment.

Every firefighter has received basic CBRN training, which is now being followed by continuance training. Training has been provided by the Fire Service College and is complemented by a range of interactive training CDs and hard copy materials. Firefighters have also joined with the other emergency services in a range of local, regional and national exercises, such as that at Bank Underground station in September 2003, and the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham in July 2004. Responsibility for training the other emergency services lies with their sponsoring departments.

Your Say Event (Sunderland)

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost of the Your Say event held in Sunderland on 30 June was; how many invitees attended; how many members of the public attended; and what the cost per member of the public was. [185484]

Mr. Raynsford: The total cost of the Your Say event held in Sunderland on the 30 June was £4,400.

45 members of the public attended, including 29 invitees.

The cost per member of the public, including invitees, was £98.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost to public funds was, including publicity, of the regional hearing held at the Crowtree Leisure Centre in Sunderland on 30 June. [184178]

Mr. Raynsford: The total cost to public funds was £4,400.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many alcohol-related antisocial behaviour incidents there have been since 1997. [182295]

Ms Blears: Statistics on alcohol related antisocial behaviour are not collected. However the table shows British Crime Survey statistics (in percentages) from 1996–2003 taken from people who believe their assailants were under the influence of alcohol when they were assaulted.

All violence (percentage)

	Under influence of drink		
	Yes	*No*	*Don't know*
1996	40	53	6
1998	42	48	10
2000	40	50	9
2001–02	47	44	9
2002–03	44	45	11

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* acceptable behaviour contracts and *(b)* antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in the Avon and Somerset police force area, broken down by basic command unit. [184650]

Ms Blears: Data on the number of acceptable behaviour contracts agreed are not collected centrally.

The available information is given in the table, up to 31 March 2004 (latest available), on the number of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued, as notified to the Home Office, within the Avon and Somerset police force area, by local authority area. The data collected are not identifiable by basic command unit area but by the local authority area within which the prohibitions apply.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) have been issued in Nottingham in the last year; and if he will list the 10 cities that have issued the most ASBOs during this period. [182662]

Ms Blears: The available information is given in the table.

Number of ASBOs issued, as notified to the Home Office by all courts, where prohibitions apply to the Nottingham city council area and to the top 11 local authority areas within England and Wales, from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004

Local authority area	*Number issued*
Nottingham city council	16
Manchester city council	108
Leeds city council	99
Salford metropolitan borough council	34
Oldham metropolitan borough council	37
Liverpool city council	34
Birmingham city council	34
London borough of Camden	31
Bolton metropolitan borough council	30
Trafford metropolitan borough council	18
Burnley borough council	18
Brighton and Hove council	18

Bichard Inquiry Report

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the timescale is for the implementation of each of the Bichard Report recommendations, with particular reference to *(a)* departments retaining records of cases not referred to the police, *(b)* all posts in schools being subject to the enhanced disclosure requirement, *(c)* head teachers and school governors receiving training to ensure that interviews reflect the importance of safeguarding children, *(d)* interview panels to appoint staff working in schools requiring at least one trained member and *(e)* the introduction of a national IT intelligence system. [180583]

Mr. Blunkett: We are developing urgently a programme for implementing the recommendations in the Bichard Report. The Home Office is co-ordinating this programme, but it will involve all the Government Departments responsible for implementation agreeing a timetable and key milestones for the work. We are committed to achieving substantial progress across the range of recommendations by the time Sir Michael Bichard reconvenes his Inquiry in six months.

The current criteria of eligibility for Enhanced Disclosures have been under review. Proposals for revised criteria have been the subject of consultation and the results are being analysed. The recommendation that all posts working with children and vulnerable adults, including posts in schools, should be eligible for Enhanced Disclosures is being taken forward in the context of this review. Our aim is that new criteria should be in place by the end of the year.

Work to develop a national IT system for police intelligence is being undertaken as a key priority. It may well be two years before such a system is fully up and running. However, the work we have done with the police service to develop a strategic approach to the delivery of national IT infrastructure is already producing great progress. The Police Local Exchange (PLX) system, which indicates where forces hold intelligence on specific individuals, will be introduced as an interim solution by spring 2005. Taking into account projects such as the £500 million Airwave communication system, the new national DMA database and the investment we have put into the Criminal Records Bureau over the past three years, we have invested more than ever before. This commitment is further reinforced by the £600 million that we allocated from 2002 to the whole criminal justice IT system to improve links between the courts, policing and social services.

The other specific recommendations referred to are the responsibility of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Officials in his Department are already in discussion with the National College for School Leadership about ways in which appropriate training might be developed for head teachers and governors to enable them to reflect the importance of safeguarding children when interviewing for staff appointments. It will be necessary to consider the practical issues associated with delivering additional training to many of the approximately 22,100 head teachers and a proportion of the estimated 350,000 school governors before making a commitment to a timescale for this to happen.

As regards handling information about cases involving known or suspected offences against children, the Department for Education and Skills will be writing to local authorities very shortly to reaffirm the existing guidance in "Working Together to Safeguard Children" and will set out how the relevant recommendations will be taken forward in the longer term.

Community Safety (Islington)

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding he has made available

in each year since 1997 for anti-crime and community safety initiatives in the London borough of Islington; and what funding is projected for future years. [184721]

Ms Blears: The Home Office has to date provided a total of £2,948,779 to the London borough of Islington for anti-crime and community safety initiatives. Funding commenced in 2000–01. In addition, a total of £732,872 has been provided to Islington police under the Basic Command Unit (BCU) Fund in 2003–04 and 2004–05. The table shows the annual breakdown for each funding stream, giving a total figure of £3,681,651. Fufure crime reduction funding for individual authorities will be announced in due course.

Anti-crime/community safety funding in London borough of Islington from 1997

£

Financial year	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*Total*
Crime Reduction Programme (CRP)	222,227	371,809	125,500	—	—	719,536
Partnership Development Fund (PDF)	59,570	50,000	50,000	—	—	159,570
Communities Against Drugs (CAD)	—	262,200	594,218	—	—	856,418
Safer Communities Initiative (SCI)	—	—	137,255	—	—	137,255
Small Retailers in Deprived Areas (SRDA)	—	26,419	66,236	66,236	—	158,891
Building Safer Communities Fund	—	—	—	412,195	422,500	834,695
Basic Command Unit (BCU) Fund	—	—	—	366,436	366,436	732,872
Home Office Directors Allocation	—	—	—	20,000	—	20,000
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Fund	—	—	—	22,414	25,000	47,414
Vehicle Crime	—	—	—	15,000	—	15,000
Total	281,797	710,428	973,209	902,281	813,936	3,681,651

Community Sentences

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the general population's attitude towards *(a)* prisons and *(b)* alternatives to prison as a means of punishment and rehabilitation. [182283]

Paul Goggins: The most recent assessment was made as part of the Review of the Sentencing Framework for England and Wales "Making Punishments Work", released in July 2001. This assessment is based on a review of the literature on attitudes to sentencing as well as a survey of public attitudes (conducted in October 2000). Full details can be found in Appendix 5 to the report.

Further information on public attitudes is also available in Home Office Research Study 245 (Improving public attitudes to the Criminal Justice System: The impact of information, Chapman et al, 2002). This includes details from a nationally representative sample on knowledge and attitudes to crime and sentencing.

In addition, information will be available in future as a result the Crime and Justice Survey. Results from this are currently being analysed and will provide information on offending, and people's attitudes towards the Criminal Justice System and sentences.

Corporate Manslaughter Bill

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the forthcoming draft Bill on Corporate Manslaughter is to extend to Scotland. [185162]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The Government are currently developing their proposals for reforming the law on corporate manslaughter.

We plan to issue a draft Bill before the end of the current session.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he will reply to the letter to him dated 24 May 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Manchester council for Community Relations; [182490]

(2) when he intends to reply to the letter to him dated 24 May 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. N Khan Moghal. [183686]

Fiona Mactaggart: I replied to my right hon. Friend's letter on 9 July 2004 on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Diversity and Equality (Prison Service)

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes there have been to the name of the Prison Service's Diversity and Equality Group within the last two months; and if he will make a statement. [184608]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* The Prison Service has reviewed the role of the Diversity and Equality Group, which has led to the formation of a new Race and Equalities Action Group. The new group will have three key teams:

Delivery Team;

Community Links Team; and

Policy and Programme Team.

The change reflects the Prison Service's commitment to ensuring that significant improvements continue to be made to race and diversity issues, and that responsibilities and obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, are implemented fully in every prison. The new group will take effect from 19 July 2004.

Drug Treatment

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have received

drug treatment in prison in each year since 1997 as a percentage of *(a)* the prison population and *(b)* the total demand. [182303]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is as follows:

(a) People in prison receiving drug treatment as a percentage of those received into prison annually since 2001 (the first year in which drug treatment figures were collected) is given in the following table.

Percentage of the prison population that have received drug treatment since 2001 based on estimated annual receptions into custody

	2001[1]	*2002*	*2003*
Clinical Services (Detoxification)	21	36	42
CARATs	21	35	40
Treatment programmes	2	3	3

[1] Excluding January—March 2001 from which data is not collated.

Note:
Population figures for 2003 are provisional

(b) The Prison Service does not collate figures centrally on the demand for drug treatment.

Drug Treatment and Testing Orders

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug treatment and testing orders were made in Gloucestershire in the last year for which figures are available; and what the re-offending rate was for those subject to such orders *(a)* in Gloucestershire and *(b)* in England and Wales in that year. [182953]

Paul Goggins: 58 drug treatment and testing orders (DTTOs) were made in Gloucestershire in 2003–04.

No offenders subject to DTTOs in Gloucestershire in 2003–04 had their orders revoked because of a conviction for another offence.

Validated information about re-offending for those subject to DTTOs in England and Wales in 2003–04 is not centrally available.

Drunkenness (Prosecutions)

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many people were prosecuted for buying drink for people who were incapable as a result of alcohol in 2003; [185077]

(2) how many people were prosecuted for allowing drunken or riotous conduct on their premises in 2003. [185078]

Ms Blears: Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Environmental Sustainability

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what have been identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of his Department's estate. [182221]

Fiona Mactaggart: The sustainable development impacts of the Department's estate varies according to the nature of the business carried out by its constituent parts. For the purposes of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate, we have divided the Home Office estate into seven areas. These are listed as follows with the key sustainable development impacts for each area

(i) Non Agency Home Office—Office Estate

Key impacts: Energy consumption, waste generation, procurement of goods and services, water consumption and vehicle emissions as a result of commuting (sites outside London only).

(ii) Immigration Removals Estate

Key impacts: Energy consumption, waste generation, procurement of goods and services, water consumption, vehicle emissions as a result of business travel and potential to affect biodiversity.

(iii) National Probation Service

Key impacts: Energy consumption, waste generation, water consumption and procurement of goods and services.

(iv) Her Majesty's Prison Service

Key impacts: Energy consumption, waste generation (including hazardous waste), procurement of goods and services, water consumption, vehicle emissions as a result of commuting and business travel and conservation of biodiversity.

(v) UK Passport Agency

Key impacts: Energy consumption, waste generation, water consumption and procurement of good and services.

(vi) Forensic Science Service

Key impacts: Energy consumption, waste generation (including hazardous waste), procurement of goods and services, water consumption, vehicle emissions as a result of commuting.

(vii) Contracted Out Prisons

Key impacts: Energy consumption, waste generation, procurement of goods and services, water consumption, vehicle emissions as a result of business travel and potential to affect biodiversity.

Facilitation Charge

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times the charge of facilitation has been used since 1997, broken down by *(a)* police force and *(b)* year. [183817]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 July 2004]:* The term 'facilitation' is not one that is used in connection with recorded crime.

Fraud Crimes

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the percentage of fraud crimes perpetrated against elderly people in England and Wales in each of the last five years. [185215]

Ms Blears: No estimates have been made of fraud crime against the elderly. Statistics on fraud and forgery offences recorded by the police in England and Wales are published annually in "Crime in England and Wales". The latest volume covering 2003–04 is due to be published on 22 July.

National Offender Management Service

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated cost is of future market test under the National Offender Management Service. [179473]

Paul Goggins: It has not yet been decided how many or which prisons will be market tested in the first year. Work is under way to decide how the competition will be structured and what criteria will be used to select prisons to be market tested.

Offender Behaviour Programmes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated developmental cost has been of each accredited offender behaviour programme. [183998]

Paul Goggins: It is not possible to provide the information in the form requested. Accredited offender behaviour programmes have a number of sources. Some are adaptations of programmes developed overseas, some have been developed by the independent and voluntary sectors, some began as local initiatives and others have been developed centrally by the Prison and Probation Services.

The costs are, therefore, varied. We estimate, for example, that the cost of adapting and piloting the existing Think First programme was £50,000, while developing the Women's Acquisitive Crime Programme from scratch, including the costs of piloting and accreditation, was in the region of £115,000.

Police (Jury Service)

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he received prior to the inclusion in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 of the provision that police officers would no longer be exempt from jury service. [181751]

Ms Blears: The Government consulted on the new jury service provisions contained in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 as part of the wider consultation on Lord Justice Auld's Review on the Criminal Courts of England and Wales.

The Department for Constitutional Affairs also consulted on the guidance that was issued to the Jury Central Summoning Bureau prior to the commencement of these provisions.

Deepcut Investigation

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made by the Devon and Cornwall police of the number of potential witnesses *(a)* contacted and *(b)* interviewed by the Ministry of Defence's police detective constables in the course of their involvement in the Deepcut investigation. [183380]

Ms Blears: I am not currently able to provide the information requested. Surrey police have advised that they commissioned Devon and Cornwall police to undertake a review into the Surrey police investigation into the deaths of four young soldiers at Deepcut barracks but this has not yet been completed. It is understood that the review will consider the use made by Surrey police of Ministry of Defence police detective constables during the course of the investigation. It will be for Devon and Cornwall police to consider whether an assessment of the numbers of potential witnesses contacted or interviewed by the Ministry of Defence police detective constables is needed as part of the review.

Police Pensions

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of each police authority budget in England and Wales was spent on pensions in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [184752]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* The information is set out in the table.

Proportion of net expenditure spent on pensions

Percentage

	1997–98	*2003–04*
Avon and Somerset	15.6	16.7
Bedfordshire	11.5	11.8
Cambridgeshire	11.9	12.9
Cheshire	11.1	12.6
City of London	12.7	16.0
Cleveland	10.9	15.8
Cumbria	12.8	15.8
Derbyshire	12.8	13.0
Devon and Cornwall	13.5	14.0
Dorset	13.0	13.2
Durham	16.5	13.6
Dyfed-Powys	12.0	13.5
Essex	10.6	14.0
Gloucestershire	13.2	14.6
Greater Manchester	16.5	14.1
Gwent	11.6	14.4
Hampshire	9.6	12.4
Hertfordshire	9.5	10.8
Humberside	13.2	13.7
Kent	11.3	13.2
Lancashire	14.2	14.9
Leicestershire	11.9	12.1
Lincolnshire	13.8	15.7
Merseyside	14.9	17.8
Metropolitan	11.4	12.2
Norfolk	13.2	12.8
Northamptonshire	12.4	9.0
Northumbria	15.4	15.5
North Wales	13.6	14.7
North Yorkshire	14.5	13.9
Nottinghamshire	13.7	16.7
South Wales	17.6	16.1
South Yorkshire	12.1	13.1
Staffordshire	17.3	14.4
Suffolk	13.3	14.5
Surrey	13.7	10.3
Sussex	13.3	14.6
Thames Valley	9.8	9.8
Warwickshire	13.9	16.4
West Mercia	11.0	13.4
West Midlands	12.2	12.5
West Yorkshire	13.0	15.6
Wiltshire	10.4	12.5

Note:
Leicestershire's 1997–98 figures were not available in the CIPFA Actuals 1997–98. The force estimates have therefore been used.
Source:
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Police Statistics—Actuals 1997–98 and Estimates 2003–04.

Police Sickness

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police forces in England operate sickness reduction schemes; and what change has been recorded in sickness levels since their introduction. [167051]

Ms Blears: All police forces have been set the objective of reducing sickness absence levels.

The Strategy for a Healthy Police, which was launched in October 2002 supports this objective through funding, guidance and best practice in managing sickness absence and attendance.

All forces in England and Wales were allocated a share of £4 million in 2002–03, and then £5 million in 2003–04 and the current financial year. They have been able to focus this extra resource on projects aimed at reducing sickness absence.

Sickness absence figures have improved since the launch of the Strategy, with overall sickness absence now at a national average of 10.4 days per officer per year, and 11.7 per support staff member. This has decreased from 12.2 days per officer and 12.6 days per support staff member when the Strategy was launched. The best performing forces have continued to make improvements, but the gap between best and worst performers has also significantly narrowed.

The Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary annual report for 2003/2004 sets out the national and force rates for sickness absence per force.

Prison Service

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many qualified craftsmen were employed by the Prison Service in each prison in each of the last five years; and how many of these were in the prison officer grades. [184289]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service does not currently collect data on the qualifications held by its employees. Craftsmen are a sub-grade of industrial staff. While data are available on overall staffing levels within the industrial grades, specific data on the number of craftsmen employed are not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the levels of prison front-line staff have changed since 1997. [182305]

Paul Goggins: Since 1997 the number of staff in front line and delivery support functions has increased by 6164 (19 per cent.).

During this period, the Prison Service has introduced a number of measures to improve overall efficiency, including identifying a number of tasks within establishments previously undertaken by Prison Officers that can more efficiently be undertaken by Operational Support Grade staff. A programme has also been implemented to use industrial grade staff to undertake activities within works departments, which had previously been undertaken by specialist officers. As a result, Prison Officer numbers have not increased as much as overall staffing increases.

Staffing levels in the healthcare and psychology functional areas have increased at a higher rate than the growth in the prisoner population.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) pursuant to the answer of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 330W, on offender management, when decisions will be made as to how many prisons will be market-tested in the first year; and how the competitions will be structured; [184691]

(2) what criteria will be used for selecting which establishments to market test. [184692]

Paul Goggins: It has not yet been decided how many or which prisons will be market tested in the first year. Work is under way to decide how the competition will be structured and what criteria will be used to select prisons to be market tested.

Probationary Police Constables

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the average annual cost of employing, training and developing a probationary police constable in the last year for which figures are available. [183993]

Ms Blears: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary have estimated that the average salary, training and development costs of a probationary police constable up to independent patrol (which is normally 31 weeks after joining a force) in 2003–04 were £27,048. This figure includes salary costs of £13,993 per probationary police constable for that period and training and development costs of £13,055.

There are of course, associated employment costs for recruitment, supervision, accommodation, information technology and so on. However, these are not collated centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Racial Equality

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost was of *(a)* publishing, *(b)* producing and *(c)* distributing the Racial Equality and the Smaller Business guide produced by the Commission for Racial Equality. [180500]

Fiona Mactaggart: HSBC sponsored the production of the guide and paid for the production of 100,000 CDs. The Post Office distributed it free of charge to small businesses. In addition, 44,417 PDF versions of the guide have been downloaded from the Commission for Racial Equality's website and 2,792 copies have been ordered from the stationary office. The Commission for Racial Equality paid for the Welsh version (£4,506). The only other cost to them was staff time.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which other Government Departments were involved in producing the Racial Equality and the Smaller Business guide produced by the Commission for Racial Equality. [180501]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department of Trade and Industry was the only other Government Department represented on the Commission for Racial Equality's advisory group.

Street Crime (London)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers in the London area work specifically in tackling street crime. [184283]

Ms Blears: Information on the number of police officers specifically tackling street crime is not collected centrally.

Statistics on police strength are published every six months. Data for 30 September 2003 appeared in on-line report number 13/04. The latest available figures for 31 December 2003 were issued in Home Office Press Release 095/2004 on 2 March 2004.

Victims' Code of Practice

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consideration is being given to the inclusion of road crash and road crime victims in the Victims' Code of Practice. [183548]

Paul Goggins: The Victims' Code of Practice, provided for in the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Bill currently before Parliament, will place national obligations on criminal justice agencies to deliver specific services to victims of crime. Those bereaved as a result of death on the road will be entitled to the relevant police obligations and, where a charge is considered or brought, the relevant Crown Prosecution Service and courts' obligations. They will not, at present, be entitled routinely to the Code's personal support services, to be offered by Victim Support, as practice in this area is still being determined.

Last year, at a cost of some £500,000, we established three pilot sites to test different ways of organising and delivering services to road traffic victims. These pilots are subject to independent evaluation with a full report on their effectiveness envisaged for Summer 2005. Following this, we will need to consider, with voluntary sector partners and others, the key outcomes from the evaluation programme and how we can best implement a support service to address the needs of all those victimised by incidents on the road.

The victims' legislation clearly sets out the procedures for making revisions to the Code of Practice and it is likely that, because it is statutory, there will be regular updates to reflect front line developments. So if, as seems likely, it is not possible to include obligations to provide personal support services for road traffic victims in the initial version of the Code, which is likely to become fully operational during 2005, then we should be in a position to do so when it is revised for the first time.

Witness Protection

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the amount of police time allocated to supervising witness protection schemes. [184958]

Ms Blears: This information is not currently available. The Home Office, in conjunction with the Scottish Executive, the Northern Ireland Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers, has appointed an independent consultant to carry out an assessment of witness protection arrangements nationally. The assessment is covering all cases where witness protection is afforded by UK law enforcement agencies including the police. It will provide us with valuable information about the numbers and circumstances in which witness protection is provided and the amount of police time allocated to it.

The assessment commenced on 2 January; it was announced in the White Paper 'One Step Ahead—a 21st century strategy to defeat organised crime' which I published on 29 March. The assessment is due to be completed over the summer, and a final report will be available in the autumn..

DEFENCE

Aircraft Carriers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether it remains his policy to acquire two British-built new aircraft carriers; and by what dates; [182002]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the suitability of United States carriers to carry out each of the projected CVF tasks if purchased by the Royal Navy; [182004]

(3) what discussions his Department has held with United States counterparts concerning the possible purchase of US carriers for the Royal Navy. [182005]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 5 July 2004]:* We remain fully committed to buying two new aircraft carriers for the Royal Navy. There has been no change to our policy that Royal Navy warship hulls will be built in the United Kingdom. Given this position, we have not considered the possible purchase of United States carriers, nor have we therefore assessed the suitability of United States carriers to undertake projected CVF tasks. However, the Department regularly exchanges information with the US on our respective programmes, for example in areas such as the integration of the Joint Combat Aircraft. Our target in-service dates for the two carriers remain 2012 and 2015.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his estimate is of the minimum *(a)* tonnage and *(b)* aircraft numbers to be operated from each future carrier to enable it to fulfil its strategic expeditionary role. [182003]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 5 July 2004]:* The Ministry of Defence has not sought to fix the dimensions of the aircraft carriers during the assessment phase. The design of the ships will continue to evolve as we seek to balance the overall performance, time and cost parameters of this complex project as part of normal assessment phase activity. Decisions on the capability to be provided by CVF, including the number of aircraft capable of being deployed, and hence on the design and dimensions for the ships, will be taken at the Main Gate investment point.

Iraq Medal

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many soldiers *(a)* are eligible for and *(b)* have received the Iraq Campaign Medal. [179022]

Mr. Caplin: It is estimated that 70,000 Service and civilian personnel are eligible for the Iraq Medal. As at 9 July, the Army Medal Office had received 18,728 applications for the Iraq Medal from Army personnel. Of these, some 1,600 applications have been approved and the majority of those medals have been issued.

Combat/Operational Clothing

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether appeal procedures apply to the contract for combat and operational clothing supplies DC4BESL/1002 Cut and Sew. [184360]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 July 2004]*: There is no formal appeals procedure applicable to this contract.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence where the bleaching, dyeing and printing of the fabric for the contract DC4BESL/1002 Cut and Sew will be carried out. [184347]

Mr. Ingram: Due to the variety of products being supplied under this contract there are a number of locations chosen by the Prime Contractor for the bleaching, dyeing and printing of fabric, including China, the United Kingdom and mainland Europe.

Commercial Exportation Levy

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 10 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 589W, on the Commercial Exportation Levy, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the change in the value of receipts collected; and if he will make a statement. [182548]

Mr. Ingram: Commercial Exploitation Levy is a form of royalty for any commercial sales of a design, use of special tooling or the granting of licences where the MOD has contributed wholly, or in part, to research and development costs. The level of receipts will consequently vary according to the levy arrangements agreed, the type of equipment involved (including software), the volume of sales and the extent to which its development was funded by the Ministry of Defence. From year to year the receipts generated for the MOD also depend upon the level of commercial sales achieved.

Defence Conferences

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentations made to the IQPC Conference Future Artillery in May 2003 on *(a)* Developing the UK's Firepower Capability by Colonel Peter H.Tomlinson, Deputy Director Equipment Capability (Indirect Battlefield Engagement) and *(b)* Future Artillery Weapons Systems—An Acquisition Angle by Alan Nicholl, Integrated Project Team Leader, Future Artillery Weapons Systems, Defence Procurement Agency; [170381]

(2) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentations made to the IQPC Conference Underwater Warfare and the Role of UUVS in January 2003 on Maritime Mine Countermeasures (MCM): A UK Perspective by Peter Evans, Technical Manager, Maritime Mine Warfare and Countermeasures, DSTL; [170382]

(3) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Suppression of Enemy Air Defences in February 2003 on SEAD in Current and Future RAF Operations by Squadron Leader Brian James, Tactical Division Weapons, Air Warfare Centre, Royal Air Force Squadron Leader and Stuart F. Hulley, SO2 EW Tornado, Royal Air Force; [170383]

(4) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Software Defined Radios in December 2003 on UK Digitisation: The Future Application of SDR by Colonel Phil Davies, Command Support Development Centre; [170384]

(5) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentations made to the IQPC Conference Sensor-to-Shooter and Time Critical Targeting in February 2003 on *(a)* Sensor-To-Shooter: The Users Perspective by Squadron Leader Malcolm Rainier, SO2 Air Offensive 2 and *(b)* UK Sensor-To-Shooter Airborne Capabilities and Concepts by Squadron Leader Dheeraj Bhasin, TD-JAGUAR, Air Warfare Centre, RAF Waddington; [170385]

(6) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentations made to the IQPC Conference Naval Air Warfare in December 2003 on *(a)* The Future of Maritime Strike in the Royal Navy by Captain David James, DACOS Strike, Commander-in-Chief Fleet Staff, Royal Navy, *(b)* UAVS in Future Maritime Operations by Lieutenant Trevor Steele, UAV TD, Maritime Warfare Centre, Royal Navy, *(c)* The 'Future Lynx': The UK's Surface Combatant Maritime Rotorcraft by Lieutenant Commander Neal Yates MBE; Requirements Manager-Surface Combatant Maritime Rotorcraft, DPA, *(d)* Royal Navy Commando Sea King by Lieutenant Commander Mark 'H' Hourigan, Commando Aviation TD, Maritime Warfare Centre, Royal Navy, *(e)* Royal Navy Merlin HM MK1 by Lieutenant Commander Gary Soar, Merlin TD, Maritime Warfare Centre, Royal Navy, *(f)* Integrating the JSF into the UK: The Future Joint Combat Aircraft by Wing Commander John Chapman, Requirements Manager, Joint Combat Aircraft IPT, DPA and *(g)* Maritime Patrol and the Future of Nimrod MRA4 Operations by Wing Commander Gordon Bruce, SO1 Maritime Capability Development, HQ3 Group, Royal Air Force; [170386]

(7) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Military Flight Training Conference in February 2003 on *(a)* The Future UK Military Flight Training Programme by Air Commodore Peter Coker, MFTS IPT Leader, Defence Procurement Agency, *(b)* Nimrod-Multi-Crew Training in a Multirole Aircraft by Wing Commander Jerry Kessell, OC 42 (R) Squadron, RAF Kinloss, *(c)* C-130J Hercules Tactical Training by Group Captain Ray Lock,

Commanding Officer and Squadron Leader Mark Pearce, Flight Commander JTTF, RAF Lynham and *(d)* Future Helicopter Flying Training in the British Army by Lieutenant Colonel David Joyce, SO1 Training and Lieutenant Colonel Norman Ryan, SO1 Attack Helicopter Training, HQ Directorate of Army Aviation; [170387]

(8) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Light Armoured Vehicles in February 2003 on *(a)* UK MoD Overview of Future Rapid Effects System (FRES) and key UK LAV programmes by Brigadier Ian Rodley, DEC (DBE), *(b)* Future Command and Liaison Vehicle (FCLV)-An Overview by Colonel Charles Hookey, Team Leader, Close Armour and Vehicle Mounted Weapons IPT, DPA, *(c)* The Bigger Picture—A UK military analysis of the future operating environment, emerging concepts and the shift of emphasis from platform performance to network effectiveness by Brigadier Geoff Sheldon, Director Land Digitisation, UK MoD (Army), *(d)* Future Force Structures—A UK MoD view by Lieutenant Colonel Crispian Beattie, SO1 Concepts, Director General Doctrine and Development and *(e)* Viking—An Overview by Major Jez Hermer, SO2 Viking, FLEET N7, HMS Excellent; [170388]

(9) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Military Helicopter Conference in April 2003 on *(a)* New Developments in Air Manoeuvre Capability by Brigadier Nick Caplin, Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, Joint Helicopter Command, *(b)* Future Modernisation of the UK Apache A.H.1 by Major Nigel Banks, Attack Helicopter Desk Officer, DEC Air and Littoral Manoeuvre, *(c)* Royal Navy Lynx HMA.8 and Future Development by Lieutenant Rob Taylor, Senior Observer, Lynx OEU, RNAS Yeovilton and *(d)* Merlin H.M. MK.1 by Lieutenant Commander Nick Dunn, Commanding Officer, 814 Squadron, RNAS Culdrose; [170389]

(10) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Future Naval Plans and Requirements in May 2003 on *(a)* The Future of Maritime Strike in the Royal Navy by Commander David James, CD Strike, Maritime Warfare Centre, *(b)* The Royal Navy—Future Operational Concepts by Captain Simon Williams, Assistant Director of Strategy, *(c)* Maritime Combat Service Support To Forces Ashore by Brigadier Charlie Hobson, Director Equipment Capability (Deploy, Sustain and Recover) and The Future Surface Combatant and its Role as a Versatile Maritime Force by Commander Stuart Robinson, Project Leader, Future Surface Combatant and Chris Richards, Capability Definition and Programme Management (FSC), DEC (AWB); [170390]

(11) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Fighter Conference in May 2003 on *(a)* Joint Force Harrier by Lieutenant Commander Nick Walker, Joint Force Harrier SO2 OPS FA2, HQ 3 Group, RAF Strike Command and *(b)* Typhoon Programme Update by Wing Commander Jonathan Hitchcock, Typhoon Requirements Manager (and Future Commander of the Typhoon OCU) Typhoon IPT; [170391]

(12) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Defence Simulation and Training in October 2003 on *(a)* A UK Overview of Training Systems by Andy Fawkes, Deputy Director, Analysis, Experimentation and Simulation, and Head of Synthetic Environments Co-ordination Office, *(b)* Bringing Coherence To MoD Individual Training and Education by Commander Jim Hammersley, DGT and E, *(c)* The Long-Term Future of Individual Armoured Fighting Vehicle Training in the UK by Lieutenant Colonel K B L (Kestrel) Simson QRH Deputy Project Manager, Armoured Vehicle Training System Project, DPA, *(d)* Simulation Requirements Analysis by Lieutenant Commander Harry Hassall, Development Projects and Research Group, UK MoD, and *(e)* UK Battlegroup Command and Control Trainer (BC2T) by Paul Newman, Deputy Team Leader, Joint and Battlefield Trainers, Simulation and Synthetic Environments, Programme Manager for Joint and Constructive Simulation DPA; [170392]

(13) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Air-Launched Weapons in September 2003 on *(a)* UK Air-Launched Weapons Capabilities and Concepts by Squadron Leader Dheeraj Bhasin, TD-JAGUAR, Air Warfare Centre, RAF Waddington, *(b)* Advanced Short-Range Air-To-Air Missile (ASRAAM) by Lieutenant Colonel Richard G Dixon, ASRAAM IPT Leader, Defence Procurement Agency, *(c)* Beyond Visual Range Air-To-Air Missile (BVRAAM)-METEOR by Mike Smith, BVRAAM IPT Leader, Defence Procurement Agency, and *(d)* Update On UK Precision-Guided Bomb by Wing Commander Peter Barker, Precision-Guided Bomb IPT Leader, Defence Procurement Agency; [170393]

(14) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Air Surveillance and Reconnaissance in March 2003 on *(a)* Watchkeeper by Alan Baker, Tactical UAV IPT Leader, DPA, *(b)* Littoral ISTAR-UK Perspective by Squadron Leader Alan Skinner, HQ3 Group, RAF Strike Command and *(c)* Operational Tactical Reconnaissance by Squadron Leader Andrew White, OC Wing, Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre, RAF Marham; [170394]

(15) if he will place in the Library a copy of the presentation made to the IQPC Conference Air Defence Systems 2003 in May 2003 on *(a)* UK GBAD future requirements by Air Commodore Richard Moore, GBAD IPTL, DPA and *(b)* UK GBAD-Bridging capability and future requirements by Squadron Leader David Watkins, SO2 GBAD/OPS, RAF Strike Command and Squadron Leader John Derbyshire, XO RAF GBAD HQ; [170395]

(16) if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* Brigadier Andrew Stewart's presentation, Support to reflect the extended scope of operations and the more

strategically responsive, yet dominant force for the 21st Century, given at the SMI Conference Supporting Forward Deployment on 18 June 2003, *(b)* Colonel Nick Knudsen's presentation on Supporting Future Air Manoeuvre Forward Deployment given at the SMI Conference Supporting Forward Deployment on 18 June 2003, *(c)* Peter Jones's presentation, Processes to ensure effective medical support, given at the SMI Conference Supporting Forward Deployment on 18 June 2003, *(d)* Colonel Phil Naylor's presentation on Base Logistic Support to Deployed Operations, given at the SMI Conference Supporting Forward Deployment on 19th June 2003, *(e)* Wing Commander Simon Ruddock-West's presentation on Maritime Patrol Aircraft In Force Protection and his key note address given at the SMI Conference Naval Force Protection on 25 and 26 June 2003 respectively; [170396]

(17) if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* Commander Dickie Burston's presentation, Multi-National Submarine Rescue, given at the SMI Conference Underwater Systems on 2 April 2003, *(b)* Peter Evans's presentation Maritime Mine Countermeasures, given at the SMI Conference Underwater Systems on 3 April 2003, *(c)* Colonel David Hargreave's presentation, Paving The Way for Digitization: Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps, given at the SMI Conference Joint Battlespace Digitization on 19 May 2003, *(d)* Lieutenant Colonel Mark Faulkner's presentation on the UK Land Digitization Programme given at the SMI Conference Joint Battlespace Digitization on 19 May 2003 and *(e)* Major Jeremy Levine's presentation, The Challenges of Digitization in the Jungle, given at the SMI Conference Joint Battlespace Digitization on 19 May 2003; [170426]

(18) if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* Colonel Toby Mills's presentation, Transforming Engineering and Asset Management in the UK MoD: the DLO change programme given at the SMI Conference Defence Maintenance on 10 March 2003, *(b)* Wing Commander David Appleton's presentation, RCM: Intelligently deciding the user's maintenance requirements given at the SMI Conference Defence Maintenance on 10 March 2003, *(c)* Andy Worrall's presentation, Integrated Logistics Support: Reducing whole life cost of ownership given at the SMI Conference Defence Maintenance on 10 March 2003, *(d)* Group Captain Peter Gray's presentation, Implementing Joint Capabilities: Organising British Joint Rapid Reaction Forces, given at the SMI Conference Rapid Reaction Deployment on 12th March 2003 and *(e)* Colonel Neil Baverstock's presentation, A Joint Perspective, given at the SMI Conference Naval C4I on 24 March 2003; [170427]

(19) if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* Lieutenant Colonel Alistair Hamer-Philip's presentation, Low Level Ground Based Air Defence: a UK perspective, given at the SMI Conference Air Defence Systems on 16 January 2003; *(b)* Neil McCabe's presentation, The UK experience: Bringing mission rehearsal requirements and solutions together given at the SMI Conference Virtual Battlespace: Developments in Mission Rehearsal on 27 January 2003, *(c)* Neil McCabe's presentation on Training AFV (Armoured Fighting Vehicles) given at the SMI Conference Armour and Anti-Armour on 25 February 2003, *(d)* Lieutenant Colonel R. J. Laidler's presentation on the future of armour support given at the SMI Conference Armour and Anti-Armour on 25 February 2003 and *(e)* Squadron Leader Gary Morgan's presentation, Nimrod MRA4: Its role in littoral warfare and future capability given at the SMI Conference Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance on 4th March 2003. [170428]

Mr. Ingram: Copies of presentations given to external conferences by Ministry of Defence employees or members of the Armed Forces are not held centrally. Where it is readily available within the Department, I am placing the information requested in the Library of the House. This covers the following presentations:

PQ	*Presentation*
170381	Developing the UK's Firepower Capability by Colonel Peter H. Tomlinson
170381	Future Artillery Weapons Systems—An Acquisition Angle by Alan Nicholl
170387	The Future UK Military Flight Training Programme by Air Commodore Peter Coker
170387	Nimrod-Multi-Crew Training in a Multirole Aircraft by Wing Commander Jerry Kessell
170387	C-130J Hercules Tactical Training by Group Captain Ray Lock
170387	Future Helicopter Flying Training in the British Army by Lieutenant Colonel David Joyce
170387	Future Helicopter Flying Training in the British Army by Lieutenant Colonel Norman Ryan
170389	Future Modernisation of the UK Apache A.H.1 by Major Nigel Banks
170389	New Developments in Air Manoeuvre Capability by Brigadier Nick Caplin
170390	Maritime Combat Service Support To Forces Ashore by Brigadier Charlie Hobson
170390	The Future Surface Combatant and its Role as a Versatile Maritime Force by Commander Stuart Robinson
170392	A UK Overview of Training Systems by Andy Fawkes
170392	Bringing Coherence To MoD Individual Training and Education by Commander Jim Hammersley
170392	Simulation Requirements Analysis by Lieutenant Commander Harry Hassall
170392	UK Battlegroup Command and Control Trainer (BC2T) by Paul Newman
170393	Advanced Short-Range Air-To-Air Missile (ASRAAM) by Lieutenant Colonel Richard G Dixon
170393	Beyond Visual Range Air-To-Air Missile (BVRAAM)-METEOR by Mike Smith
170426	Lieutenant Colonel Mark Faulkner's presentation on the UK Land Digitization Programme
170427	Andy Worrall's presentation, Integrated Logistics Support: Reducing whole life cost of ownership
170428	Lieutenant Colonel Alistair Hamer-Philip's presentation, Low Level Ground Based Air Defence: a UK perspective

The following presentations were either not in fact given at the conferences specified or have since been deleted by the presenters and are therefore now unobtainable.

PQ	Presentation
170386	Royal Navy Merlin HM MK1 by Lieutenant Commander Gary Soar
170388	UK MoD Overview of Future Rapid Effects System (FRES) and key UK LAV programmes by Brigadier Ian Rodley
170392	The Long-Term Future of Individual Armoured Fighting Vehicle Training in the UK by Lieutenant Colonel K B L (Kestrel) Simson
170393	Update On UK Precision-Guided Bomb by Wing Commander Peter Barker
170396	Wing Commander Simon Ruddock- West's presentation on Maritime Patrol Aircraft In Force Protection and his key note address given at the SMI Conference Naval Force Protection on 25 and 26 June 2003 respectively.
170426	Commander Dickie Burston's presentation, Multi-National Submarine Rescue
170426	Colonel David Hargreave's presentation, Paving The Way for Digitization: Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps

The Ministry of Defence is conducting a further trawl to locate the remaining presentations. These will be placed in the Library of the House subject to availability and resource constraints. Should it not be possible to provide all the information requested, copies of conference proceedings can usually be bought from the event organisers.

The content of these presentations will not have been specifically cleared with MOD Ministers and may therefore represent the views of the individual rather than that of the Department. It should also be noted that some of the content of these presentations is likely to have been overtaken by subsequent events.

Defence Projects (US Funding)

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which defence-related projects in the UK are supported by *(a)* the US Defense Advanced Projects Agency and *(b)* the US Office for Naval Research; what funding is being made available in each case; and what the actual or intended benefit to the UK is in each case. [182013]

Mr. Ingram: In keeping with our strong defence relationship with the United States of America, the United Kingdom works closely with the US Government on a range of defence projects and has dealings with both the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Office of Naval Research.

Currently the Office of Naval Research is involved in collaborative programmes with the UK on anti-submarine warfare and unmanned underwater vehicle technologies. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency does not currently lead any of the collaborative programmes with the UK but may contribute indirectly through projects led by one of the US Armed Services.

These collaborative links are to our mutual benefit, enhancing the military capabilities of both our nations and improving our ability to operate alongside one another. Typically, such collaborative activities involve both parties pooling the outputs of respective national defence research activities, on an equitable basis.

It is unusual for the US Government to directly support or fund UK defence projects. The US does contract directly with UK companies and academia in support of their own defence programmes, but details of these contracts are a matter for the US Government.

End-to-end Review

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the outcome of the end to end review. [183973]

Mr. Ingram: The original End to End Study reported its findings on 1 July 2003, leading to a six-month Demonstration Phase which has been a notable success. Many of the principles and recommendations put forward by the End to End Final Report have been proven through the pilot activities conducted thus far. It is the intention; therefore, to focus future activity on implementation and the early realisation of benefit.

As an example, the cost of delivering the first wave of End to End was far outweighed by the year-on-year savings. The MOD has invested £18 million in this programme over the last 15 months. End to End Demonstration has identified efficiency benefit of between £16 million to £19 million per annum and identification of realisable benefit of around £330 million. Potential exists for additional benefit, whilst at the same time preserving and in many cases improving, operational effectiveness.

The quick wins achieved by the End to End Programme and the ongoing and extremely successful DLO Change Programme, have been the catalysts for the launch of a defence-wide programme of logistics transformation.

Haiti

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what support the UK has provided to the Brazilian and other UN forces in Haiti. [184188]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The UK supports the work of the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and welcomes the work of the troops from Brazil, Canada and Chile, operating under Force Commander Lt. Gen. Heleno Ribeiro Pereira of Brazil. The UK is pleased that additional contingents from Argentina, Uruguay, Nepal and Sri Lanka and Peru should be deployed by the end of July.

The UK is not currently providing personnel contributions to Haiti as we have strong and emerging commitments elsewhere—particularly in Africa. We will be contributing an estimated £8.9 million in assessed contributions until October 2004. This contribution will support the UN troops in Haiti as well as other UN work set out in resolution 1542 (2004). Our financial support will continue beyond October, but the levels are dependent on operational needs which are not fully known as yet.

In addition to financial support for the forces in Haiti, the UK has contributed to related work. The Department for International Development (DfID) sent £1.9 million in bilateral support to Haiti to address civilian unrest. DfID also responded to the flooding in

Haiti, sending £250,000 to the World Food Programme (UN Programme), £150,000 to Save the Children and £109,400 to Action Aid.

The UK also has a continued interest in raising the standard of peacekeeping. The UK funds world-wide 'train the trainer' programmes to support countries in developing their peacekeeping capacity. These focus on police training, but some of the personnel in Haiti may have benefited from this.

Hearing Loss (Veterans)

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research he has conducted on the comparative levels of hearing loss suffered by *(a)* those suffering from age-related hearing loss and *(b)* veterans suffering from hearing loss which is both age-related and attributable to wartime noise. [184111]

Mr. Caplin: Neither the Ministry of Defence, which is now responsible for veterans' matters, nor the former Department of Social Security, has commissioned research on this specific comparison. However, we recognise that, particularly in the past, noise injury arising from service in the Armed Forces has been a significant contributor to hearing loss among service personnel. The Government have therefore taken a close interest in the medical understanding of the causes of and prognosis for hearing loss, including instigating the 1997 Caiman review. The current scientific understanding of noise-induced sensorineural hearing loss is that it does not get worse on removal from the noise giving rise to the injury and that, in the context of the War Pensions Scheme, hearing loss due to noise and that due to subsequent effects of age are not more than additive. The aim remains that policy and individual decisions should reflect the latest published peer reviewed scientific evidence and, to that end, we carry out a regular scrutiny of emerging relevant scientific literature.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1235W, on Iraq, if he will give *(a)* the date of and, *(b)* if deceased, the name of the person alleged to have suffered harm during the incident to which he refers. [185599]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding this information under Exemption 4 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Manning Control Reviews

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to conduct manning control reviews in the next 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [183827]

Mr. Caplin: The answer I gave on 19 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 919W to the hon. Gentlemen is still applicable today.

Military Exports

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of military equipment produced in the UK was exported in each of the last 10 years. [182955]

Mr. Ingram: Figures for the value of military equipment that is produced in the UK in any year are not available. In deriving the following table, estimated MOD UK equipment expenditure (including MOD spend with UK industry on research and development, repair and maintenance and assets under construction) have been added to identified exports of military goods to provide an approximation to this figure.

Estimated percentage of military equipment produced in UK which are exported

Percentage

	Military equipment (goods) exported
1997–98	32
1998–99	20
1999–2000	12
2000–01	19
2001–02	17
2002–03	9

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many non-departmental public bodies for which his Department is responsible have been *(a)* established and *(b)* abolished since 1997. [182941]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has seven executive and 12 advisory non-departmental public bodies (NDPB)s. The following advisory NDPBs have been established in MOD since 1997:

Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (1998)

Advisory Group on Medical Countermeasures (1998)

Nuclear Research Advisory Council (2001)

The Department also took on the sponsorship role of the Central Advisory Committee on War Pensions and the War Pensions Committees (a multiple body) following the transfer of the Veterans Agency (formerly known as the War Pensions Agency) from the Department for Work and Pensions in 2001.

The Royal College of Defence Studies Advisory Board and the Royal Military College of Science Advisory Council have been abolished since 1997. In addition the Nuclear Powered Warships Safety Committee and Nuclear Weapons Safety Committees merged in this period to form the Defence Nuclear Safety Committee.

The National Employers' Liaison Board, later renamed the National Employers' Advisory Board was relaunched in 2002 as "Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers". Finally the Independent Board of Visitors for Military Corrective Training Centre has recently been re-categorised from an advisory NDPB to an independent monitoring board. Further details on MOD's NDPBs are in the Cabinet Office annual "Public Bodies" publications which can also be found on the Cabinet Office website.

Non-EU Defence Contractors

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what scope there is to amend the Public Procurement Regulations insofar as they relate to Ministry of Defence contracts to regulate the use by UK companies of sub-contractors outside the EU. [183782]

Mr. Ingram: The Public Procurement Regulations implement in the United Kingdom law the European Union Directives on the award of public sector contracts. They apply to Ministry of Defence procurement on non-warlike goods and services. Neither the Regulations or the Directives regulate the engagement of sub-contractors. As a matter of procurement policy, MOD places responsibility on its prime contractors for securing and demonstrating value for money in meeting defence requirements. To this end, MOD encourages the greatest application of open and fair competition by its prime contractors in the selection of sub-contractors.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to announce the short list of sites under consideration for storing radioactive waste as part of project ISOLUS; and if he will make a statement. [185083]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: I expect to make an announcement shortly.

Support Vehicles

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what meetings Ministers in his Department have had with their US counterparts on the Support Vehicle contract; and if he will make a statement. [171577]

Mr. Ingram: No meetings have been held between Ministers and their US counterparts regarding the Support Vehicle contract.

Tanker Aircraft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the current forecast is for *(a)* the in-service date and *(b)* the final cost of the contract to provide new tanker aircraft; what the original projections were; and if he will make a statement. [183313]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft (FSTA) project is currently in its Assessment Phase and does not have a formally approved in-service date (ISD). At the commencement of the Assessment Phase, ISD was broadly forecast to fall in the period 2007–09. We now believe it will be achieved later than this, but endorsement of a firm planning date for ISD is subject to the outcome of negotiations with industry. The maximum whole life cost of the FSTA programme is currently estimated to be £13.1 billion, at Outturn prices, which compares to an estimate of £13.9 billion at the commencement of the Assessment Phase.

Tornado

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on plans to upgrade the Tornado's anti-aircraft missile self-protection system to combat potential missile threats over the coming decade; whether there is a budget for such an upgrade; and what the in-service date is for this upgraded capability. [183406]

Mr. Ingram: We have recently completed the assessment phase for the Modular Defensive Aids Systems (MoDAS) project, which is the programme to upgrade the defensive aids system for the Tornado GR4, and we are evaluating the results. A decision on the next phase of the project will be taken as part of the Department's normal planning process.

PRIME MINISTER

Operation Mass Appeal

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister (1) whether he personally approved the setting up of Operation Mass Appeal; [185423]

(2) what the purpose was of Operation Mass Appeal. [185424]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to Lord Butler's report, paragraphs 485 to 489 (House of Commons 898).

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Prime Minister how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Office announced in the spending review will be of special advisers. [185480]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend, the Chief Secretary for the Treasury (Mr. Boateng), gave to him today at column 190W.

Sudan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on tackling the situation in Sudan. [184467]

The Prime Minister: I regularly discuss all aspects of foreign policy, including Sudan, with the Foreign Secretary. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development, also visited Sudan, including Darfur, between 6 and 8 June to assess the situation.

The UK is fully engaged in Darfur and we have held discussions with our UN, US and EU partners. We have made very clear to the Sudanese Government that they must now take significant steps to improve the security situation and humanitarian access. We have also allocated over £62 million for humanitarian assistance in Darfur.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 21 July 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Advertising

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much money was spent on advertising and promotional literature for her Department's initiatives, broken down by year since 1997. [183810]

Alun Michael: The Department does not maintain separate records of its expenditure for advertising and promotional literature. The expenditure for publicity by Defra's Communications Directorate, includes marketing, advertising, publications, events, shows and direct mailings, and is recorded for the financial years since Defra's creation in June 2001 as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	6.6
2002–03	4.7
2003–04	2.5

This includes communications on a wide range of matters, much of it necessary or beneficial to the public and the wide range of industries in which Defra has an interest, together with local government, voluntary organisations and other bodies.

Agricultural Wages Board

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the future of the Agricultural Wages Board, with specific reference to the launch of the consultation on its status; and what discussions she has had with *(a)* farming organisations and *(b)* the TGWU on this subject. [184436]

Alun Michael: I can confirm that Ministers at Defra are fully committed to the continued operation of the Agricultural Wages Board for England and Wales. The Board plays an important role in protecting the interests of agricultural workers including the migrant workers employed on farms.

The Agricultural Wages Board as a non-departmental public body was last reviewed in 1999. There is no longer a requirement to undertake reviews at regular intervals and further reviews will be undertaken by this Department as necessary to confirm that the Board is delivering high quality services efficiently and effectively.

Following the last review of the Board we announced that some aspects of the Board's operation would be modernised. We plan to introduce these changes through a Regulatory Reform Order. We do not intend to reduce the protection given to agricultural workers. However, one of our objectives will be to align the operation of the Agricultural Minimum Wage legislation and general employment law as closely as possible. This will lessen the burden on employers in agriculture and allow them to benefit from the more flexible approach available under the National Minimum Wage legislation (including the revised output work provisions that will be introduced in October).

The Food and Farming Minister Lord Whitty met representatives of the NFU and the Transport and General Workers Union to discuss detailed proposals in January 2003 and November/December 2004. This issue was also raised in a meeting with members of the Transport and General Workers Union on 24 June. A consensus on the way forward is now emerging and we hope to bring forward more detailed proposals for changes to the Agricultural Wages legislation before the end of the year.

Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many copies of her Department's, and predecessor Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183842]

Alun Michael: Defra does not have the information on how many copies were printed as the departmental report is published by The Stationery Office Ltd. which determines the print quantities, based on a commercial judgment, and receives all revenues.

Defra is responsible for the design, editorial, typesetting and proofing of the document and the cost for these items since the formation of the department in 2001 are:

	£000
2002	17,512
2003	15,200
2004	16,993

The report is available, free of charge, on the Department's website.

Bottled Water

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her estimate is of the number of litres of bottled *(a)* sparkling and *(b)* still water consumed in the United Kingdom in each year since 2002; and what percentage was supplied in (i) plastic, (ii) glass and (iii) other materials. [184859]

Alun Michael: Figures published by Zenith International in the 2004 Sucralose Soft Drinks Report estimate that bottled water consumption in 2002 was 1,760 million litres, of which 83 per cent. was still and

17 per cent. sparkling, and 2,070 million litres in 2003, of which 85 per cent. was still and 15 per cent. sparkling. Figures published by Mintel in its Bottled Water Report in June 2003 indicates that 79 per cent. of bottled water is packaged in plastic bottles, 20 per cent. in glass bottles and 1 per cent. in cans.

Business Fines

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what the average fine imposed on businesses prosecuted by the Environment Agency was in each financial year since 1999–2000; [184850]

(2) how many businesses were *(a)* successfully and *(b)* unsuccessfully prosecuted by the Environment Agency in each financial year since 1999–2000. [184851]

Mr. Morley: The following table gives figures relating to Environment Agency prosecutions of registered companies. It does not include sole traders, who cannot be distinguished from individuals on the agency's database.

Prosecutions of registered companies by the Environment Agency

Financial year	*Number of successful prosecutions*	*Number of unsuccessful prosecutions*	*Average fine (£)*
1999–2000	286	10	7,575
2000–01	307	12	6,737
2001–02	317	7	7,354
2002–03	325	5	8,356
2003–04	271	2	7,229

Cross Compliance

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will make a decision on cross compliance; and if she will make a statement. [185143]

Alun Michael: We will be making an announcement shortly on cross compliance conditions.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to delay the introduction of cross compliance; and if she will make a statement. [185144]

Alun Michael: We will be making an announcement shortly on cross compliance conditions.

Curry Report

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate Sir Don Curry made of the funding necessary to implement his Food and Farming Report; what funding she is making available for it; by what mechanism those funds are to be allocated among rural areas; how much will be paid to each region; how much will be used in urban areas; and if she will make a statement. [182561]

Alun Michael: Sir Don Curry estimated that implementation of the recommendations in the report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food would cost in the region of an extra £500 million over the following three years.

The Government's Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (SSFF), which builds on the work of the Curry Commission, was launched in December 2002. As part of the 2002 Spending Review, the Government announced a sum of £500 million to implement the strategy. This is in addition to existing spending by Defra and other Government Departments which is already being used to deliver aspects of the strategy.

The additional funding provided covers a number of major aspects of the strategy. These include the new Environmental Stewardship Scheme (Entry Level and Higher Level) and the IT system to underpin all the England Rural Develop Programme (ERDP) schemes; improvements in livestock traceability and other major animal health and welfare measures; and new food chain initiatives such as the Food Chain Centre and English Farming and Food Partnerships.

Regional delivery of the strategy will be facilitated by many public body and industry representatives and these organisations will work together with both resource and funding support to deliver the vision set out in the strategy. They are making use of Government grants, industry support and the resources of Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies, as well as other Government bodies participating in regional steering groups. Existing support programmes, including the ERDP have been targeted to deliver SSFF regional action plans. Hitherto, land-based scheme budgets have not been managed on a regional basis, but they will be in future when the new ERDP IT system is rolled-out next year. Budgets for the three ERDP project-based schemes are managed on a regional basis, and the following table summarises expenditure on these schemes in 2003–04:

£000

	Processing and marketing grant	*Rural enterprise scheme*[1]	*Vocational training scheme*
East Midlands	3,021	3,541	297
East of England	998	2,297	303
North East	670	1,882	52
North West	1,264	2,477	453
South East	962	2,408	246
South West	1,255	3,948	451
West Midlands	1,090	3,112	367
Yorks and Humberside	758	2,318	211

[1] RES funds are also available to non-farming businesses.

Given the number of public and industry bodies contributing to regional delivery, it is not possible to quantify precisely the level of support available to fund regional delivery. Implementation of SSFF is one of the core tasks of the Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies, and their funding from Defra reflects this. Funding for the Government Offices is provided directly by Defra. The current Defra contribution to the RDA 'single pot', administered by DTI, is to enable RDAs to address rural productivity issues, which are a key factor in achieving the outcomes of the national Sustainable Food and Farming Strategy. In addition, Defra is making a further £1.5 million available to the RDAs in the current financial year to assist with the implementation of regional delivery plans. New tasking arrangements for RDAs, which will take effect from April 2005, will include specific reference to contributing to delivering a customer-focused, competitive and sustainable farming and food industry.

It is not possible to differentiate precisely between funds that will be spent in rural areas and funds that will be spent in urban areas, but it is clear that the vast bulk will be spent in rural areas.

Dairy Cattle

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total number of dairy cattle in England was for the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what the estimated figure is for 2004–05. [184819]

Alun Michael: The number of dairy cows and heifers that have calved in England is shown in the following table for 1994 to 2003. Provisional figures from the June 2004 census will be available in a statistics notice to be published on the 16 September 2004 on the Defra website.

Number of dairy cows and heifers that have calved in England 1994 to 2003

	Dairy cows (Thousand)
1994	1,897.0
1995	1,809.3
1996	1,783.3
1997	1,700.3
1998	1,642.6
1999	1,659.2
2000	1,575.3
2001	1,490.2
2002	1,462.2
2003	1,434.7

Note:
Figures prior to 2000 are for main holdings only, 2000 onwards include main and minor holdings.
Source:
June Agricultural Census.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total number of dairy farms was in England for the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what the estimated figure is for 2004–05. [184820]

Alun Michael: The number of holdings in England whose predominant business is dairy is shown as follows. Equivalent figures from the June 2004 census will be published on the Defra website in early 2005.

Number of dairy type holdings in England 1994 to 2003

	Number (Thousand)
1994	20.6
1995	19.6
1996	18.9
1997	18.0
1998	17.0
1999	16.3
2000	15.2
2001	14.1
2002	14.3
2003	13.6

Note:
Figures prior to 2000 are for main holdings only, 2000 onwards include main and minor holdings.
Source:
June Agricultural Census.

Dairy Farm Workers

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total number of farm workers employed on dairy farms in England was for the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what the estimated number is for 2004–05. [184818]

Alun Michael: The number of employees on holdings in England whose predominant business is dairy is shown in the following table for 1994 to 2003. Equivalent figures from the June 2004 census will not be available until early 2005.

Number of employees on dairy type holdings in England 1994 to 2003

	Employees (Thousand)
1994	26.4
1995	25.6
1996	24.7
1997	23.4
1998	21.0
1999	18.8
2000	16.0
2001	14.7
2002	14.7
2003	13.4

Notes:
1. Employees exclude farmers, partners, directors and spouses if they work on the holding.
2. Figures prior to 2000 are for main holdings only, 2000 onwards include main and minor holdings.
Source:
June Agricultural Census.

Disposable Nappies

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many disposable nappies she estimates were *(a)* used and *(b)* disposed of by (i) landfill, (ii) incineration and (ii) other means in each year since 2001. [184853]

Mr. Morley: We do not collect information on the amount of disposable nappies used nor of the disposal route.

The Strategy Unit Report "Waste Not Want Not" estimated that in 2000–01 nappies comprised around 2 per cent. of household waste, equivalent to 350,000 tonnes. In 2002–03 75 per cent. of our household waste was sent to landfill and 7 per cent. to incineration.

Domestic Waste Sites

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects her Department to publish the criteria for the treatment expected at the domestic waste sites which are to be allowed to accept cells containing treated toxic waste. [183796]

Mr. Morley: I assume the hon. Member is referring to the provision in the Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002 (as amended) that allows stable, non-reactive hazardous waste to be landfilled in a separate cell in a non-hazardous landfill site. The criteria for stabilised non-reactive granular hazardous waste are set out in part 3, paragraph 14 of Schedule 1 of the amended Regulations. Equivalent criteria for monolithic wastes are being developed and will shortly be issued for consultation.

Eggs

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the enforcement difficulties that led to the decision of the Council of Ministers to remove the derogation from marking for ungraded eggs. [184195]

Alun Michael: The Commission (supported by other member states, but not the UK), argued it was necessary to clamp down on fraudulent sales (eggs being sold other than by the producer) through markets. There is no evidence of any significant problems of this sort in this country.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact upon *(a)* egg producers, *(b)* small markets and *(c)* consumers of her proposed requirement for ungraded eggs to be marked. [184197]

Alun Michael: Defra has received over 3,000 inquiries from small-scale egg producers on the Registration of Laying Flocks Order and the Egg Marketing Regulations. All producers must register with departments in order to obtain an identifying code. Currently small producers with less than 350 birds are exempt from this requirement, provided that the eggs are ungraded and sold direct to the final consumer.

Because of enforcement difficulties in other member states, it was agreed in November 2003 that part of the derogation from marking for ungraded eggs be removed. From 1 July 2005 farmers selling eggs from their own farms at local public markets will no longer be exempt from the requirement to mark their eggs, irrespective of the number of laying hens kept A Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment was prepared on this in November 2003.

The cost for small producers to purchase the necessary equipment is low. A hand stamp can be bought for around £30. The time required to register as a producer and then to stamp eggs is unlikely to be significant. The majority of small producers appear to be satisfied that the costs are reasonable and can be borne comfortably.

Some producers with fewer than 350 laying hens will therefore have to register for the first time, in order to obtain a distinguishing number. This measure had the support of the majority of other member states. Sales in farm shops and door-to-door do however remain exempt.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what penalties she plans to impose for a breach of the proposed requirement for ungraded eggs to be marked. [184198]

Alun Michael: If prosecution is required under the Egg Marketing Standards, then any person who fails to comply with any requirement properly made to him by an authorised officer of the Minister or of a food authority under these Regulations, or contravenes or fails to comply with any Community provision, will be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 (currently £5,000) on the standard scale.

We will encourage producers to comply with the new Regulations and provide any necessary advice. Our Egg Marketing Inspectorate will take a sensible and proportionate approach to enforcement. Prosecution will be taken only as a last resort.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 1 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 361–62W, on egg stamping, what the *(a)* date and *(b)* nature was of the Council of Ministers meeting which agreed to remove the derogation from marking for ungraded eggs; and what legislation she plans to bring forward to implement the proposed requirement for ungraded eggs to be marked. [184199]

Alun Michael: The meeting at which the agreement was reached to remove the derogation from marking for ungraded eggs was an Agriculture and Fisheries Council which was held on 17 November 2003.

The legislation anticipated to implement the proposed requirement would be The Eggs and Poultrymeat Marketing Standards (Enforcement) (England) Regulations. We hope to bring these Regulations forward later this year, following formal consultation.

Energy Efficiency

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the external costs associated with waste disposal, with particular reference to the environmental costs. [184582]

Mr. Morley: The Review of Environmental and Health Effects of Waste Management, published in May 2004 identified and quantified the health and environmental impacts of different municipal waste management options. A second related report, to be published shortly, will identify the economic values for the impacts identified in the Health and Environmental Effects review. Combined, these studies will provide a range of external costs for each municipal waste management option.

These studies look at the direct impact of different waste management activities, but do not employ a full life cycle analysis to take account of, for example, the benefits of recycling.

Table C4 in Appendix B to Waste Strategy 2000 Part 2 provides estimates of the external costs and benefits of different waste management options (Source: adapted from Coopers and Lybrand (1997)).

Table C4: External costs and benefits of different waste management options

Waste management option	*External cost estimate, £ per tonne of waste, 1999 prices*
	1
Landfill	-17
Incineration (displacing electricity from coal-fired power stations)	10
Incineration (displacing average-mix electricity generation)	-161
Recycling	-297
Ferrous metal	-929
Non-ferrous metal	-196
Glass	-69
Paper	17
Plastic film	-48
Rigid plastic	-66
Textiles	

Fisheries

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of fisheries management schemes employing individual transferable quotas and effort control, based on days at sea. [184817]

Mr. Bradshaw: The most recent evaluation of various alternative fisheries management systems was carried out by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and set out in their "Net Benefits" report published on 25 March 2004. We will be examining the Strategy Unit's findings in detail with stakeholders before settling how to take them forward.

Flood Defences

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding has been allocated for flood defences in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [184067]

Mr. Morley: The Government continue to recognise the importance of flood management and have agreed, as part of the recent Spending Review, to carry forward the significant increases in funding allocated in Spending Review 2002. Total Government funding of flood and coastal defence in England is planned to be £478 million in 2004–05 and at least £564 million in 2005–06.

Fly-tipping

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will propose to the Environment Agency that it establish a national enforcement squad to specialise in detection and prosecution of incidences of fly-tipping, especially of hazardous waste. [183231]

Mr. Morley: Defra has been working closely with the Environment Agency on proposals to help tackle fly-tipping. The agency already has a national enforcement concordat and enforcement officers who deal primarily with tackling investigation of serious, larger incidents of fly-tipping.

Defra will work closely with the agency on efforts to increase the enforcement of illegally disposed waste by ensuring they have a comprehensive toolkit of powers to deal with fly-tipping.

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 gave the Secretary of State power to issue statutory directions to the agency and local authorities on the division of responsibilities for using their clear up powers to tackle fly-tipping. Defra has recently consulted on the proposed directions, which will be issued shortly.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Environment Agency on fly-tipping; and what joint activities are being undertaken. [183707]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 July 2004]*: Defra has been working very closely with the Environment Agency to tackle fly-tipping. Recent work has included bringing forward measures in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, which allowed the Secretary of State to issue statutory directions to the Agency and local authorities to clarify the division of responsibility for dealing with fly-tipping.

The ASB Act also led to the development of the Flycapture database, which the Agency has developed on behalf of Defra. The system went live on 5 April 2004 and take-up has been encouraging, with around 90 per cent. of local authorities registered in the first month.

Defra are currently exploring with the Agency the possibility of developing a comprehensive training package tailored for local authorities. This will allow the Agency to pass on their experience in enforcement to local authorities ensuring fly-tipping is prevented and penalised accordingly.

The Department will carry on working closely with the Environment Agency to ensure that they have a suitable toolkit of powers to properly tackle the illegal disposal of waste or fly-tipping.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will bring forward legislative proposals to amend the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 to extend the requirement to report fly-tipping to fly-tipping on private land. [183226]

Mr. Morley: Section 55 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 set up a requirement for waste collection authorities and the Environment Agency to submit data to Defra on incidents of fly-tipping. The new database went live in April.

Take up of the system has been excellent with over 90 per cent. of authorities registered but it is important to ensure that reliability and quality of current data sources is as good as possible before exploring extending the system. The requirements to report to Flycapture will be reviewed after the first year of operation.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will bring forward legislative proposals to make fly-tipping an arrestable offence. [183232]

Mr. Morley: Under Section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 the illegal disposal of hazardous waste can incur imprisonment of up to five years on conviction on indictment. This automatically makes it an arrestable offence. Arrest without warrant can occur in relation to arrestable offences or in relation to non-arrestable offences in particular circumstances.

It is open to question however, whether it would be possible to justify, by reference to the level of seriousness, making any act of fly tipping by itself an arrestable offence or one attracting a custodial sentence. However, my right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary, has indicated his intention under the Police Reform Act 2002 to conduct a public consultation on modernising police powers, which includes the intention to rationalise the powers of arrest.

Hazardous Waste

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much additional expenditure the Environment Agency has allocated in 2004–05 to address unlawful depositing of hazardous waste. [183230]

Mr. Morley: The agency's expenditure on enforcement across all its activities amounts to £12 million per annum, funded through Grant in Aid. The Agency uses its judgment to prioritise its enforcement effort to deliver the best outcome to protect the environment and human health. Unlawful activity involving hazardous waste is an enforcement priority for the agency in 2004–5 and it will not hesitate to use its powers where evidence is obtained that may lead to prosecution in the courts.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* businesses, *(b)* trade associations and *(c)* trade publications her Department has contacted to provide information on changes in the way hazardous waste is treated and disposed of from 16 July onwards. [184770]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* The Department has taken, and will continue to take, a range of measures to inform businesses of incoming legislation and their legal obligations as producers of waste.

It is not possible to give a precise figure of how many individual businesses and trade bodies have been reached as a result of Defra and Environment Agency communications on this subject. A recent Defra survey, carried out among a cross-section of small businesses, showed a 78 per cent. awareness of the Landfill Regulations and an 84 per cent. awareness of the forthcoming Hazardous Waste Regulations.

The Department works closely with other organisations who are better placed to disseminate information to businesses on our behalf. For example, Envirowise has produced a Hazardous Waste Guide for Chief Executives of small businesses, which will be distributed to over 13,000 businesses.

The Department has also produced its own smaller leaflet called "Hazard Alert", which has been distributed to a wide stakeholder audience. In addition a dedicated hazardous waste web portal is available at www.hazardouswaste.org.uk.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what timetable *(a)* has operated until now and *(b)* has been set out for the future, for informing businesses of changes to the treatment and disposal of hazardous waste and the types of waste classified as hazardous, resulting from waste-related European Union Directives. [184771]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* The timetable for implementing changes resulting from European Union Directives usually takes several years, and businesses should expect and anticipate the regulatory changes from an early stage.

To date, businesses have been informed about these changes through the negotiation of the Directives, via the consultation exercises undertaken on the implementation and regulatory amendments and also by means of stakeholder forums, such as the Hazardous Waste Forum.

Since early 2004, a Defra communications strategy has been in place to inform businesses about the changes that are being introduced as a result of the Landfill and Hazardous Waste Directives over two years. As part of this function a dedicated website, widely distributed leaflet, a number of stakeholder events and relevant articles in the trade press have been produced.

Communicating with businesses about these changes will continue while the waste-related European Union Directives are implemented.

Home Energy Efficiency Scheme (Manchester)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Manchester, Central have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme. [184172]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 2,889 households in Manchester, Central received assistance from the Scheme.

Human Pesticide Poisoning

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the cases of human pesticide poisoning mentioned by the right hon. Member for Cardiff, South and Penarth (Alun Michael) in his broadcast comments on Farming Today of 17 June; in each case *(a)* who was the investigating agency and *(b)* what information from medical practitioners was obtained; and whose conclusion it was that illness was found not to be due to the effects of pesticides. [184435]

Alun Michael: It would be quite wrong for me to release the individual case details of the 60 incidents referred to in my broadcast. They were investigated by the Field Operations Directorate of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and detail of individual incidents is presented to the Advisory Committee on Pesticides to inform the pesticides approvals process.

Cases of alleged ill health caused by the use of a pesticide are investigated by the HSE or the Local Authorities. Reports are then submitted to the Pesticide Incidents Appraisal Panel (PIAP) for their assessment. The membership of PIAP includes medical practitioners and a representative from the Department of Health. PIAP considers individual incident and case reports to identify if there is a link between exposure and ill health which may indicate a trend to inform the regulatory system. Medical records are only obtained from GPs and hospital doctors with the consent of the subject. PIAP considers clinical information as it is recorded in medical files.

The details of the results and conclusions are available in the latest PIAP annual report available at: http://www.hse.gov.uk/fod/pir0203.pdf

Landfill

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she applied for a derogation from the EU Landfill Directive for the years *(a)* 2006, *(b)* 2008 and *(c)* 2018. [182988]

Mr. Morley: Article 5(2) of the EC Landfill Directive sets three target years 2006, 2009 and 2016 by which member states must reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfills in proportion to the amount produced in 1995. Under the Directive there is a four-year derogation from these targets available to member states that sent to landfill more than 80 per cent. of their collected municipal waste in 1995. The UK qualifies for this derogation.

The UK does not need to apply to make use of the derogation. The Directive only requires member states to inform the Commission if it intends to make use of the derogation. The Government intend to make use of their derogation and will inform the Commission before each target year.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs why the targets in the Landfill (Scheme Year and Maximum Landfill Amount) Regulations 2004 are measured by weight instead of volume. [182989]

Mr. Morley: The Landfill (Scheme Year and Maximum Landfill Amount) Regulations 2004 divide the UK's targets under Article 5(2) of the EC Landfill Directive between the four countries of the UK. The Directive limits by weight the amount of biodegradable municipal waste allowed to be sent to landfill from member states. The Regulations set the targets consistently with the way the UK's performance will be measured under the Directive.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the delays to the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme. [182990]

Mr. Morley: The decision to delay the implementation of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme until 2005, announced by the Minister of State for Local and Regional Government on 19 November 2003, was made as part of Defra's contribution to helping to reduce spending pressures on local government in 2004–05.

The decision reflected the views of local authorities, received through the consultation on implementing the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme, that more time was needed to prepare for this new scheme which is a significant departure from the normal operations of local authorities. The delay in starting the scheme will mean that waste disposal authorities will have to make steeper annual reductions in the amount of biodegradable waste they landfill in order to meet the first target year of 2010 but they will have more time to plan how to do this.

The Government are using the additional time to raise awareness of the scheme within local authorities and to support those who plan to make use of its provisions. A series of regional events will be taking place later this month to explain the scheme to local authorities, waste management companies and other interested parties. In addition, workshops will be arranged early in 2005 to give local authority officers hands-on experience of operating a trading scheme. Written and electronic guidance material will also be made available.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's plans are to deal with biodegradable municipal waste which will not be permitted to be sent to landfill under the Landfill (Scheme Year and Maximum Landfill Amount) Regulations 2004; and whether she plans to permit an increase in the number of incinerators in the UK as a consequence of the regulations. [182991]

Mr. Morley: It is for individual waste disposal authorities to decide which waste management options to use to meet their statutory obligations in the light of local circumstances. The Government have no plans for the provision of any particular number of incinerators.

Defra's Waste Implementation Programme provides waste disposal authorities with a package of support measures designed to help them meet their share of the national target for the diversion of biodegradable municipal waste from landfill. In particular its new Technologies Demonstrator programme aims to establish five plants by the end of 2005 with a further five initiated by the end of 2006. The 10 plants will cover at least four different technologies either not currently available in this country or new to the industry, with a target of diverting at least 240,000 tonnes/annum of biodegradable municipal waste away from landfill. This should encourage the faster development and take up of new and innovative technologies.

The Statutory Instrument specifies the maximum amount of biodegradable municipal waste allowed to be sent to landfills; it does not impose a ban on land filling above these permitted levels. However, waste disposal authorities responsible for part or the whole of the UK exceeding the maximum amounts set out in the Instrument will be liable to a penalty.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what increased funding will be given to local authorities to cover their responsibilities under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme. [182992]

Mr. Morley: The cost to local authorities of meeting Landfill Directive obligations was addressed in the main in Spending Review 2002, which included increases to the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (EPCS) block and PFI credits for local authorities.

The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme is designed specifically to enable local authorities to choose the most cost effective way to meet their Landfill Directive targets taking account of local circumstances.

The Spending Review settlement 2004 announced by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 12 July incorporates additional targeted funding for waste management including an extra:

£275 million in PFI credits for local authorities in 2006–07 and 2007–08, and

£35 million in 2006–07 and 2007–08 for the new waste management Performance Reward Grant.

These additional funds will enable further investment in sustainable waste management and encourage local authorities to meet their targets efficiently.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications of the Landfill (scheme year and maximum landfill amount) Regulations on incineration in England. [183035]

Mr. Morley: The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme requires local authorities progressively to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill. Incineration, with or without energy recovery, provides an alternative to landfill, as does recycling. It is up to local authorities to develop and implement a strategy for implementing the scheme to match their local circumstances, taking into account statutory recycling and composting targets and planning guidance, among other things.

Waste Strategy 2000 provided five estimates of waste management options over the period 2000 to 2020. A 'base case' was modelled so that the additional cost of meeting the landfill targets for biodegradable waste and the waste strategy goals could be calculated. The other four models provided different mixes of recycling, composting and incineration and the additional capacity required for those facilities under each option.

The actual figures for additional capacity can be seen in annex C in Part Two of Waste Strategy 2000 (table C8 on page 194). A copy of the strategy is in the House of Commons Library and can also be accessed through the Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk)

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many waste landfill sites she expects to have received a permit to receive hazardous waste by 16 July. [183798]

Mr. Morley: Seven dedicated hazardous waste sites will have received a PPC permit to receive hazardous waste by 16 July. This figure comprises five merchant sites and two in-house sites.

In addition to these, 12 sites are awaiting the final decision on their PPC permit application, but currently hold Waste Management Licences to receive hazardous waste. This figure comprises six merchant sites and six in-house sites. These sites will continue to be able to receive those hazardous wastes allowed under their Waste Management Licence.

Landfill Tax Credit Scheme

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much money raised under the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme has been diverted from local environmental trust distributors to the Treasury. [184644]

Mr. Morley: As part of the reform of the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme, approximately £84 million, £92 million and £92 million was allocated to a new public expenditure programme in England (the Waste Implementation Programme) for the financial years 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06. The purpose of this programme is to take action to enable local authorities and others to meet the requirements of Article 5 of the EU Landfill Directive to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste landfilled.

Under the reformed Landfill Tax Credit Scheme approximately £47 million a year continues to be available for spending on local community environmental projects in England.

Mobile Phones/Printer Cartridges

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* mobile phones and *(b)* printer cartridges were

(i) recycled, (ii) reused overseas and (iii) disposed of within the UK waste stream in the most recent year for which figures are available. [184858]

Mr. Morley: The Government do not currently collect data on the numbers of mobile phones and printer cartridges that have been recycled, reused or disposed of in the UK waste stream.

The Government will be collecting data on the amounts of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), including IT and telecoms equipment, reused and recycled to report to the European Commission when the producer responsibility obligations of the WEEE Directive come into force from August 2005.

National Trails

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many National Trails there are in the UK. [185095]

Alun Michael: There are 15 National Trails in England and Wales and four Long Distance Routes in Scotland.

Orchards

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what additional assistance will be available for orchards following the introduction of single farm payment; and if she will make a statement. [183830]

Alun Michael: The Commission has confirmed that it will carry over into the single payment scheme land in dual use such as traditional grazed orchards to be considered as forage rather than orchard land, subject to some conditions still to be clarified, and so that they qualify for payments. We are in the process of drafting detailed guidelines for the application of this guidance with the assistance of English Nature and the Forestry Commission.

Subject to approval by the European Commission, grants to farmers and other land managers for the conservation and restoration of traditional orchards will also be available under the new Environmental Stewardship Scheme, which is to replace the Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Areas Schemes in 2005.

Packaging Regulations

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to incorporate companies that fall below the minimum requirements only because of their franchise arrangements within the working of the packaging regulations. [183503]

Mr. Morley: This is a matter currently being considered by the Advisory Committee on Packaging (ACP) and subject to their advice, the Government may include proposals for amendments to the packaging Regulations in a packaging consultation document that we expect to issue next year.

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to ensure that free videos are incorporated into the working of the packaging regulations. [183504]

Mr. Morley: This is a matter currently being considered by the Advisory Committee on Packaging's (ACP) "Free Rider" Task Force. The Task Force will submit a best practice document for the identification and detection of free riders to the ACP later this year. Subject to the Committee's advice, the Government will consider what further action is needed.

Pay Systems

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library the most recent review of *(a)* her Department's pay systems, *(b)* the pay systems of the non-departmental public bodies for which she is responsible and *(c)* the departmental equal pay action plan. [181346]

Alun Michael: Defra completed an Equal Pay Review and submitted this together with an action plan to Cabinet Office in April 2003. The review covered core-Defra and two of its agencies, Pesticides Safety Directorate and Veterinary Medicines Directorate, for which the core-department has pay remit negotiating responsibility.

The review found that there were no significant pay gaps within the department provided that Defra's multi-year pay settlement was fully rolled out for future years up to and including 2005–06. Defra is now entering the third year of the four-year settlement.

The Equal Pay Review has been published within Defra and has been accessible to staff via the departments' intranet, Defra Online. A copy will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

Senior managers will be considering the implications of Defra's Equal Pay Review Action Plan in conjunction with developing new pay arrangements for Defra for 2006 and beyond, following the end of the current multi-year pay settlement.

Agencies

Rural Payments Agency

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) submitted an Equal Pay Review and action plan to Cabinet Office in 2003 in accordance with Cabinet Office guidelines. A further Equal Pay Review has now been completed together with a revised action plan. This review and implications of the action plan on RPA pay systems is currently being considered by senior managers and the Trade Unions. Senior managers will be asked to consider placing the review and action plan in the House of Commons Library when the action plan is agreed.

Central Science Laboratory

The Central Science Laboratory completed its Equal Pay Review in April 2003 and the resultant action plan was submitted to the Cabinet Office in May 2003. The contents continue to be subject to consultation with the Trade Unions.

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science

In line with Cabinet Office guidance, the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) completed an Equal Pay Review and submitted this together with an action plan to Cabinet Office in April 2003.

The review found that there were no significant pay gaps as a result of gender difference. There were individual problems as a legacy from earlier pay arrangements; these were addressed in the action plan.

The Equal Pay Review has been published within CEFAS and the results made known to staff. Implementation of the action plan is the subject of on-going discussions with the Trade Unions.

A copy of the Review will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

Veterinary Laboratories Agency

The Veterinary Laboratories Agency completed its Equal Pay Review in April 2003 and the resultant action plan was submitted to Cabinet Office in May 2003. The review found that there were no significant pay gaps as a result of gender difference. Implementation of the action plan is the subject of ongoing discussion with the Trade Unions. A copy of the review will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

Non-departmental public bodies

Non-departmental public bodies were not included in the Government commitment to carry out equal pay reviews by April 2003, although several have done so.

Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans the Government have to extend post-marketing surveillance to pesticide products in the same way as for new medicinal products. [184449]

Alun Michael: The pesticide approvals process requires all approval holders to report any adverse effects to the Pesticides Safety Directorate. In addition a range of monitoring activities are carried out to ensure that pesticide products are formulated and used correctly. These activities include formulation analysis of pesticide products, label checks, and the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme. In addition a number of investigations are carried out by the Health and Safety Executive and local authority Trading Standards officers. Therefore, the Government have no plans to extend the post marketing surveillance of pesticide products.

Recycling

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her strategy is to encourage the use of recycled fibre in the private sector. [184954]

Mr. Morley: Government recognise that it is not only important to collect materials for recycling, but to make good use of them. The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) was set up by Government and the Devolved Administrations to help in this area. Their aim is to create stable and efficient markets for recycled materials and products and to remove the barriers to waste minimisation, re-use and recycling.

Over the past three years WRAP have been working with a wide variety of businesses to encourage the use of recycled materials and also to find new uses for recycled materials.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total tonnage of waste collected by community recycling organisations was in England in each year since 2000. [183187]

Mr. Morley: According to Defra's latest annual Municipal Waste Management Survey of local authorities in England, the total tonnages of voluntary organisation recycling are:

	Thousand tonne
2001–01	35
2001–02	35
2002–03	37

However, these figures are likely to be an underestimate as not all recycling carried out by community organisations is reported to local authorities.

The results of the survey are based on information supplied by local authorities in England for the financial year 2002–03, the latest year for which data are available. A summary of the survey was published on the Defra website in April this year and can be accessed through this link: http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2004/040429a.htm

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total value of contracts between community recycling organisations and local authorities was in England in each year since 2000. [183188]

Mr. Morley: The Department does not collect this information.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many community recycling organisations were registered in England to collect waste in each year since 2000. [183189]

Mr. Morley: This information is not available. All organisations involved in waste collection are required to have a Waste Carrier's Licence or an Exemption to that requirement. The Environment Agency (EA) issues

and regulates the licensing system but its records do not differentiate between commercial organisations, charities, community groups or individuals.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department has taken to tackle false claims of recycling achievements by the packaging industry. [183703]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 July 2004]*: The Department, in conjunction with the Department of Trade and Industry, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Northern Ireland administration, the Environment Agency, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the Environment and Heritage Service in Northern Ireland has commissioned fact-finding exercises to establish whether there is any substance to the allegations of inappropriate issuing of Packaging Waste Recovery Notes (PRNs) and Packaging Waste Export Recovery Notes (PERNs) by some packaging waste reprocessors and exporters.

The first fact finding exercise took place last year and investigated the wood packaging waste sector. On completion of the exercise, the fact finding team presented their findings in a report which can be found on the Department's website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/topics/packaging/index.htm

During the course of the exercise the team established that there were no inappropriate operations of the kind that might warrant criminal proceedings. However, some assumptions were being made, for example about the tonnages of packaging waste in mixed loads, that were unrealistic or were made on the basis of insufficient evidence. The team therefore recommended that the amount of wood packaging waste recycled in 2002 should be reduced by 76,400 tonnes. This was done.

The second fact finding exercise is currently focusing on the plastic packaging waste sector and the findings will be announced shortly.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to increase the amount of recycling in London. [184279]

Mr. Morley: In common with all local authorities in England, London boroughs were set statutory national recycling and composting targets for 2003–04 and 2005–06.

To help support achievement of these targets over the last two years, Defra has allocated £24.9 million from the National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund to the London Recycling Fund, for a range of sustainable waste management schemes in London. A further £20.55 million has been awarded for 2004–05 to 2005–06.

Twenty-two London boroughs included a sustainable waste management target in the first round of local Public Service Agreements (PSA). The second round of local PSA negotiation is now under way and four London boroughs have proposed sustainable waste management targets.

I have also written to all local authorities offering direct consultancy support on waste management projects up to the value of £20,000.

Set Aside

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will advise farmers of the rules for *(a)* set aside, *(b)* uncultivated fields and *(c)* permanent pasture; and if she will make a statement. [185145]

Alun Michael: With regard to set-aside, we will be advising farmers before the 1 August deadline. We will be making an announcement shortly on cross compliance conditions.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy to allow farmers to receive single farm payment in Euros; and if she will make a statement. [185233]

Alun Michael: The Government are committed in principle to providing farmers with the option of receiving grants and subsidies in Euros. The computer systems at the Rural Payments Agency that will deliver the single payment are being developed with that in mind, and I will make an announcement in due course.

Stored Departmental Publications

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183871]

Alun Michael: Defra regularly publishes reports, consultations and publicity material. The current list of titles published by the department and available to the public numbers 1,595, of which 438 are stored digitally and printed on demand. Publications are stored at Defra Publications, based in East Kilbride, Scotland.

Additionally, The Stationery Office publishes a number of publications on behalf of the department and for these publications retention and storage is a matter for the publisher.

The titles available are listed on the Defra website.

Toxic Waste Disposal

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the cost to business of the stock-piling of toxic waste in the six month period following 16 July owing to the short-term shortfall of disposal capacity. [183797]

Mr. Morley: None. It is Government policy to ensure as smooth a transition as possible of the implementation of the requirements of the Landfill Directive and to avoid the need for storage of hazardous waste over and above that which normally occurs.

Waste

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if her Department will launch a public information campaign alerting businesses to their legal obligations as producers of waste. [183197]

Mr. Morley: The Department is taking a range of measures to inform businesses of their legal obligations as producers of waste. Defra has issued a code of practice and information leaflet covering the duty of care requirements which are set out in Section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. We are currently reviewing the duty of care regime which will result in a consultation later in the year and should assist in raising public awareness.

With the forthcoming changes to the management of hazardous waste, a dedicated hazardous waste web portal will be available at www.hazardouswaste.org.uk from the 16 July 2004. Other measures to inform businesses of these changes include leaflets, updated and signposted Defra, Environment Agency and Envirowise websites, press releases, case study material and a communication network; established primarily through the Hazardous Waste Forum.

The Envirowise programme, which is partly funded by Defra, offers businesses in the UK advice on their legal obligations relating to waste, together with a range of support and guidance on waste minimisation.

Defra and the Department for Trade and Industry are informing businesses of their obligations under the Packaging Regulations and the forthcoming Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations and End of Life Vehicles (ELV) Regulations. For example, during the implementation of the WEEE directive the Government have organised over 50 workshops to alert stakeholders to the regulations.

Defra also supports the Environment Agency-led NetRegs project, which provides businesses with an online plain English guide to the environmental legislation that applies to them, and how to comply with it.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Environment Agency will establish an online database to monitor flows of wastes and other materials through the economy. [183229]

Mr. Morley: Good quality data on waste is vital to monitor and evaluate performance, underpin planning and investment decisions and formulate strategy and specific policy interventions. Defra's Waste Implementation Programme has established a data work-stream to ensure effective co-ordination, provision and dissemination of reliable data on different waste streams, through the development of a national three-year data strategy.

Already in place is the development of a web-based intranet and central database to provide quarterly data on municipal waste. Waste Dataflow (www.wastedataflow.org) has been established by Defra together with the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management, and is widely supported. The system will provide more timely, efficient and accessible data than is currently available, helping to monitor progress against landfill directive targets. The Environment Agency has played an important role in helping to steer this project.

Our medium-term aim is to develop an accessible central database of current (and where available historic) data on all waste streams, working closely with the Environment Agency.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance her Department issues to business producers of waste on how to discharge the statutory duty under section 34 of the 1990 Environmental Protection Act and the extent of due diligence required of such a producer in discharging its duty. [183228]

Mr. Morley: Defra has produced "Waste Management The Duty of Care Code of Practice" to offer guidance on complying with section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This is available on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/management/doc/pdf/waste_man_duty_code.pdf

Defra has recently re-issued a leaflet entitled "Waste and Your Duty of Care" which can also be accessed online at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/management/doc/index.htm

A comprehensive review of the duty of care regime is currently under way which will result in a consultation and an updated code of practice.

WaterVoice Office (Exeter)

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it is Government policy to close the WaterVoice office in Exeter; and if she will make a statement. [185276]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The Government's policy in relation to WaterVoice regional offices is to take forward the recommendations made by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in its report on the organisational and regional structure of the Consumer Council for Water that was published in January 2004, and for an Implementation Steering Group, which includes representatives from Defra, WaterVoice and Ofwat, to decide on the location of merged regional offices for the new Consumer Council for Water.

PwC recommended that the offices in Exeter and Bristol currently serving the South West and Wessex should be merged into one office and located either in Exeter, Bristol or at a new site in Taunton. Following consultation with staff in Exeter and Bristol, the Steering Group agreed that the merged office should be located in Bristol.

Waterways

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans does she have to ensure that the programme of investment on waterway infrastructure will meet the target of seven million tonnes of freight being transported on British Waterways navigations by 2010; and if she will make a statement. [183684]

Alun Michael: The target referred to is one set by British Waterways itself, rather than the Government. It is an ambitious target but that is greatly to the credit of British Waterways.

We encourage British Waterways to facilitate waterway transport by encouraging the transfer of freight from roads to water where this is practical, economic and environmentally desirable. The Government will continue to provide grant in aid to support British Waterways' Corporate Plan and in

particular to help it address its backlog of maintenance and so enable it to meet its freight and other objectives. British Waterways is also eligible for grants from the Department of Transport's freight facilities grant programme towards infrastructure investments that will lead to identifiable transfer of lorry movements from roads.

TRANSPORT

Aviation (State Aids)

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations his Department has made to the US Administration about state aid for the US aviation industry; and if he will make a statement. [183294]

Mr. McNulty: The issue of state aid has been raised in the negotiations between the European Community and the United States over a transatlantic Open Aviation Area. The new EU regulation on protection against subsidisation and unfair pricing practices by third country carriers, which has recently entered force, is designed to address unfair competition arising from subsidies to non-EU airlines.

Canteen Facilities

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost of running the Department's canteen facilities was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185244]

Mr. McNulty: In 1996–97 the Department's restaurant services were provided by an outside contractor and the contract attracted a subsidy of £25,000. The Department also paid the accommodation and utilities costs. These were borne within the overall costs for the building (so separate figures are not available). The contract was re-let in 2000, it was let on a self-financing basis. This gave the contractor freedom to operate commercially and it obviated the requirement for a cash subsidy. The Department still pays the accommodation and utilities costs. Another contract has recently been let still under the same self-financing principle.

Civil Aircraft (Safety)

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* incidents and *(b)* complaints regarding the safety of civil aircraft the UK aviation authorities received in (i) 2004 to date, (ii) 2003 and (iii) 2002, broken down by (A) airline, (B) aircraft type and (C) country of registration. [184129]

Mr. McNulty: Neither we nor the CAA maintain a central record of complaints about the safety of particular airlines. We receive very few complaints from the public about the safety of airlines and these are dealt with as they arise. Appropriate action is taken if a complaint reveals any non-compliance with required standards.

Article 117 of the Air Navigation Order establishes a Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) scheme for safety related incidents. The purpose of the scheme is to ensure that the CAA is advised of hazardous or potentially hazardous incidents and defects, and that knowledge of these occurrences is disseminated so that other persons and organisations may learn from them. This enables an assessment to be made by those concerned of the safety implications of each occurrence.

Occurrence reports are an important part of our open reporting culture and the fact that an occurrence report has been made is not necessarily an adverse indication about the safety standards of an airline. The MOR scheme aims to ensure the safety of the UK industry but some reports, mainly relating to occurrences en route in UK airspace, do involve foreign aircraft.

The tables, which have been placed in the Libraries of the House, set out the number of aircraft the subject of mandatory occurrence reports by state of registry and aircraft type for the years 2002 to 2004. Slight discrepancies exist between the figures because of the way data is recorded. Section 23 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 constrains the Civil Aviation Authority's ability to release information relating to individual companies that it receives under the MOR scheme. I therefore consider that it would be inappropriate for me to undermine those constraints by publishing a list of airlines whose aircraft have been the subject of mandatory occurrence reports.

Diabetic Retinopathy (Driving Licences)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the minutes of the Honorary Medical Advisory Panel on Driving and Visual Disorders' special forum on progressive and non-progressive retinopathy. [184634]

Mr. Jamieson: The minutes of the meetings of the Honorary Medical Advisory Panel on Driving and Visual Disorders are published regularly on the DVLA website. At the last meeting the Panel suggested that a useful area of research would be a workshop on retinopathy. We are currently considering whether this initiative should be included in the Department's research programme.

If approved the results of the workshop will be published.

Headed Notepaper

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total cost of printing departmental headed notepaper was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available. [185235]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The Department does not retain records of the former Department of Transport's expenditure, and to investigate the costs of printing its headed notepaper in 1996–97 could be done only at disproportionate cost.

The Department for Transport's expenditure on headed notepaper for 2003–04 was £1,424.

Network Rail

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how, under his proposals of 15 July, the borrowing of Network Rail is guaranteed. [185425]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: Network Rail's borrowing benefits from support arrangements provided by the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA). As announced to the House by the Secretary of State for Transport on 15 July 2004, the SRA is to be closed. Its financial obligations, including those in support of Network Rail's borrowing, will be transferred to the Department for Transport, subject to the passage of the necessary legislation. In the meantime, the existing SRA support arrangements will continue.

Pay Systems

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library the most recent review of *(a)* his Department's pay systems, *(b)* the pay systems of the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible and *(c)* the departmental equal pay action plan. [181356]

Mr. McNulty: A copy of the Department's equal pay action plan will be placed in the Libraries of the House once it is finalised.

Transport Statistics

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the average journey time between central London and the centre of *(a)* Manchester, *(b)* Edinburgh, *(c)* Bristol and *(d)* Newcastle by (i) air, (ii) rail, (iii) lorry and (iv) car, including, in the case of air, check-in time at the airport. [182376]

Mr. McNulty: Data on journey times by mode between these cities are not held centrally.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its predecessor Department and *(c)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183892]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport came into existence on 29 May 2002 following Machinery of Government changes. The total travel and subsistence costs for civil servants in the Department for fiscal year 2002–03 were £1,606,589, and for 2003–04 were £1,919,678. Information for earlier years can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The totals for the Department's agencies in the same years were £18,696,176 (2002–03), and £21,975,803 (2003–04).

All travel undertaken by civil servants in the Department for Transport complied with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

DEFENCE

Iraq

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British troops charged with torture or mistreatment of prisoners in Iraq could be tried in an Iraqi court under Iraqi law. [183244]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the reply my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary gave on 1 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 432W, to the right hon. Member for Devizes (Mr. Ancram). British troops serving in Iraq have immunity under Coalition Provisional Authority Order 17.

United Kingdom armed forces, wherever they operate in the world, are subject to English criminal law. They can be tried by court martial for acts committed overseas if those acts would constitute a criminal offence if committed in the UK.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when and in what circumstances Ministers were first informed of the practice of hooding; what the nature of the practice was; and what the reasons were for its abandonment. [183944]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: The hooding of detainees for the purposes of arrest or transit was a standard procedure for United Kingdom troops prior to Operation Telic and, as such, was not specifically brought to the attention of Ministers. The UK believes that hooding during arrest and transit is acceptable when there is a strong military reason, for example to offer security to our own forces and locations or to provide protection to the detainee (through the prevention of identification by other detainees).

Military commanders became aware that the practice of hooding could be harmful to prisoners, especially if it was applied inappropriately. They judged that these concerns outweighed the military justification for the continued use of hooding as a means of blindfolding, and that the most prudent, immediate response was to introduce a ban.

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment were *(a)* awarded medals and *(b)* mentioned in despatches following their recent deployment in Iraq. [184500]

Mr. Caplin: Following their recent deployment to Iraq (from June 2003 to November 2003), four personnel from the Queen's Lancashire Regiment were awarded medals and two were Mentioned in Despatches.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 7 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 721W, on Iraq, why he decided to publish the extracts from the document. [185600]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: The extract contained the relevant information.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether he was informed in July 2003 that the SIS had, in that month, withdrawn reporting from a source who claimed that production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable; [185656]

(2) when he was informed that SIS had withdrawn reporting from the source who claimed that production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable. [185691]

Mr. Hoon: I first became aware that SIS had withdrawn the reports as a result of the Butler Review.

European Rapid Reaction Force

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the costs of participation in the European Rapid Reaction Force. [185202]

Mr. Hoon: There is no standing European Rapid Reaction Force. National forces declared under the Helsinki Headline Goal are made available to European Union operations on a voluntary, case-by-case basis, as for NATO or United Nations operations. United Kingdom contributions to such operations are provided from within existing forces.

Management Groups

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the responsibilities of the *(a)* Defence Housing Executive, *(b)* Defence Medical Training Organisation, *(c)* Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency, *(d)* Policy Director, *(e)* Deputy Chief Defence Staff (Equipment Capability), *(f)* Chief of Defence Intelligence, *(g)* Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, *(h)* Internal costs, *(i)* Programme Account and *(j)* Nuclear Management Groups. [181747]

Mr. Caplin: The responsibilities of the management groupings requested are listed as follows:

(a) This organisation ceased to exist on 31 March 2003 when it was absorbed into Defence Estates.

(b) This organisation ceased to exist on 31 March 2003 following the formation of Defence Medical Education and Training Agency (DMETA).

(c) This Agency, owned by the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff Personnel (DCDS(Pers)), contributes to operational effectiveness through the provision of pay and administration services to Service personnel. In addition, the Agency provides direct support to the mobilization of reservists and the deployment of improved Operational Manpower systems.

(d) The Policy Director is responsible for future defence policy and international security policy.

(e) The Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Equipment Capability) heads the Equipment Capability Customer organisation, whose role is to develop an integrated and affordable equipment programme that meets Defence capability requirements, and to drive the delivery of new and enhanced military capability.

(f) The Chief of Defence Intelligence is responsible for the provision of defence intelligence to the MOD, the armed forces, wider Government and allies. His areas of responsibility encompass the Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) including its agencies, the Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency and the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre.

(g) Training in security, languages, intelligence and photography takes place at the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre, who also provide advice on intelligence and security policy.

(h) This Management Group was discontinued with effect from 31 March 2004. It has been merged with (i) Programme Account.

(i) The responsibilities of the Programme Account Management Group are: the purchase of new equipment systems and associated weapons including major upgrade programmes and system procurement expenses such as studies and the management and funding of Defence Procurement Agency staff, accommodation and all related activities.

(j) The responsibilities of the Nuclear Management Group are; to sustain a safe and effective Nuclear Warhead capability and to discharge MOD's liabilities for waste management and decommissioning at the sites of BNFL and UKAEA.

Further information on individual defence agencies is available in the Library of the House of Commons.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the responsibilities of the *(a)* Fleet, *(b)* General Officer Commanding (Northern Ireland), *(c)* Field Army, *(d)* 1st (UK) Armoured Division, *(e)* 2nd Division, *(f)* 3rd Division, *(g)* 4th Division, *(h)* 5th Division, *(i)* UK Support Command (Germany), *(j)* Joint Helicopter Command and *(k)* Land Support management groups. [181779]

Mr. Caplin: The responsibilities of the management groupings requested are listed as follows:

(a) The Commander-in-Chief Fleet ensures the Royal Navy carries out its responsibilities by delivering an effective and capable Fleet based on flexible support, the continuous development of people, organisations and capability and through the most efficient use of resources.

(b) It is the responsibility of the GOC NI to implement policy in accordance with Chief of Defence Staff and Chief of General Staff Directives and to support the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland in the defeat of terrorism and in the maintenance of Public Order in order to assist HMG's objective of returning to normality.

(c) Exercising operational command of the Field Army and training designated forces for war and other operations in order to provide military capability in the right place, at the right time in the most cost effective manner.

(d) 1st (UK) Armoured Division is to maintain and where possible enhance the Division's capabilities with emphasis on war in order to set the conditions for future success on operations.

(e) 2nd Division is to provide the most effective regional command and infrastructure support to all formations and units within Scotland and the North of England in order to enable Commander Regional Forces to deliver the required military capability and infrastructure support to CinC LAND.

(f) 3rd (UK) Division is to exercise operational command, train designated forces for war and other operations, and conduct operations as directed in order to provide military capability within readiness.

(g) 4th Division is to deliver, and where possible enhance, both military capability and the provision of infrastructure support to designated formations and units.

(h) 5th Division is to provide the most effective regional command and infrastructure support to all formations and units within its geographical area in order to enable Commander Regional Forces to deliver and, where possible, enhance the required military capability and infrastructure support to CinC LAND.

(i) The mission of United Kingdom Support Command (Germany) is to deliver, and where possible enhance, both military capability and the provision of infrastructure support to designated formations and units.

(j) Commander Joint Helicopter Command's primary role is to deliver and sustain effective Battlefield Helicopter and Air Assault assets, operationally capable under all environmental conditions, in order to support UK's defence missions and tasks.

(k) Land Support Management Group exists to effectively manage the resources of Headquarters Land Command, and the overall Communication Information Systems requirement for Land Command.

Missiles

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many nations he estimates have *(a)* air, *(b)* land and *(c)* submarine-launched (i) cruise and (ii) skim missiles with a range of more than 20 nautical miles. [185574]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence does not hold the information requested on all countries.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms has seven categories of conventional arms for nations to report against, including Section VII—Missiles and Missile Launchers. However returns are made on a voluntary basis and the UN does not hold all this information either.

Prisons

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what training is given to police officers employed in British-run military and civilian prisons in Iraq; and how long it lasts. [177245]

Mr. Ingram: There are no British-run civilian prisons in Iraq. The only British detention facility in Iraq is the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility in Shaibah. Internees are guarded by soldiers of the Military Provost Staff who are trained to Home Office standards. No civilian prison or police officers are employed in Shaibah.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Basic Skills Agency Data

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will update the data prepared for each English constituency by the Basic Skills Agency in 2000; and what the updated information is for each constituency in the North East Region. [185169]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In May 2004 the DfES commissioned work to produce local level estimates of literacy and numeracy in England based on the results of the Skills for Life survey (published in October 2003). The survey mapped skill levels to the National Standards for Adult Literacy and Numeracy. These estimates will update those provided by the Basic Skills Agency and will be available via the DfES's website in autumn 2004.

At the current time, based on the Skills for Life survey findings, we can provide estimates of literacy and numeracy levels for the North East and its constituent Learning and Skills Council areas:

	Entry level 1 and 2 (%)	*Entry level 3 (%)*	*Level 1 (%)*	*Level 2+ (%)*	*Sample size*
Literacy					
England	5	11	40	44	7,874
North East	8	14	41	37	877
Northumberland	8	21	38	33	[1]82
Tyne and Wear	7	15	42	36	310
County Durham	5	10	39	46	191
Tees Valley	10	15	43	33	294
Numeracy					
England	21	26	28	25	8,040
North East	28	27	25	21	894
Northumberland	41	23	22	15	[1]82
Tyne and Wear	24	26	24	26	317
County Durham	23	24	28	25	192
Tees Valley	31	30	24	15	303

[1] please note the small sample size

Countryside Interpretation Centres

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what programmes his Department has established for collaboration between schools and independent countryside interpretation centres. [185548]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We welcome collaboration between schools and independent countryside interpretation centres and would encourage schools to develop relationships with them.

More specifically, our Growing Schools programme has worked with 12,000 schools and 40 partner

organisations which specialise in the field of outdoor education to assist teaching about food, farming and the countryside both within and beyond the school grounds. The programme is now further developing an accreditation scheme for countryside centres such as estates, farms, woodlands, parks, gardens and outdoor museums.

Our London Challenge programme has commissioned the Field Studies Council to provide outdoor learning experiences for London pupils over a three year period.

Dentistry

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many dental clinical academics hold honorary consultant contracts. [181642]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have been asked to reply.

Detailed information has been published by the Council of Heads of Medical Schools and the Council of Deans of Dental Schools in "Clinical Academic Staffing Levels in UK Medical and Dental Schools", May 2004. A copy has been placed in the Library.

Departmental Staff

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* consultants and *(b)* advisers his Department employs; and what the annual cost is of their employment; [184739]

(2) how many *(a)* consultants and *(b)* advisers his Department has employed for more than six months in the last year; and what projects they were assigned to; [184741]

(3) how many *(a)* consultants and *(b)* advisers are currently paid from departmental programme budgets; and what the total associated costs are; [184742]

(4) how many *(a)* consultants and *(b)* advisers have been taken out of schools to work on his Department's projects. [184743]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Working in partnership and involving front line practitioners in policy thinking and system change is fundamental to our vision for managing the transformation of the education system. We consult regularly with schools and take advice from headteachers and teachers to support the development of our policies.

Authority to use consultants and advisers is delegated to Directorates and data on numbers is not recorded centrally. The cost of consultants charged to administration budgets in 2003–04 was £4.7 million. The cost charged to programmes is not recorded centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Education (Nottingham)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many teachers and teaching assistants posts will be lost at the end of the current school year in Nottingham City maintained schools; [184654]

(2) how much money Nottingham local education authority lost from its formula allocation by the imposition of a funding ceiling; and how many of the lost teaching posts this could have saved; [184655]

(3) what assessment he has made of the change in teacher numbers in Nottingham on educational standards in city schools; [184656]

(4) if he will make a statement on the funding of primary and secondary schools in Nottingham in 2005–06. [184657]

Mr. Miliband: The Department collects statistics on numbers of teachers and support staff in January each year and will be publishing the figures for January 2004 by local education authority in the autumn. These show an increase in full-time equivalent regular teachers in Nottingham City between 1999 and 2003 of 210 (10 per cent.). Schools make changes in their staffing levels every year in response to a range of issues including changing pupil numbers, new school priorities and the resources available to them.

The calculation of the Education Formula Spending Share has a floor and ceiling component which ensures that all authorities see a minimum increase per pupil which is in part funded by having a ceiling which imposes a maximum increase per pupil. In 2004–05 Nottingham City local education authority received the ceiling increase (6.8 per cent. per pupil) which reduced its Education Formula Spending Share by £2.8 million.

The funding allocation for each local education authority for 2005–06 will be announced in the provisional local government finance settlement in the autumn. However, every authority will receive an increase in the Schools Formula Spending Share of at least 5.5 per cent. per pupil. [Primary and nursery schools will receive a minimum funding increase per pupil of 5 per cent. and secondary schools of 4 per cent. where pupil numbers do not change.]

Grammar Feeder Schools

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many eligible feeder schools there were in each of the last five years in *(a)* the state sector and *(b)* the independent sector for grammar schools subject to the feeder school provisions of the grammar school ballot regulations, broken down by local education authority in England. [184748]

Mr. Miliband: Responsibility for identifying qualifying feeder schools for the purpose of petitions and ballots to decide the future admission arrangements of grammar schools falls to the designated ballot administration company, Electoral Reform Services. Consequently, the Department does not collect this data.

Oversubscribed Schools

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the oral answer of 8 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1022, if he will publish the guidance and regulations which require schools wishing to expand to take account of *(a)* the local situation, *(b)* other schools in the area, *(c)* the adjudicator and *(d)* other factors. [185598]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: The current statutory guidance to decision-makers and those wishing to publish proposals is available on the Department's website and hard copies are sent to interested parties on request. In deciding proposals for the expansion of schools, School Organisation Committees and Adjudicators are required to consider a range of factors including relevant local issues, the impact on neighbouring schools and the effect on standards in the area, though there is a "strong presumption" in favour of popular and successful schools being able to expand.

The Five Year Strategy document announced plans for a new fast track process to enable popular and successful schools to expand more quickly. We will consult on amendments to regulations, procedures and guidance in September. We intend that the decision on proposals will continue to be for the School Organisation Committee (SOC) or, where they cannot agree unanimously, the schools adjudicator. Decision-makers will continue to decide proposals on their merits, taking into account all relevant factors. The current strong presumption that proposals should be approved will be reinforced in revised guidance.

Partnership for Schools

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the Board Members of Partnership for Schools indicating the other public sector appointments each member holds. [182506]

Mr. Miliband: The Board Members of Partnerships for Schools are all officials of the Department:

Stephen Crowne

Peter Stanton-Ife

Lorraine Chapman

The first two are also directors of Partnerships for Church of England Schools.

Post-16 Education (Stalybridge and Hyde)

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much will be spent per learner in Stalybridge and Hyde in *(a)* school sixth-forms and *(b)* further education colleges in 2004–05. [185364]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not collect information on the level of funding per pupil in school sixth-forms and further education colleges at the local level. Mark Haysom, the Learning and Skills Council's Chief Executive will write to the hon. Member with details of funding provided for *(a)* school sixth-forms and *(b)* further education colleges in 2004–05 in the local area covering Stalybridge and Hyde. A copy of his letter will be placed in the House Libraries.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to provide specific funding to help further education colleges in Stalybridge and Hyde refurbish and rebuild their estates. [185365]

Alan Johnson: All of the Department's post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment is allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for rebuilding and refurbishing property in further education colleges at either the local or regional levels. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House Libraries.

Private Finance Initiatives

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what provision has been made to protect schools against the risk of financial failure on the part of a private finance initiative contractor. [185399]

Mr. Miliband: Most PFI deals involve stand-alone special purpose vehicles (SPVs) with other investors and contractors, plus bank financing. It is a usual feature of PFI projects that the banks have the opportunity to step in and find a new contractor in the event of insolvency and we would expect the banks to do this. The Department for Education and Skills is not party to schools PFI contracts; these are between the local authority and the relevant consortium. Officials are ready to assist and advise local authorities if this should prove necessary.

School Admissions

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the cost to the education budget of *(a)* school admissions and appeals, *(b)* the School Adjudicator and *(c)* school admissions policy staff in his Department in the last year for which figures are available. [185242]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: The Department does not collect data on expenditure by each local authority on the administration of school admissions and appeals. However, for the financial year 2004–05, LEA net planned budgets to cover this expenditure totals £46 million, or approximately £307,000 per local authority. This includes budgets for funding delegated to governing bodies of schools that are their own admission authority and administer the system themselves.

For the financial year 2003–04, outturn figures showed the total cost of the Schools Adjudicators and their support staff to be £637,572 and the total cost of school admissions policy staff to be £530,287.

School Meals

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what encouragement is given to *(a)* local education authorities and *(b)* schools to source locally grown produce for school meals; and if he will make a statement. [185281]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: In 2003 the Department produced a purchasing guide for schools and LEAs that encourages them to source locally grown produce for school meals. In addition, there are case studies of good practice available on the Teachernet website at http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/.

Surplus Places Rule

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the surplus places rule was abolished. [184632]

Mr. Miliband: There has been no formal surplus places rule. In the past, local authorities bid for capital support for new pupil places in areas where there was pupil growth, to meet their statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. In assessing the bids, my Department took account of places in surrounding schools in coming to a view on how many additional places to support each year. However, capital funding for school buildings can come from a number of sources, including other capital programmes, authorities' own resources and agreements with developers.

From 2004–05, against a background of rising capital investment in school buildings, and in order to simplify the process for allocating resources on pupil places criteria, we have moved to making allocations by formulae.

In addition, from 2003–04 we have set up a dedicated capital stream and issued guidance that has a strong presumption in favour of expansion to enable successful and popular schools to expand.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many copies of his Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183883]

Gareth Thomas: DFID's first departmental report was produced in 1998.

Between 1998 and 2002 publication of DFID's departmental report was handled by The Stationery Office Limited (TSO). The cost of production was met by DFID. The cost of printing was met by TSO. TSO provided an agreed number of copies to DFID and retained revenue from sales.

The following table includes the number of copies supplied to DFID, the number of copies issued by TSO and the production costs met by DFID. The total number of reports produced is not available, nor is the revenue earned by TSO.

	Copies supplied to DFID	*Copies issued by TSO*	*Cost of production met by DFID (£)*
1998	1,500	605	33,672
1999	2,662	531	65,051
2000	3,842	509	98,000
2001	5,000	547	81,576
2002	3,500	531	61,235

From 2003 the arrangements with The Stationery Office Limited (TSO) were changed. DFID handled both the production and print of the report itself, providing the required number of copies to TSO. TSO retain the revenue of any copies sold. The report is also available to download, free of charge, from DFID's website.

This second table includes the number of copies produced, the additional number of copies issued by ISO, and the cost of printing and production met by DFID.

	Copies produced by DFID	*Copies issued by TSO*	*Cost of printing and production by DFID (£)*
2003	3,000	440	76,480
2004	3,050	[1]351	45,000

[1] To date.

Haiti

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Haiti. [184330]

Mr. Gareth Thomas *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: DFID is addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Haiti primarily through its contribution to the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and through its shareholding in the World Bank. Both organisations provide grants to Haiti's National Programme for HIV/AIDS.

The Global Fund approved two grants to Haiti amounting to US $25 million in late 2002. As a result, the National Programme accelerated its delivery of treatment and care to a target group of 500,000 poor people. So far, US $17 million has been disbursed.

The World Bank agreed a US$ 2.9 million grant to Haiti in early 2003 for the prevention and control of infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS. The grant is being implemented with the support of the Pan-American Health Organisation (PAHO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). In addition, DFID has provided support to WHO/PAHO to help kick-start the provision of affordable Anti-Retro-Viral medicines globally, from which Haiti will benefit.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures he proposes to cater for women affected by AIDS and their children. [185547]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The UK Government's new strategy, 'Taking Action: The UK's Strategy for Tackling HIV and AIDS in the Developing World', launched by the Prime Minister on 20 July 2004, prioritises women and young people. Chiefly, the UK Government will:

Support comprehensive programmes for women that address not only their access to sexual and reproductive health and rights but also access to education, employment and social protection.

Support efforts to promote girls' education and work to support programmes tackling gender violence and stigma and discrimination.

Strengthen the links between AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health programmes.

Make support for orphans and vulnerable children a cornerstone of our response, by dedicating at least £150 million over the next three years to address their needs, including through:

securing international commitment to UNICEF's Strategic Framework;

reflecting our commitment in the Country Assistance Plans in all affected countries; and

working on a range of interventions to assist keeping children productively in school, secure access to health care and social protection.

Support prevention and treatment programmes that meet the needs of marginalised groups.

Promote the greater involvement of people with HIV and AIDS—including women, young people and marginalized groups—in planning and delivering programmes.

Ensure the human rights of marginalised and vulnerable groups, including women and children, are given proper attention, including:

- supporting legislative reform to improve the human rights environment—including anti discrimination legislation, legislation to regulate the conduct of public institutions like the police, and to guarantee individuals access to services.

Working with the formal justice sector to make justice systems more responsive to human rights concerns and more accessible to vulnerable groups.

The UK Government will also support research to build the evidence base and contribute to effective AIDS programmes worldwide. DFID will work to help co-ordination and information sharing between the various research initiatives concerned with the delivery and the impacts of HIV treatment. In particular DFID will support research efforts, which address access to treatment by the poorest and most vulnerable, including women and children.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures he proposes to take to tackle AIDS in Asia. [185581]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID currently funds major HIV and AIDS programmes in eight countries in Asia[1], and supports regional initiatives to reduce the spread of infection and provide services for vulnerable groups. Fuller details are set out in the table on page 20 of the recently launched "Taking Action, the UK's Strategy for Tackling HIV/AIDS in Developing Countries".

DFID will continue to strengthen political leadership and public support for action in all the Public Service Agreement countries in Asia. DFID will intensify its support to national programmes including through non-Government organisations, for example, by supporting India's National AIDS Control Organisation and targeting vulnerable groups in Vietnam and Bangladesh.

DFID will assist the Chinese Government to expand the delivery of services for high risk populations in the poorest provinces of China, and to replicate the approach on a national basis.

[1] Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, China, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Vietnam.

International Aid (Water and Sanitation)

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development by how much and by what proportion UK international aid spending on water and sanitation will change in the next three years. [185473]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Total bilateral expenditure on water and sanitation represents approximately 6 per cent. of the Department for International Development's (DFID's) total bilateral aid budget—about £85 million per year over the last three years. DFID channels a significant proportion of its assistance through multilateral channels such as the European Union, the World Bank and UN organisations (£1.3 billion in 2001–02): of this DFID's contribution to water and sanitation is estimated at around £40 million per annum. DFID supports international initiatives aimed at raising the profile of water and sanitation and achieving better coordination. These include the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council; the Water and Sanitation Programme (attached to the World Bank); and the Global Water Partnership.

DFID does not budget on a sectoral basis. DFID's work and resource allocation is shaped by developing country priorities, notably through support to their poverty reduction strategies; by what other donors are doing; and by our comparative advantage. It is therefore not possible to predict with accuracy water and sanitation sector expenditures for future years. DFID recently published a Water Action Plan that outlines our commitment to ensuring that the water and sanitation targets are given the same international priority as the other MDGs.

Kenya

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial assistance, health and medical advice is being given to Kenya to combat HIV/AIDS; and if he will make a statement. [185018]

Hilary Benn: DFID is planning to spend £7.1 million during the next financial year to tackle HIV/AIDS. Most of this is to support the Government of Kenya's National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS. This strategy will work alongside non-governmental agencies to ensure that HIV/AIDS concerns are considered in all relevant Government activity. Among other initiatives, DFID is supporting the equitable delivery of Anti Retroviral Treatment (ART), including a communication strategy to reduce misuse, and Home Based Care especially for orphans. Alongside the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), DFID is also funding the social marketing of condoms, especially in rural areas.

In education, DFID has been training teachers to teach children about HIV/AIDS. This programme was found to delay the age at which both girls and boys have sex and increased the use of condoms by girls. DFID is therefore increasing this activity and expects to cover 5,000 schools over the next year.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial assistance is being given to Kenya; and for which projects. [185019]

Hilary Benn: Last year, DFID's development assistance to Kenya was £29 million. This year our allocation has increased to £37 million. DFID's Country Assistance Plan makes provision to increase our development assistance to £50 million by 2005–06, but final decisions will depend on progress on the Kenyan Government's Economic Recovery Strategy, including its efforts to tackling corruption.

The following is a list of projects in Kenya that have approved funding for this year through bilateral assistance. There are a number of additional programmes that are being developed.

£ million

Project description	Allocation	Forecast spend 2004-05
ABLH Smallholder Marketing	2,819,000	406,423
Smallholder Dairy Project	2,007,000	322,968
Farm Africa—Goat Project II	1,453,000	355,892
Farming Systems Kenya	433,000	86,008
Sustainable Rural Livelihoods	120,000	34,385
Support to Kenya Land Reform	472,000	114,150
Sabatia Food Security Project	462,289	33,801
Kwale Rural Support	2,100,000	300,000
Assistance Road Sector Reform	400,000	54,439
Financial Sector deepening	11,370,000	2,035,914
Approtech Micro-Irrigation	1,700,000	192,796
Business Partnerships Programme	2,000,000	146,889
Enabling Environment	2,900,000	620,000
Business Services Market Dev	2,700,000	600,000
Support for Private Sector Dev	400,000	150,000
Strengthening Govt Finance	1,030,000	110,935
Assist. to Population Census	2,140,050	624,537
Political Empowerment Project	7,340,000	825,009
Legal Sector Reform	3,000,000	1,712,591
Monitoring and Evaluation	150,000	75,091
Environmental Governance Prog.	2,200,000	816,868
Poverty Reduction (PROLOGS)	6,600,000	1,271,945
Public Expenditure Mgmt	950,000	350,000
CBS Statistical Data	250,000	450,000
Ndhiwa Health Education	908,785	44,582
WaterAid Dev	725,971	66,551
ASAL Water	1,000,000	113,189
CARE Garissa Water	405,693	127,253
Kitui Sand Dams	353,059	50,739
Education for Employment	450,000	44,090
SPReD III Prim. Education	4,390,000	690,902
HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care Ph 3	34,895,419	6,000,000
Safe Motherhood	2,054,000	197,376
Anti-Malarial Treatment	573,081	100,000
Malaria Control in Kenya	6,163,820	2,502,773
Decentralisation of Health Serv	3,500,000	1,011,260
Social Marketing of Bednets	27,800,000	5,800,000
Social Marketing of Condoms	8,636,000	1,100,000
Oxfam Programme Partnership Agreement	425,000	425,000
ActionAid Programme Partnership Agreement	3,000,000	1,100,000
Reduction of Conflict	250,000	250,000
Turkana Emergency Relief Programme	653,000	653,000
Total		31,957,347

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the progress being made to assist Kenya in the provision of *(a)* the roads network and *(b)* water distribution in the North West of the country. [185122]

Hilary Benn: DFID supports development work in North West Kenya through partners such as Oxfam and Water Aid Kenya (locally known as Maji na Ufanisi). This work includes long-term development and short-term humanitarian assistance carried out in close collaboration with the Kenya authorities and with local communities. The long-term development approach involves strengthening local organisations to press the Government to provide basic services, including roads and water, and at the same time building community capacity to provide services such as bore hole maintenance at local level.

Part of Oxfam's current work in response to the famine in the North West (which is supported by DFID) is the provision of water for domestic use (construction and rehabilitation of bore holes and pan/dams, well protection and other water points) for both domestic and livestock use. As a result of this, the pressure on water in the North West has been reduced even during this period of drought and famine.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement about the accounting, auditing and anti-corruption safeguards in place in respect of schemes run by his Department in Kenya. [185666]

Hilary Benn: DFID's programme in Kenya is subject to the same rigorous safeguards as all our development assistance. These are intended to ensure that funds are spent sensibly, in line with our objectives and with minimal risk of fraud or misappropriation. For this reason, DFID is unable at present to provide poverty reduction budget support to the Kenyan Government, since we are not yet convinced that the Government are seriously committed to fighting corruption and are making good progress on their overall reform programme. However, we can make progress on the Millennium Development Goals by supporting specific sectors and projects.

DFID is also supporting the central Government systems that are intended to ensure that public financial resources are monitored and used more effectively.

DFID, alongside other donors, are also working to strengthen key institutions that are directly involved in fighting corruption. There is to be increased support to the Director of Public Prosecution, Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission and civil society organisations, such as Transparency International, that work to improve the transparency of public resources.

In continued dialogue with the Government, the UK has made clear to the Kenyan Government that allegations about unsatisfactory tendering and contracting procedures are serious and need to be fully investigated. DFID has remained categorical that firm action should be taken against those found to have acted corruptly. DFID has continued to press the Government to pass important legislation including the Public Procurement Bill, the Public Financial Management Bill, and the appointment of a credible Head of the Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to suspend aid to the Kenyan Government. [185852]

Hilary Benn: I am keeping the situation under close review, but have no plans to suspend our assistance to Kenya. Our assistance is designed to support long term change in Kenya that will lead to improved governance, and to help Kenya to make sustainable progress towards the MDGs. The faster the pace of reform, and the more conducive the environment, the faster progress we will make.

DFID's Country Assistance Plan (CAP), launched with the Government of Kenya last month, makes clear that we want to support the implementation of Kenya's Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS). Tackling corruption is a major priority of the ERS. DFID's CAP makes provision to increase our development assistance to £50 million by 2005-06, but final decisions will depend on ERS progress, including tackling corruption.

Palestinian Authority (Funding)/Territories

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures his Department

is taking to ensure transparency and accountability of (*a*) European Union and (*b*) other international funding to the Palestinian Authority. [185093]

Hilary Benn: Substantial progress has been made since 2002 in improving the transparency and accountability of the Palestinian Authority's (PA) financial management systems. This has largely been driven by the Palestinian Finance Minister with donor encouragement.

DFID supported a World Bank Country Financial Accountability Assessment which endorsed the major improvements made. It also identified key actions needed to further improve the systems. The recently established World Bank Public Financial Management Reform Trust Fund will also encourage further financial reform.

Disbursement of funding is conditional on the PA's achievement of certain agreed benchmarks. DFID has contributed, and the EC plans to contribute, to the trust fund. The World Bank and donors will carefully monitor the use of donor funds. This benchmark approach was also successfully used by the EC in its earlier budget support to the PA. Allegations about the misuse of these funds have been looked at in great detail, but no evidence has been found that EC funds have been used for anything other than their original purpose.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to monitor the extent of poverty in the Palestinian Territories. [185092]

Hilary Benn: Poverty in the Palestinian Territory has increased dramatically since the intifada started in September 2000. According to the latest World Bank report approximately 50 per cent. of Palestinians are living in poverty on less than $2.1 per day. 16 per cent. of the total population currently live in deep or absolute poverty on less than $1.5 per day. DFID monitors the situation closely through our engagement with, and support to, Palestinian partners and like-minded donors who seek to analyse and find ways of addressing the deepening crisis.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid his Department has given to the Palestinian Territories. [185094]

Hilary Benn: DFID provides technical and financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, and Palestinian civil society. It aims to enhance the prospects for peace, make Palestinian governance and institutions more effective and accountable, and encourage more harmonised delivery of humanitarian and development assistance. DFID plans to spend £28.5 million on support to Palestinians in the current financial year.

South America (Aid)

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will restore development aid to South American countries, with particular reference to Peru. [184887]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID will continue to provide development assistance to South America through our contributions to multilateral institutions; through a regional bilateral programme, which will include support for Brazil and the Andean region to be managed out of our office in La Paz (from which Peru will benefit); and through central DFID support for non-governmental organisations working in the region. DFID remains committed to supporting poverty reduction in Peru through all these channels.

Sudan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the United States Agency for International Development about joint approaches to other nations to seek contributions to humanitarian relief in Darfur. [185583]

Hilary Benn: The Department For International Development has a good working relationship with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and is in frequent contact, both in-country and between capitals, to ensure a co-ordinated approach when encouraging other donors to contribute to the humanitarian relief effort in Darfur. DFID plans to continue working with USAID on a donor lobbying strategy.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the number of displaced women in Darfur, Western Sudan. [185584]

Hilary Benn: The United Nations has estimated the total number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Darfur, Western Sudan at 1.2 million. UN agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are currently on the ground assessing the food, shelter and sanitation needs of these people. However, at this time the exact ratio of male to female IDPs is unknown.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the number of deaths resulting from bombing by Sudanese Government aircraft of locations in Darfur near Chadian border towns in the first three weeks of June. [185586]

Hilary Benn: At present there is no information to confirm the bombing by Government aircraft of locations in Darfur near Chadian border towns. The ongoing deployment of the African Union-led Ceasefire Commission, to which DFID has contributed £2 million, should help increase the information from the ground.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the number of villages in Darfur, Western Sudan, that have been destroyed by Sudanese Government forces and Janjaweed militias. [185587]

Hilary Benn: DFID is not able to verify which settlements have been destroyed by the Government of Sudan, Janjaweed militias, Sudanese Liberation Army

(SLA) or Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) forces. The Humanitarian Information Unit of the United States Department of State currently estimates the total number of villages destroyed at approximately 347. A further 96 are estimated to have been damaged but not destroyed.

It is not possible at this stage to determine the ethnicity of the people that occupied destroyed or damaged settlements. The African Union has begun investigations into reported infringements of the ceasefire. These investigations will help determine who is responsible for such infrmgements.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* financial and *(b)* other support has been provided by his Department to Sudan in each year since 1997. [185588]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the following table.

£000

	Project or sector aid	*Programme aid*	*Technical cooperation*	*Aid and trade provision*	*Grants and other aid in kind*	*Humanitarian assistance*
1997–98	137	—	369	—	491	4,337
1998–99	115	—	176	—	413	23,497
1999–2000	106	—	15	—	319	2,755
2000–01	97	—	14	—	309	4,491
2001–02	93	—	34	—	322	5,149
2002–03	87	—	407	—	2,696	16,032
2003–04	90	—	291	—	3,445	20,836

	DFID debt relief	*Total DFID programme*	*CDC investments*	*Other*	*Total gross public expenditure*
1997–98	342	5,677	—	—	5,677
1998–99	—	24,201	—	—	24,201
1999–2000	—	3,196	—	—	3,196
2000–01	—	4,912	—	—	4,912
2001–02	—	5,598	—	—	5,598
2002–03	—	19,222	—	—	19,222
2003–04	—	24,663	—	—	24,663

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has made to the Government of Sudan about *(a)* the ratification of the International Labour Organisation Convention on the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Form of Child Labour and *(b)* the reflection of that ratification in national legislation. [185592]

Hilary Benn: Sudan ratified the International Labour Organisation Convention on the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Form of Child Labour on 7 March 2002. DFID's embassy in Khartoum raises human rights issues on a regular basis both bilaterally and multilaterally as part of the EU-Sudan dialogue.

PRIME MINISTER

Honours

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Prime Minister whether *(a)* his Office and *(b)* members of the general public are able to identify numbers of honours recipients by postcode; and if he will make a statement. [185271]

The Prime Minister: Details of honours recipients, including postal addresses are held centrally for administration purposes. However, full postal addresses are not made publicly available.

Cabinet Secretary

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister what future role in security and intelligence matters he intends to give the Cabinet Secretary. [185635]

The Prime Minister: The Butler Review makes no specific recommendation on this point. Existing arrangements will continue.

Cyprus

Tom Cox: To ask the Prime Minister when he last visited the Republic of Cyprus; and which Cypriot politicians he met during that visit. [185017]

The Prime Minister: I have not visited the Republic of Cyprus.

Iraq (Briefing Papers)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister who commissioned the briefing papers on Iraq, referred to in paragraph 610 of the Butler Report; who decided not to circulate them to Cabinet Ministers; and for what reason. [185634]

The Prime Minister: Material on a range of issues related to Iraq was commissioned by the Cabinet Office Overseas and Defence Secretariat. The resulting papers were circulated to the Departments involved.

Iraq (Intelligence)

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister (1) whether *(a)* the head of MI6 and *(b)* the Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee were informed that SIS had withdrawn reporting in July 2003 from a source who claimed that production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable; [185688]

(2) whether *(a)* members of the Cabinet Office and *(b)* the Intelligence and Security Committee was informed that SIS had withdrawn reporting in July 2003 from a source who claimed that production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable; [185689]

(3) whether members of *(a)* his and *(b)* Cabinet Office staff were informed in July 2003 that the Secret Intelligence Service in that month had withdrawn reporting from a source who claimed that the production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable. [185788]

The Prime Minister: We have nothing further to add to the remarks that were made in yesterday's debate on Iraq.

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister when he was informed that SIS had withdrawn reporting from the source who claimed that production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable. [185690]

The Prime Minister: As my Official Spokesman made clear on 16 July, it was as a result of the Butler Review.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Link

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the market penetration of business link operators. [185454]

Nigel Griffiths: Business Link Operators were used by around 606,000 customers in 2003–04 comprising 435,000 existing firms (representing a 40 per cent. growth in use by existing firms between 2002–03 and 2003–04) and 171,000 pre-start businesses. Expressed as a ratio of the Inter-Departmental Business Register of around 1.8 million firms (the largest official count), this is a market penetration rate of 34 per cent. in 2003–04.

A more detailed table is provided:

BLO usage—all customers, in-year cumulative

Percentage

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Existing Businesses[1]	14	17	24
Pre-starts[1]	[2]n/a	[2]n/a	10
Total customer usage	—	—	34

BLO usage—all customers, in-year cumulative

Number

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Existing Businesses	245,342	309,665	435,293
Pre-starts	[2]n/a	[2]n/a	170,749
Total customer usage	—	—	606,042

[1] Rate per 100 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses.
[2] Pre-start users not available as an annual figure prior to 2003–04.

Business Regulations

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the levels and cost of regulations imposed on business by her Department since 1997. [185536]

Nigel Griffiths: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 5 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 124W.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new regulations her Department has introduced in the last year. [185537]

Nigel Griffiths: The number of statutory instruments (Regulations, Orders and Rules) introduced by the Department in 2003 was 145. A listing of DTI statutory instruments produced between 1991 and 2003 has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

During 2003 they include: The Enterprise Act 2002 (Commencement No. 1) Order 2003, The Competition Appeal Tribunal Rules 2003 and The Insolvent Companies (Disqualification of Unfit Directors) Proceedings (Amendment) Rules 2003.

Business Start-ups

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new business start-ups there were in each year since 1995, broken down by industry. [185331]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start ups in England and Wales in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before.

DTI figures based solely on UK VAT registrations by main industry group are shown as follows for the period 1995 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in Autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations 1995–2002

Thousand

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
All industries	165.8	171.0	187.7	187.5	181.4	184.0	174.6	175.8
Agriculture, fishing	4.4	4.6	4.7	4.1	3.7	3.6	3.3	3.8
Mining, energy, water	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Manufacturing	14.5	14.7	14.4	13.4	12.7	12.0	10.8	10.1
Construction	15.8	15.4	19.7	18.5	18.2	17.8	18.3	18.9
Wholesale, retail, repairs	37.8	37.7	37.5	36.9	37.1	36.1	31.3	32.7
Hotels, restaurants	15.6	16.1	17.0	16.8	17.8	18.2	19.1	19.2
Transport, communication	8.5	8.4	9.2	9.2	9.4	9.5	9.3	9.3

VAT Registrations 1995–2002

Thousand

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Finance	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.6	1.2
Business services	48.4	54.6	64.7	69.3	63.3	66.9	63.1	63.2
Education, health	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.3
Other services	17.4	15.6	16.3	15.3	14.9	15.7	15.5	15.0

Source:
Business Start-ups and closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service www.sbs.gov.uk/statistics/analytical/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1995. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Business Support

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she has taken to evaluate the impact on skills of each of the business support products her Department launched in April. [183685]

Ms Hewitt: As part of its Review of Business Support, DTI carried out a review of evaluations of previous schemes and identified key success factors. This included assessment of the impact on skills, and on other drivers of productivity growth. The successful elements of previous schemes have been incorporated into the new business support products.

The new products are also subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, which includes measurement of the impact on skills.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the overlap between the provision of business support products administered *(a)* directly by the Department and *(b)* by regional development agencies. [185457]

Ms Hewitt: The complex array of more than 100 DTI business support schemes that existed at the time of the DTI Review in 2001 has been replaced with a tighter, more targeted package of support based on nine business support products. The Department's work to transform its support to business specifically looked at the issue of overlap and duplication and this was addressed so that the new product set are broad in their scope and avoid duplication. The Department's externally led Investment Committee continues to provide independent scrutiny to ensure our investments in business support products deliver the economic and customer benefits we intend, and that we take action to address any weaknesses identified through rigorous evaluation. This work extends to ensuring that there is no overlap or duplication in DTI's business support offering.

With regard to regional development agencies (RDAs), DTI and the RDAs are working together with the specific aim of avoiding any overlap on the provision of business support products. RDAs have committed themselves to ensure that any new business support schemes or initiative they create will not duplicate or overlap existing DTI business support products. RDAs will seek to build on national DTI products by co-funding and tailoring them to meet regional needs where possible.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many business support schemes are currently supported by her Department. [185491]

Mr. Timms: DTI has a set of nine business support products.

These are:

Support area	*Products*
Succeeding through innovation	Knowledge transfer networks Collaborative research and development Grant for investigating an innovative idea Grant for research and development Knowledge transfer partnership
Achieving best practice in your business	Access to best business practice Support to implement best business practice
Raising finance	Small firms loan guarantee
Regional Investment	Selective finance for investment in England

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much public funding has been spent on business support agencies in the last year. [185475]

Nigel Griffiths: The main business support agencies funded directly by the DTI are the Business Link Operators (BLOs) who provide services to small businesses.

In 2003–04 BLOs received Core Services grants from the Small Business Service totalling £139.5 million.

Most BLOs sub-contract the delivery of some of their services to Enterprise Agencies and other service deliverers as do other Government Departments, RDAs, and local authorities. European funds are also available in certain areas. The level of funding varies from BLO to BLO based on local needs, priorities and access to additional funding streams. The SBS does not systematically collect information on the level of service provision sub-contracted by BLOs.

Coal

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total tonnage of coal mined in England and Wales was during the last 12 months for which figures are available. [185336]

Mr. Timms: The information available on the amount of coal produced in England and Wales for the 12 months ended March 2004, in millions of tonnes, is as follows:

Tonnes million

	Deep mine	*Opencast*
England	14.1	3.7
Wales	0.6	1.1

A further 6.8 million tonnes, all from opencast mines, was produced in Scotland in the same period.

Source:
Coal Authority data as published in the Digest of UK Energy Statistics, 2004 to be published on 29 July 2004 and accessible through the DTI website Output is the tonnage declared by operators to the Coal Authority, including estimated tonnages.

Corporate Environmental Engagement Index

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made of the findings of the corporate environmental engagement index published by Business in the Community. [184555]

Mr. Timms: The Department has not made an assessment of the findings of the Business in the Community (BITC) corporate environmental engagement index. However BITC have published a report on the main sector trends from both the Business in the Environment and Corporate Responsibility Indices as "Benchmarking Responsible Business Practice" (www.bitc.org.uk).

The department contributes financially to the work on the Corporate Responsibility Index.

Departmental Audit

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if she will commission an independent audit of the activities of her Department and its sponsored agencies and non-departmental bodies between 1997–98 and 2003–04 with the purpose of establishing what proportion of the total departmental spending was inefficient over that period; [185458]

(2) what proportion of the reductions in core civil service posts in her Department by 2007–08 will be relocated to sponsored agencies in the regions. [185500]

Ms Hewitt: Sir Peter Gershon's report on his review of public sector efficiency, "Releasing Resources to the Front Line", sets out agreed efficiency targets for all Government Departments including DTI.

Procurement

DTI will aim to achieve savings by improving procurement through a combination of developing and implementing better purchasing practice, making better use of resources within technical and economic research, centralising marketing operations and moving to e-procurement, and savings on rent increases and building service costs by rationalising DTI's estate. This rationalisation involves reducing headquarters in London from six to three buildings over the Spending Review period.

Back Office Rationalisation and Abolition of Posts

My Department has developed plans that will enable it to deliver more efficiently DTI's priorities and responsibilities, as reflected in the spending plans announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer last week. These plans will drive forward efficiencies in all areas of my Department's work, including:

- the rationalisation and streamlining of all our 'back office' services, including the processing of routine financial and personnel work and a reduction in the number of office support service posts following rationalisation of the Department's London estate from six buildings to three; and
- the adoption of a new approach to policy work involving the more effective prioritisation of policy projects and the centralised handling of routine policy enquiries and correspondence.

In conjunction with our estate rationalisation strategy, staff will also operate within a flexible workspace arrangement whereby there will be eight desks available for every 10 staff.

Business Support

DTI has conducted a review of its Business Support schemes ahead of the Spending Review with a view to working to clear high-level strategic objectives, increasing value created through the investment of taxpayers' funds, rigorous monitoring and evaluation, and improving the customer experience in dealing with DTI. Over 100 schemes have been rationalised into 10 new products, the last one of which will be introduced in 2005. The effectiveness of the new products and resultant efficiency savings will be realised over the Spending Review period.

Savings in the order of £20 million are projected by the end of the Spending Review period, as a result of closing inefficient schemes.

In addition, DTI is rationalising its use of third party contractors to deliver the new Business Support products. By consolidation of the contractor portfolio and more effective procurement, further cost savings of approximately £4 million a year are anticipated over the Spending Review period as the DTI's commitment to legacy schemes is exhausted. The level of support provided to business is expected to remain unchanged at around £500 million per annum.

Agencies and NDPBs

All of DTI's agencies and non-departmental public bodies are tasked with delivering efficiency gains over the Spending Review 2004 period. Over the Spending Review period, DTI expects the agencies and NDPBs to achieve some £15 million savings, the majority of which is cashable. It is anticipated that these savings will be achieved through a combination of continued delivery and increased output within a climate of reduced funding, reduced estate expenditure and reduced unit cost.

As Companies House, Patent Office are trading funds, and NWML is a net funded agency, they do not appear on DTI's Expenditure Limit and their savings are not claimed against the Department's 2.5 per cent. annual efficiency savings target. These bodies are, however, still expected to generate efficiency gains which

they intend to achieve through a number of measures i.e. e-delivery, reduced staff costs, and increased output/ reduced processing times.

Other than a very small number of Office of Science and Technology posts moving to the Research Councils in Swindon, there are no plans to meet DTI staff reduction targets by relocating posts from the core Department to sponsored agencies.

Audit of inefficient spend

DTI is committed to ensuring that all aspects of the Department, including its agencies and non-departmental bodies operate efficiently both now and going forward. We have just completed an efficiency project, reviewing efficiency in DTI, which was scrutinised by the Gershon Review. We continually review our activities as part of annual business planning to deliver greater value for money. We therefore have no plan to commission an in-depth audit of past activities—to do so would be an inefficient use of resources.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department spent on *(a)* mobile phone costs, *(b)* hospitality and *(c)* taxi costs in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [185377]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* Information on spend for 1996–97 would be available only at disproportionate cost.

The latest information available is for 2003–04. Against a Department Expenditure Limit of £5.6 billion, spend on mobile phone costs was £279,000; spend on hospitality and entertainment costs was £1,121,000 and spend on taxi costs was £171,000. These figures are taken from the Department's financial records, and are subject to audit.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total cost of refurbishments to the fabric of buildings owned by the Department has been since May 1997. [185379]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* My Department undertakes a wide variety of projects as part of ongoing maintenance and improvements of its current stock. The total capital cost of minor works, maintenance, and renovation projects involving significant works to the building services and fabric, since 1997 are as follows:

Financial Year	*£ million*
1997–98	2.0
1998–99	2.0
1999–2000	2.15
2000–01	1.8
2001–02	4.75
2002–03	2.20
2003–04	2.30

The additional expenditure incurred in Financial Year 2001–02 was due to the project to extend the conference facilities and associated services at 1 Victoria Street.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department spent on press officers in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available, broken down by grade. [185383]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The information is not held in the form requested and could be recovered only at disproportionate cost.

Environmental Impact Assessments

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what requirements are *(a)* in place and *(b)* proposed for businesses to provide an account of the (i) environmental and (ii) social impact of their activities. [184556]

Mr. Timms: We encourage business to provide information to a wide range of stakeholder interests on their social and environmental performance. To help business report on their environmental impacts we have published a series of voluntary guidelines, which cover subjects including greenhouse gas emissions, waste and water. We also support the Business in the Community Corporate Responsibility Index and the ACCA Annual Sustainability Reporting Awards.

We published draft Regulations on the Operating and Financial Review for consultation in May 2004. These proposals will require quoted companies to provide a narrative report giving a discussion and analysis of the company's business and the main trends and factors underlying the results and financial position of the business and likely to affect performance in the future. Where necessary to an understanding of the business, directors will need to include information on employees, the environment and social and community issues.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) pursuant to the statement of 1 July 2004, Official Report, column 22WS, regarding the Export Credits Guarantee Department, if she will make a statement on the *(a)* financial objectives and *(b)* aims of the Trading Fund's Realisations account; [182760]

(2) which unrecovered claims outstanding with the Export Credits Guarantee Department will be transferred to the Trading Funds Realisations account; who the debtor is in each case; what the amount of outstanding debt is in each case; and what the project type is in each case. [182761]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 12 July 2004]:* The objective of the Realisation Account will be to maximise the asset value of the Account consistent with Government strategy on international debt. Details will be worked out during the pilot Trading Fund.

The unrecovered claims to be vested in the Realisations Account are those currently reported under Account 1 of ECGD's Resource Accounts, except that Account 1 unrecovered claims on heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) are to be omitted. These will be handled outside the Trading Fund under the auspices of the Government's strategy on international debt.

As explained in my recent answers of 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 818W and 13 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 696W, it is not possible to provide all the details that have been requested. However, I am able to supply, as follows, a market-by-market breakdown of all the unrecovered claims that ECGD will transfer to its Realisations Account.

£ sterling[1]

Market	*Unrecovered claims*
Algeria	100,209,724.83
Antigua and Barbuda	2,745,763.44
Argentina	31,705,358.61
Bahrain	69,465.62
Bosnia and Herzegovina	902,966.24
Brazil	147,578,918.84
Canada	786.95
Croatia	46,475,237.64
Cuba	52,146,568.31
Cyprus	454.00
Ecuador	26,841,427.89
Egypt	134,073,410.89
France	83,801.01
Gabon	74,718,999.71
Greece	120,555.67
Grenada	957,608.78
Indonesia	99,656,279.35
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	28,766,647.48
Iraq	621,894,072.68
Italy	71,063.06
Jamaica	1,138,927.55
Jordan	216,358,944.62
Korea, Democratic People's Republic	5,864,356.17
Kuwait	1,350,264.38
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	8,972,335.50
Macedonia	2,401,002.75
Morocco	19,846,714.94
Nigeria	1,655,102,497.14
Peru	54,255,361.16
Philippines	6,150,721.69
Poland	360,214,998.71
Portugal	1.00
Russian Federation	572,046,141.98
Saudi Arabia	1,305,765.53
Serbia Republic	150,035,718.87
Seychelles	8,866.35
Singapore	5,326.27
Spain	64,866.50
United States	3,207,078.66
Zimbabwe	987,401.12

[1] As at 30 June 2004.

Capitalisation for ECGD's Trading Fund has been based upon data related to 31 March 2003 and will be updated prior to inception of the Trading Fund.

Gershon Review

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what processes she aims to use to achieve the savings through improved procurement as part of Sir Peter Gershon's efficiency review into public services; and what parts of her Department's estate she intends to rationalise; [185023]

(2) what the estimated recyclable savings are that she anticipates making from her Department's agencies and non-departmental public bodies as part of Sir Peter Gershon's efficiency review into public services; and through what mechanisms she intends to achieve those savings; [185024]

(3) which back office functions she intends to rationalise as part of the implementation plan agreed as part of Sir Peter Gershon's efficiency review into public services; [185025]

(4) what measures she has put in place to increase the effectiveness of her Department's business support products; and what savings she expects to make from this activity as a result of the Gershon review of public sector efficiency; [185026]

(5) if she will provide details of the present activities of the posts in her Department due to be abolished as a result of the Gershon review of public sector efficiency. [185027]

Ms Hewitt: Sir Peter Gershon's report on his review of public sector efficiency "Releasing resources to the front line" sets out agreed efficiency targets for all Government Departments including DTI.

Procurement

DTI will aim to achieve savings by improving procurement through a combination of developing and implementing better purchasing practice, making better use of resources within technical and economic research, centralising marketing operations and moving to e-procurement, and savings on rent increases and building service costs by rationalising DTI's estate. This rationalisation involves reducing headquarters in London from six to three buildings over the Spending Review period.

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the adoption of a new approach to policy work involving the more effective prioritisation of policy projects and the centralised handling of routine policy inquiries and correspondence.

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Internet Drug Sales

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action her Department has taken to prevent companies from abroad advertising via the internet drugs for sale that are only available in the UK with a prescription from a general practitioner. [183495]

Mr. Timms: The responsibility for regulating medicines lies with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which is an Executive Agency of the Department of Health. Accordingly, my officials will write to the Chief Executive of MHRA Professor Kent Woods asking him to respond directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Manufacturing

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action the Government are taking to promote manufacturing sector jobs *(a)* in Havering and *(b)* in the UK. [184250]

Jacqui Smith: With the Government's Manufacturing Strategy—the first for over 30 years—which we developed in partnership with industry, trade unions, and other stakeholders, we are taking a range of actions to create a modern manufacturing sector with a highly skilled, highly paid workforce. We published a review of the Government's Manufacturing Strategy on 15 July 2004, highlighting what has been achieved since the Strategy was established in May 2002. Details of the review are available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/manufacturing .

Manufacturers in Havering benefit from the actions the London Development Agency is taking to ensure a strong and sustained manufacturing base through its support of the London Production Industries Commission, and the London Manufacturing Advisory Service which has handled over 2,200 enquiries and added value of nearly £3 million a year to manufacturing companies in London in its first two years. The Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence in Dagenham also provides educational and training opportunities for local industry, including that of Havering, with access to leading edge technology through links with Ford, their suppliers and other local and international companies.

Metric Standardisation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effects on the UK of metric standardisation in terms of trade with *(a)* Europe and *(b)* the rest of the world; and if she will make a statement on the impact on British competitiveness of the transition to metric standardisation. [182741]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is Government's understanding that many business sectors undertook metric standardisation in the 1960s and 1970s. The Department has no recent information on the extent to which particular sectors may not have undertaken metric standardisation.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to promote the completion of the UK's transition to metric standardisation. [182742]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government do not see a need to promote metric standardisation. All business sectors are free to undertake metric standardisation where they see benefits in doing so.

National Grid

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has held with representatives of National Grid Transco regarding the maintenance of the grid system. [185453]

Mr. Timms: As part of the regular contracts Ministers and officials have with National Grid Transco, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State met with Roger Urwin the company's Chief Executive on 9 February 2004. A range of issue were discussed at the meeting including those arising from the Engineering Inspectorate's investigation following the major power failures last year. Maintenance and repair were factors that were looked at as part of the investigation.

Nuclear Power Stations

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the age of each nuclear power station in the UK. [185338]

Mr. Timms: British Energy and BNFL's operational stations commenced operations in the following years:

British Energy

Year commenced	*Station*
1976	Hinkley Point B
1976	Hunterston B
1983	Dungeness B
1983	Heysham 1
1983	Hartlepool
1988	Heysham 2
1988	Torness
1995	Sizewell B

BNFL

Year commenced	*Station*
1966	Dungeness A
1966	Sizewell A
1968	Oldbury
1971	Wylfa

Post Offices

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* post offices and *(b)* sub-post offices have closed within the Greater London area during each of the last five years. [185340]

Mr. Timms: Data for Greater London are available from March 2000. The net closure figures for the London region are:

Year to end March	*Number*
2001	10
2002	16
2003	[1]44
2004	[2]155

[1] Including 11 under the urban reinvention programme.
[2] Including 142 under the urban reinvention programme.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the number of people who use post offices threatened with closure at *(a)* The Green, Bearsted, *(b)* The Spires, Downswood and *(c)* Roseacre, Bearsted. [185159]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Privacy

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make it her policy to require the manufacturers of phones with camera and video functions to incorporate an audible beep or ring when these functions are used in order to safeguard the privacy of those being photographed. [185627]

Mr. Timms: The Government have no plans to make this a policy requirement. Some mobile phone manufacturers already set their handsets to make a noise particularly when the camera function is used. We are aware that other manufacturers are reviewing their position in the light of concerns expressed by consumers etc.

Regional Development Agencies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* running costs and *(b)* total expenditure of each of the regional development agencies in England was for each year since each was established. [185008]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Cotswold (Mr. Clifton-Brown) on 11 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 247W.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the prospects for achieving the 2010 renewables energy target. [185545]

Mr. Timms: The target is challenging but we believe it remains achievable. We have worked hard to put an attractive system for new investment in place and the industry is responding.

There are many areas where there is still a great deal of work to be done such as the planning system both onshore and offshore and the development of the grid network. However, we are working closely with all the relevant interests, for example, via mechanisms such as the Wind Energy and Civil and Military Aviation Working Group, to ensure that any outstanding issues are resolved in a timely fashion.

The review of our primary support mechanism, the Renewables Obligation, will enable us to assess progress towards the target and consider in detail the points on incentives made by the final report of the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, on the practicalities of renewables.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in her Department announced in the spending review will be of special advisers. [185482]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 190W.

WALES

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many copies of his Department's and predecessor Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication cost and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183880]

Mr. Touhig: The costs for annual and departmental reports were as follows:

£

		Cost
2004	Annual Report	11,515
2003	Departmental Report	20,200
2002	Departmental Report	19,697
2001	Departmental Report	23,933

Note:

Information on 1999–2000 is not readily available and providing this information would require disproportionate cost. The Department only came into existence in 1999 so there were no reports prior to this.

The Wales Office produces 250 copies of the report each year for its own use and to lay in the House Libraries. The Wales Office does not sell copies of the report and as such does not receive any revenue from such sales.

The number of sale copies printed is a matter for The Stationery Office. The Wales Office receives neither revenue from these copies, nor sales figures for the report.

Departmental Publications (Storage)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183863]

Mr. Touhig: The Wales Office have published a Departmental Report and a Departmental Resource Accounts Report annually from 2000 to 2003 through The Stationery Office. Copies of these reports are held in the London and Cardiff Offices.

In 2004, the Wales Office has published an Annual Report, replacing the Departmental Report, and a further Departmental Resource Accounts Report, both through The Stationery Office, as well as the Office's Welsh Language Scheme, which was produced internally. All of these are also held in the London and Cardiff offices.

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many cases against his Department and its predecessor organisations have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent *(A)* settling and *(B)* contesting claims. [181467]

Mr. Touhig: The former Welsh Office records show that one case was brought against them in 1998 by an employee in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act, but the claim was not upheld. Information on how much was spent can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

No claims have been brought against the Wales Office since its establishment on 1 July 1999.

EU Funding

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what steps his Department has taken to increase the rate of implementation of EU funding programmes in Wales. [183023]

Mr. Hain: None. Responsibility for implementing the structural funds programme is a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government.

Health/Education Services

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what cross-border measures he is undertaking to improve *(a)* health and *(b)* education services in Wales. [183175]

Mr. Touhig: I will answer this question in two parts:

(a) Whether a patient is resident in England or in Wales, they are offered NHS care at the most clinically and geographically appropriate location for their treatment. In border areas there are numerous examples of long established relationships between health commissioning bodies and treatment providers across the border.

(b) Pupils who live in England and attend schools in Wales are required to follow the national curriculum for Wales and vice versa. Schools on both sides of the border are free to choose examinations and qualifications from any of the awarding bodies irrespective of where those bodies are located.

Job Losses (Civil Servants)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisors. [185468]

Mr. Touhig: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 20 July 2004, column 190W, by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Pay Systems

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will place in the Library the most recent review of *(a)* his Department's pay systems and *(b)* the departmental equal pay action plan. [181354]

Mr. Touhig: Staff serving in the Wales Office have been on secondment or loan from other Government Departments—predominantly from the National Assembly for Wales. Their pay is therefore set by their home Departments rather than by the Wales Office.

Department for Constitutional Affairs staff working at the Wales Office since our merger in June 2003 fall under the DCA pay system and so are paid in accordance with the pay scheme of the DCA.

Richard Commission

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether changes in the constitutional position of Wales consequent on the report of the Richard Commission will be subject to a referendum. [183022]

Mr. Hain: The Richard Commission reported to the Welsh Assembly Government, which has not yet approached the Government with any representations concerning the report. When we receive such representations, we will give them full consideration, including whether they require a referendum.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Cultural Objects

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has held in relation to the creation of a national database of stolen or otherwise tainted cultural objects in the last six months, with particular reference to discussions with *(a)* the Home Office, *(b)* the police, *(c)* bodies in the cultural sector and *(d)* other organisations; and if she will make a statement. [185678]

Estelle Morris: Officials within the Department worked jointly on a Home Office funded Options Appraisal, carried out by independent consultants. As part of that appraisal process, the police, bodies in the cultural sector, and other organisations, such as commercial providers of cultural databases, were invited to discuss their views. We are still considering how best to move forward in light of the findings of the report.

Departmental Expenditure

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost of running her Department's canteen facilities was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185983]

Mr. Caborn: The information is as follows:

(a) DCMS did not have a canteen in 1996–97.

(b) A catering facility was opened in 2001 and in the 2003–04 year cost £67,431.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total cost of refurbishments to the fabric of buildings owned by her Department has been since May 1997. [185984]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS does not own any buildings; all buildings occupied by the Department are leased from commercial landlords.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total cost of printing departmental headed notepaper was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185985]

Mr. Caborn: A record of expenditure at this level of detail within the overall stationery budget for 1996–97 is no longer available. The expenditure on headed notepaper in 2003–04, the last full year for which information is available, was £3,500

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department has spent on *(a)* mobile phone costs, *(b)* hospitality and *(c)* taxi costs in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [186003]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is included in the table. All expenditure on official hospitality is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government guidance. The hospitality expenditure figure for 2003–04 reflects the changes made in 2002–03 in the way hospitality expenditure was captured to include associated staff costs following the contracting out of the hospitality service. Figures for 2004–05 are not available at present.

£000

	1996–97	2003–04
Mobile telephones	[1]—	35,000
Hospitality	41,000	[2]78,144.29
Taxi costs	16,914.69	[2]21,878.36

[1] It is not possible to provide an expenditure figure for mobile telephones in 1996–97 save at disproportionate costs.

[2] Provisional total pending finalisation of annual accounts.

Libraries

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to extend the Lending Time project to other library services using volunteers. [185498]

Estelle Morris: The Framework for the Future Action Plan contains a strategic objective to develop an inclusive library service that reflects and helps build cohesive communities. Volunteering is an integral component of this. Lessons will be drawn from the Community Service Volunteers (CSV) Lending Time project along with other experience of community engagement and used to develop a work programme which will take a wider approach to community engagement. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) are currently considering a proposal from CSV to provide expert advice and support through a national post funded by Framework for the Future. This person would work with a group of key partners as an advisory group to the work programme.

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to implement the recommendations made in Shared Intelligence, the evaluation report of the Lending Time project. [185510]

Estelle Morris: The recommendations from the Shared Intelligence evaluation report will be used by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to develop a work programme widening the library approach to community engagement. The experiences from the Lending Time project will be used to ensure that volunteering will be an integral part of this work programme. Funding will come from the Framework for the Future Action Plan and a plan is currently being considered to include a national post at MLA for a member of Community Service Volunteers (CSV), who led the Lending Time project, to provide expert advice and support to the work programme alongside an advisory group of experts.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has for a second phase of the Lending Time: Volunteers in Libraries initiative. [185769]

Estelle Morris: Lending Time was an agreed three-year project and has now come to an end. The lessons drawn from the project and the recommendations from the evaluation report will be used by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to support the development of a wider strategy of community engagement for libraries. This will encompass volunteering within a range of initiatives and will be funded through the Framework for the Future Action Plan. In order to utilise the experiences from the Lending Time project further, MLA are currently considering funding a national post for a member of Community Service Volunteers (CSV) to support and advise the development of this strategy.

Recruitment and Employment Costs

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will publish the *(a)* recruiting and *(b)* salary and other employment costs associated with the post of (i) Chairman of the UK Film Council, (ii) Chairman for the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and (iii) Chairman of the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council. [184372]

Estelle Morris: The direct costs associated with the three public appointments referred to are set out as follows. The average cost of officials' time in running an appointments process, based on 2003–04 figures, was £2,500 per campaign.

(i) UK Film Council

Cost of advertising—£14,491.74

Chair's remuneration—The post is unpaid. However, £198 per day may be claimed, plus travel and subsistence. The time requirement for the post is four days on average per month.

(ii) Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

Cost of advertising—£14,093.81

Chair's remuneration—£45,000 per annum plus reasonable expenses.

(iii) Museum, Libraries and Archives Council

Cost of advertising—£12,477.06

Chair's remuneration—£32,640 per annum plus reasonable expenses.

School Athletics

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what support her Department gives to the English Schools' Athletic Association; [185878]

(2) what representations her Department has received regarding the future of the English Schools' Athletic Association; [185879]

(3) what action her Department has taken to promote athletics in schools. [185880]

Mr. Caborn: This Department provides no funding support to any schools sport association. It is Government policy that schools sport associations work closely with, and receive their core funding from, the governing bodies for their sports. DCMS officials and Ministers have held regular discussions with officers of the English Schools Athletic Association and UK Athletics over the past year about the future of competitive schools athletics. This is an issue that will be taken forward over the coming months by UK Sport and Sport England as part of the Foster Review implementation.

DCMS, the Department for Education and Skills and Sport England are supporting the secondment of a Development Manager to the National Council for School Sport. He is working with schools sport associations—including athletics—to embed competitive school sport in governing body one-stop/whole sport plans and to ensure that schools competition structures dovetail with the new infrastructure being established under the national strategy for PE, School Sport and Club Links.

The results of the 2003/04 PE, School Sport and Club Links Survey showed that athletics is the fourth most popular sport in school sport partnership schools (provided in 90 per cent. of schools) and the fourth most popular in terms of links between schools and clubs (32 per cent. of schools with links to clubs). Athletics is one of 22 sports receiving funding from the Club Links programme to increase the number of such links.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in her Department announced in the Spending Review will be of special advisers. [185478]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 190W.

Tourism

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Manchester Central. [184170]

Mr. Caborn: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with Marketing Manchester, the nominated Destination Management

Organisation (DMO) for Manchester. DMOs are effectively mini tourist boards that will ensure a strong visitor and market focus to all that is done within the region, and aim to strengthen the connection that exist within the region between businesses and other organisations that make up the tourism sector.

Marketing Manchester also has a key role in securing funds for tourism development from the NWDA. Hence any funding for Manchester Central would need to be secured via that route. During 2003-04 Marketing Manchester received £898,000 to promote and develop tourism within the sub region. A similar amount has been identified to support their work during 2004-05.

Unfortunately at this stage NWDA cannot show a specific breakdown of funding provided to Manchester Central but the impact of NWDA funding to Marketing Manchester will certainly have been beneficial to the Manchester Central tourism product.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many visitor attractions have signed up to the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme. [186034]

Mr. Caborn: The Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Service (VAQAS) has accredited 510 visitor attractions.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the rate of productivity in the tourism industry has been in each of the last 10 years; and what criteria are used to measure these rates. [186036]

Estelle Morris: The Department estimates the rate of change of labour productivity in Tourism.

Data is derived from the Annual Business Inquiry, carried out by the Office for National Statistics. This takes the form of estimates of Gross Value Added and numbers in employment. Productivity is estimated as the ratio of Gross Value Added to numbers in employment, and the rate of change from one year to the next is calculated.

Information has been collected in its present form only since 1998. The latest figures are those for 2002.

The figures are as follows:

	Percentage
1998-99	+ 3.1
1999-2000	+ 4.0
2000-01	+ 2.5
2001-02	+ 4.6

SCOTLAND

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many copies of his Department's and predecessor Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication cost and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183882]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

The Scotland Office has had 150 copies of its Annual Report printed each year since 1999. The report is also available on the Office's website.

The printing costs to the Scotland Office were as follows:

	£
1999-2000	1,020
2000-01	3,160
2001-02	3,869
2002-03	4,036
2003-04	4,119

Other costs of printing and publication of the report are met directly by the publisher, The Stationery Office Limited (TSO), and did not fall to the Government. TSO recoups these costs through sales and uses its commercial judgment as to the number of copies printed. The numbers sold and the revenue from sales are matters for the publisher.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland who the Finance Director of *(a)* the Scotland Office and *(b)* the Registers of Scotland is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts in each of the last five years. [183456]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 14 July 2004]:* The Scotland Office is a distinct entity within the Department for Constitutional Affairs. The Head of Finance at the Scotland Office is Norman Kernohan. He does not hold a professional accountancy qualification but he has full access to advice from professionally qualified staff in both the DCA and the Scottish Executive. The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999 and since that date none of its accounts have received a qualified opinion.

Questions about the Registers of Scotland are a matter for the Scottish Executive.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183859]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999. The Office has no staff working solely on public relations or publicity. The cost of press office staff was as follows:

	£
1999-2000	[1,2]44,078
2000-01	139,705
2001-02	134,702
2002-03	[2]99,166
2003-04	[3]111,202

[1] Part year cost from 1 July 1999.
[2] Part year cost because of vacancies.
[3] Estimated.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its predecessor Department in each year since 1997. [183891]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

The following table shows the overall expenditure costs of civil servants in the Scotland Office and the Office of the Advocate-General on travel and subsistence since that date.

	£
1999–2000	[1]179,669
2000–01	318,858
2001–02	330,496
2002–03	346,373
2003–04	[2]264,407

[1] Part year: the Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.
[2] Financial year 2003–04 costs are provisional, pending finalisation of Annual Accounts.

All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules contained in the Civil Service Management Code.

Departmental Publications (Storage)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183860]

Mrs. McGuire: Most of the publications for the Scotland Office and the Office of the Advocate-General are produced on our behalf by commercial publishers, such as The Stationery Office. The retention and storage of items published commercially are matters for the publishers. Policy divisions with the Office retain small quantities of publications for working purposes. Details of recent publications are on the Scotland Office website, www.scottishsecretary.gov.uk.

TREASURY

Amateur Sports Clubs

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what further benefits for community amateur sports clubs he plans to introduce; and if he will make a statement. [185012]

John Healey: The 2004 Spending Review has made increased funding available to sport. The benefit to Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) will depend on the spending plans of the Department for Culture Media and Sport. The Government are keen to ensure that as many eligible amateur sports clubs as possible benefit from the tax and other reliefs available to CASCs. The Chancellor will continue to keep the scheme under review in the context of the annual Budget process.

Bank of England (Regional Offices)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the Bank of England's regional offices; and what their annual expenditure was in each of the last five years. [184976]

Ruth Kelly: The following table provides the annual expenditure of the Bank's regional agencies for the last five years:

£000

Region	*Location*	*Financial Year from 1 March*				
		1999–2000	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
South West	Bristol/Exeter	422	397	407	502	526
West Midlands	Birmingham	488	391	437	456	439
Scotland	Glasgow	396	382	435	498	531
Yorkshire and the Humber	Leeds	—	283	393	448	425
North West	Liverpool/Manchester	1,097	644	584	689	611
Northern Ireland	Belfast	334	228	255	281	305
North East	Newcastle upon Tyne	367	360	390	401	349
Central Southern	Southampton	421	412	457	499	446
Wales	Cardiff	407	349	383	452	407
East Midlands	Nottingham	355	323	336	400	355
South East and East Anglia	Cambridge	299	412	440	519	468
London	London	69	259	280	332	286
Total		4,656	4,442	4,799	5,477	5,150

Childcare Tax Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many applications for the childcare tax credit have been *(a)* rejected and *(b)* initially paid and then rejected as invalid. [185695]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not readily available and could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate cost.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what his estimate is of the average time between submission of an application for a childcare tax credit and the first payment; [185702]

(2) what the length is of the average claim for childcare tax credit. [185704]

Dawn Primarolo: Claims for the childcare element of the working tax credit are made as part of a single claim for child and working tax credits. For the time taken to process such claims, I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Truro and St. Austell (Matthew Taylor) on 8 September 2003, *Official Report*, columns 21–22W.

Departmental Accounting Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer who the Finance Director of *(a)* the Treasury, *(b)* the

Inland Revenue Trust, *(c)* Customs and Excise, *(d)* the Government Actuary's Department, *(e)* the Crown Estate, *(f)* the Royal Mint, *(g)* the Office of National Statistics, *(h)* National Savings and Investments and *(i)* Inland Revenue is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183419]

Ruth Kelly: The answer is as follows.

Department	*Finance Director*	*Accountancy qualifications*
HM Treasury	Mrs Hilary Douglas (Managing Director, Corporate Services)	None, but supported by a fully qualified Head of Finance
	Ms Mary Keegan (from 1 September 2004)	Fellow, Institute of Chartered Accountants
Customs and Excise	Ms Alison French	None, but supported by a qualified and experienced team
Government Actuary's Department	Mrs Kim Clegg	Associate, Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
The Crown Estate	Mr John Lelliott	Fellow, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
The Royal Mint	Mr Huw Edwards	Associate, Institute of Chartered Accountants
Office for National Statistics	Mr Peter Murphy	None
National Savings and Investments	Mr Trevor Bayley	Fellow, Institute of Chartered Accountants
Inland Revenue and The Inland Revenue Trust	Mr Stephen Jones	None

As to the qualification of the accounts of the Chancellor's departments, I refer the hon. Member to the accounts themselves.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many copies of his Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183884]

Ruth Kelly: Publication of HM Treasury's Departmental Report is handled by The Stationery Office Ltd. (TSO), who are responsible for determining print runs and for selling copies of the report. Sales figures for the previous seven years are as follows:

Edition	*Copies issued by TSO*
1998	589
1999	524
2000	484
2001	547
2002	465
2003	426
2004	306

Printing and publication costs for the Treasury Departmental Report are met by The Stationery Office Ltd. (TSO) and in recent years the document has been designed in-house by members of the Treasury's publishing unit.

For information on direct publication costs incurred by the Treasury in previous years, I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given by the former Financial Secretary to the Treasury, the right hon. Member for Brent South (Mr. Boateng), to the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed (Mr. Beith) on 24 July 2002, *Official Report*, column 1190W.

Employment (Over-65s)

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people over 65 years have been in work in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* Tyne and Wear and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [184519]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Stephen Hepburn dated 21 July 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking about the number of people over 65 in employment in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* Tyne and Wear and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. I am replying in his absence. (184519)

The attached table gives estimates of the number of people aged 65 and over in employment in Tyne and Wear and the United Kingdom for the three months ending in May of each year from 1997 to 2004. However, the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey (LFS) sample size is too small to give reliable estimates for the Jarrow Parliamentary Constituency and the South Tyneside Unitary Authority.

As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

People 65 and over in employment

£000

3 months ending May each year	*UK*	*Tyne and Wear*
1997	432	4
1998	444	3
1999	464	3
2000	459	4
2001	421	3
2002	477	3
2003	525	3
2004	540	6

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey.

Fuel Taxation

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will reduce fuel taxation. [185204]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 13 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1014W.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to use funds raised from road and fuel taxes specifically for road construction and improvement projects. [185205]

John Healey: Revenue from any particular tax is not generally earmarked to any particular part of the public spending programme. However, the Government have a commitment to ring fence any revenue from fuel duty increases above inflation to improving public transport and modernising the road network.

Government Offices (East Midlands)

Mr. Dorrell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many full-time equivalent employees of the Inland Revenue in the east midlands there were in each year since 1997. [185493]

Dawn Primarolo: The numbers of full-time equivalent employees of the Inland Revenue in the Government East Midlands region on 1 April each year since 1997 were:

	Number
1997	3,714
1998	3,807
1999	3,951
2000	4,010
2001	4,060
2002	4,080
2003	4,385
2004	4,368

The reasons for changes in staff numbers in a single Government region are difficult to accurately measure as they do not reflect organisational divisions within IR or changes in organisational design over the period. Nationally, Inland Revenue growth since 1997, of which a proportion will be reflected within East Midlands, can be attributed to workload growth, spend to save initiatives, programmes such as the Grabiner review of the informal economy, mergers with the contribution and benefit agencies and the introduction of new tax credits work.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185130]

John Healey: As the Treasury's Green Minister, I am committed to improving the environmental impact of the Department's operations, to integrating environmental considerations across policy areas, and to improving the economic analysis underpinning the Government's environmental initiatives.

In the financial year 2003–04, as the Treasury's Green Minister my work included the development of a range of environmental policy measures including those announced in the pre-Budget report on 10 December 2003 and Budget on 17 March. It also included membership of the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Green Ministers and the Sustainable Development Taskforce, and meetings with representatives of non-governmental organisations and other key stakeholders on topics ranging from climate change to waste to aviation.

MRSA (Frimley Park Hospital)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will investigate the practice at Frimley Park Hospital of not recording MRSA on death certificates where it was the cause or a contributory cause of death; and if he will make a statement. [184667]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the Registrar General for England and Wales, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Andrew Mackinlay, dated 21 July 2004:

As Registrar General for England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking if the Chancellor will investigate the practice at Frimley Park Hospital of not recording MRSA on death certificates where it was the cause or a contributory cause of death. (184667)

The Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 places an individual responsibility on the medical practitioner in attendance on the deceased to certify the cause of death to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, rather than on any organisation. The Registrar General has no specific power to instigate an inquiry into an accusation of this nature. Coroners can only investigate where a death is referred to them.

The Government published a position paper on death certification and Investigation in March 2004 outlining proposals for reform. In the interim, the General Register Office will be issuing guidance to all doctors on the best practice for death certification under current legislation. This will remind them of their duty to certify the cause of death to the best of their knowledge and belief, recording each condition which contributed to the death.

There were 7 deaths in Frimley Park Hospital in the years 2000 to 2002 where the cause of death was wholly or partly attributable to MRSA[1].

[1] Identified using the methodology described in Griffiths C, Lamagni TL, Crowcroft NS, Duckworth G and Rooney C (2004) Trends in MRSA in England and Wales: analysis of morbidity and mortality data for 1993–2002. Health Statistics Quarterly 21, 15–22.

Objections to Ministerial Decisions

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list occasions since 1992 when a Permanent Secretary in his or her role as accounting officer has lodged a note of dissent formally objecting to a ministerial decision. [185628]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Norman Baker) on 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 839W.

Office for National Statistics

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated expenditure by the Office for National Statistics in compiling regional-level statistics and indicators was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [184977]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mrs. Caroline Spelman, dated 21 July 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what the estimated expenditure by the Office for National Statistics in compiling regional-level statistics and indicators was in the most recent year for which figures are available. I am replying in his absence. (184977)

The estimated expenditure relating to the Regional and Local Division and the Regional Accounts branch of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) was £1.1 million 2003/04. These work areas have responsibility for the production of a range of statistics and analyses at Government Office region level (including sub-regional figures as appropriate).

There is also significant expenditure by ONS on the Neighbourhood Statistics programme, which primarily addresses the need for statistics for smaller local area, to inform neighbourhood renewal initiatives.

In addition, many work areas in ONS produce regional-level statistics as part of their routine statistical outputs. However, an estimate of the total expenditure across ONS on the production of regional-level statistics would be very approximate and could only be produced at disproportionate cost.

The Allsopp Review of Statistics for Economic Policy Making, whose final report was published in March 2004, made a number of recommendations for improving regional statistics in the UK. In the Government's recent 2004 Spending Review ONS was given the objective of implementing the recommendations of the Allsopp Review. As a result a higher level of ONS's resources will be allocated to regional statistics work than has been the case in recent years.

Oil Price

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made in recent economic forecasts of the price per barrel of oil in each of the next five years; and if he will make a statement. [184744]

Ruth Kelly: The assumption underlying the public finance projections, audited by the NAO is stated in Box C1, page 251 of the 2004 FSBR.

Pension Schemes (Public Sector)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many workers have joined each public sector pension scheme in each year since 1997–98. [185710]

Ruth Kelly: This information is not held centrally and could be collected only at disproportionate cost.

Policy (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185100]

John Healey: Chapter 7 of the 2003 and 2004 Budget books (HC 500 and HC 301) shows how budget measures sit alongside other policies as part of the Government's approach to the environmental elements of sustainable development and sets out the environmental impacts of measures introduced in recent Budgets that have a significant effect on the environment or which serve an environmental purpose (Tables 7.1 and 7.2).

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) is produced for all major Budget measures. From spring this year the RIA includes a requirement to consider environmental impacts.

Regional Productivity Growth

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to measure productivity growth by region following the 2004 Spending Review Key Performance Agreement with the Department of Trade and Industry to make sustainable improvements in the economic performance of all English regions. [185509]

Ruth Kelly: The 2002 Spending Review introduced a joint target for the Treasury, Department of Trade and Industry and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to improve the growth rate in every English region and over the long term reduce the persistent disparities in growth rates between the regions. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland regional development is substantially devolved.

The Technical Note published after the 2002 Spending Review, available on the Departmental websites, sets out how this target will be measured, looking at regional Gross Value Added per head figures produced by the Office for National Statistics. The 2004 Spending Review has reaffirmed this target, and an updated Technical Note will be published on 31 July.

It was also announced that the Office for National Statistics will implement the recommendations of the Allsopp Review in full, which in its final report in March, set out the implications of the regional agenda for economic statistics.

In addition, the Treasury and DTI published a consultation document, Productivity in the UK 5, in March on how progress against productivity, and the drivers of productivity, could best be monitored. A full response to Productivity 5 will be made available soon.

Stamp Duty (Residential Property)

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue implication of restructuring stamp duty on residential property sales to charge marginal rates of *(a)* 0 per cent. on property sales of £120,000 or less, 2 per cent. on sales revenue between £120,000 and £249,999, 5 per cent. on sales revenue between £250,000 and £499,999, 8 per cent. on sales revenue of £500,000 and above, *(b)* 0 per cent. on property sales of £120,000 or less, 3 per cent. on sales revenue between £120,000 and £249,999, 5 per cent. on sales revenue equal to £250,000, 8 per cent. on sales revenue of £500,000 and above and *(c)* 0 per cent. on property sales of £120,000 or less, 3 per cent. on property sales between £120,000 and £249,999, 5 per cent. on sales revenue of £250,000 and 7 per cent. on sales revenue of £500,000 and above. [185385]

Ruth Kelly: The estimated revenue cost, in 2005–06, of restructuring stamp duty on residential property sales

according to the three schemes described in the question is given in the following table:

Price of residential property	Tax regime 1 Marginal rates	Tax regime 2 Marginal rates	Tax regime 3 Marginal rates
£0 to £119,999 (percentage)	0	0	0
£120,000 to £249,999 (percentage)	2	3	3
£250,000 to £499,999 (percentage)	5	5	5
£500,000 and above (percentage)	8	8	7
Revenue Cost (£ million)	1,020	430	570

This does not include any allowance for behavioural changes.

Tax Credits

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer under what circumstances backpayments of *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* child tax credit are paid as a series of regular payments rather than as a lump sum. [185683]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Members for Vale of York (Miss McIntosh) and Northavon (Mr. Webb) on 17 July 2003, *Official Report*, columns 465–66W.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Answer of 13 July, *Official Report*, columns 1014–15W, on tax credits, when figures for 2003–04 will be available. [185389]

Dawn Primarolo: The timing of complete figures on overpayments in 2003–04 will depend on the timing of the replies to the Annual Review, the time taken to obtain any extra information needed to process them, and the proportion of replies containing provisional income data.

West Sussex (Demographic Population)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what is the demographic population breakdown of West Sussex; [185514]

(2) how many people moved into the Adur, Arun and Worthing Primary Care Trust area in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; [185515]

(3) what the population of the south-east region is, broken down into those *(a)* under the age of 20 years, *(b)* between 20 and 60 years and *(c)* over the age of 60 years. [185521]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from John Pullinger to Mr. Tim Loughton dated 21 July 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions concerning the number of people that moved into the Adur, Arun and Worthing Primary Care Trust area in 2003 and 2004 and also the population breakdown of the South East and the demographic breakdown of West Sussex. I am replying in his absence. (185515, 185514, 185521)

Unfortunately I am not able to answer your question regarding the number of people moving into the Primary Care trust, as statistics on population flows for Primary Care Trust areas are not currently available. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) will be publishing population estimates by Primary Care Organisation area for the first time on 21 October for 2001, 2002, and 2003.

The first of the two attached tables shows a demographic population break down for West Sussex based on mid-2002 population estimates. The second table shows mid-2002 population estimates for those who are aged under 20, 20 to 59, and those aged 60 years and over in the South East government office region.

As announced by ONS on 8 July, revised mid-2002 population estimates are due to be released on 9 September. Information about the revisions can be found at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/PEUannouncement_08Jul.pdf

Mid-year 2002 population estimates for West Sussex

Thousand

Age bands	Male	Female	Total
0–19	91.4	85.9	177.3
20–59	189.1	197.1	386.2
60+	81.7	110.6	192.4
0–4	21.1	20.3	41.4
5–9	23.4	22.0	45.4
10–14	24.7	23.4	48.2
15–19	22.2	20.1	42.3
20–24	17.7	18.1	35.8
25–29	18.2	19.4	37.6
30–34	23.6	25.7	49.4
35–39	28.8	29.2	57.9
40–44	26.7	27.3	54.0
45–49	24.6	25.2	49.9
50–54	24.9	26.1	51.1
55–59	24.5	26.1	50.6
60–64	18.7	20.3	39.0
65–69	17.6	20.0	37.6
70–74	16.4	20.1	36.5
75–79	13.2	18.5	31.7
80–84	9.2	15.5	24.7
85–89	4.6	9.9	14.5
90+	2.0	6.4	8.4

Note: Figures may not add exactly due to rounding.
Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Population for the South East, Mid-year2002

Thousand

Age bands	Male	Female	Total
(a) 0–19	1,017.7	959.5	1,977.3
(b) 20–59	2,167.1	2,184.8	4,351.9
(c) 60+	747.5	961.7	1,709.2

Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many parents were in receipt of the lone parent element of the working tax credit in 2003–04. [185717]

Dawn Primarolo: Information is contained in the various issues of "Child and Working Tax Credits. Quarterly Statistics", which can be found on the Inland Revenue website at: www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the budgetary cost of the lone parent element of the working tax credit was in 2003–04. [185718]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not possible to provide a split of total spending between the different elements of the working tax credit. The amount of award payable is reduced as family income increases, and this reduction is applied to the total value of all the elements taken together.

Andrew Selous: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the cost of disregarding maintenance payments for the purposes of calculating working tax credit and child tax credit. [181838]

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the latest estimate is of the cost of disregarding maintenance payments for the purposes of calculating working tax credit and child tax credit. [182117]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Members to my answer to the hon. Member for Wycombe (Mr. Goodman) on 19 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 44W.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Growth Areas (Infrastructure Projects)

5. **Mrs. Anne Campbell:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action his Department is taking to ensure that infrastructure projects can be funded in growth areas. [185312]

The Deputy Prime Minister: In the statement I gave to the House on Tuesday 13 July following the Spending Review Settlement I announced that funding for the growth areas outside the Thames Gateway would double by 2007–08. I hope to announce the full details of the allocation when the House returns in September.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has also established a new Community Infrastructure Fund to provide transport infrastructure in all growth areas, providing £200 million over the SR04 period.

Private investment, captured through developer contributions in areas of high land value will also play an important part in supporting the development of the Growth Areas.

Housing (Hertfordshire)

6. **Barbara Follett:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department is taking to improve the availability of *(a)* social and *(b)* affordable housing in Hertfordshire. [185313]

Phil Hope: Through the Housing Corporation, Hertfordshire will gain around 1,170 homes for rent and low cost home ownership over this year and the next. This is a very significant increase on the 273 homes completed in 1997–98.

Following the Spending Review, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has announced that an extra 10,000 social rented homes a year will be provided, in England, by 2007–08. Over the next three years, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will provide more than 40,000 affordable homes for essential public sector workers and others in need.

Right-to-Buy System

7. **Sandra Gidley:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action he is taking to prevent abuses of the right to buy system. [185314]

Mr. Raynsford: In March 2003 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister reduced right to buy discounts in 41 local authority areas under the greatest housing market pressure and we have included provisions in the Housing Bill to tackle exploitation of the scheme.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has also made it easier for landlords in rural areas to restrict the resale of ex-Right to Buy homes to local people. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends shortly to lay an Order before Parliament in accordance with section 157 of the Housing Act 1985, designating Test Valley as a rural area for this purpose, in addition to the 30 other areas already designated.

Sustainable Communities (Student Areas)

8. **Lynne Jones:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his policy is on developing sustainable communities in student areas of major towns. [185315]

Phil Hope: Student populations can bring real benefits to local neighbourhoods. However, universities and local authorities need to work together more closely to reduce potential problems in areas of high student populations. Last month we agreed to fund a project between Universities UK and the Local Government Association to improve the way that students are housed in local communities.

Planning Inspectorate

9. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the role of the Planning Inspectorate. [185316]

Keith Hill: The Planning Inspectorate serves The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), the Welsh Assembly Government and other Government Departments by dealing with appeals, development plans and other casework under planning, housing, environment and allied legislation.

Its mission is:

"To use our impartial expertise in planning and land use to help shape well planned environments."

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

10. **Ms Christine Russell:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has for the development of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. [185317]

Mr. Raynsford: On 12 July we announced, as part of the Spending Review 2004, that a further £525 million of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) resources would be made available in each of the years 2006–07 and 2007–08. We expect to make a further announcement on the distribution of these resources later in the year.

Polluted Land (Investment)

11. **Dr. Gibson:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department is taking to promote investment in cleaning up polluted land for new house building. [185318]

Keith Hill: The Government have a wide-ranging package of fiscal measures to support regeneration including a contaminated land tax credit designed to encourage the reuse of contaminated land. The Office has also negotiated a state aid approval from the European Commission that allows public sector support for the remediation of derelict and contaminated land. Furthermore, the Office is working closely with English Partnerships to develop a National Brownfield Strategy to ensure the best use of previously developed land, including contaminated land.

Market Renewal Pathfinder Programme

12. **Jim Dobbin:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Market Renewal Pathfinder programme in Heywood and Middleton. [185319]

Phil Hope: The Middleton area of Rochdale is included in the Oldham Rochdale Partners in Action (the Market Renewal Pathfinder). Following submission of their strategic scheme, the pathfinder has been allocated £53.5million Housing Market Renewal Funding up to March 2006. Some of this will contribute to the funding of a comprehensive regeneration programme in the right hon. Gentlemen's constituency area of Middleton including works to refurbish over 800 homes to a decent homes standard, construction of over 300 private new homes and providing safe and secure off road parking for more than 3,000 homes.

Regional Assemblies

13. **Mr. Dalyell:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress towards establishing regional assemblies. [185320]

Mr. Raynsford: The House is debating this afternoon three Orders to enable referendums to take place. The House of Commons Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation has already considered Orders on the date for those referendums and the local government options in the three regions where referendums are proposed.

Following a 'yes' vote in any one of those regions we will move as soon as possible to introduce legislation that will enable us to establish regional assemblies.

Fire and Rescue Service Equipment (Purchasing)

14. **Ann Winterton:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what changes his Department has implemented to the purchasing of fire and rescue service equipment. [185321]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been working with fire and rescue authorities and suppliers to develop a National Procurement Strategy that aims to deliver improved cost effectiveness, to maintain competition and stimulate innovation. In the meantime, fire service circulars issued in 2003 and 2004 gave advice on the arrangements to be used pending publication of the strategy.

Affordable Housing

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many and what proportion of the affordable housing to be built in *(a)* Camden, *(b)* the City of London, *(c)* Hackney, *(d)* Hammersmith and Fulham, *(e)* Haringey, *(f)* Islington, *(g)* Kensington and Chelsea, *(h)* Lambeth, *(i)* Lewisham, *(j)* Newham, *(k)* Southwark, *(l)* Wandsworth and *(m)* Westminster in (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 2005–06 will be (A) social housing for rent, (B) low cost home ownership stock, (C) low cost home ownership stock for key workers and (D) intermediate rented housing for key workers. [185255]

Keith Hill: Allocations for funding by the Housing Corporation through its Approved Development Programme for schemes due to start in 2004–05 and 2005–06 in the London boroughs specified are set out in the following table. The data include the numbers of units for social rent, low cost home ownership for key workers and others and intermediate rent for key workers.

Allocations: 2004–05 and 2005–06

	Social rent		*Low cost home ownership*	
	Units	*Percentage of total*	*Units*	*Percentage of total*
Camden	230	54.2	49	11.6
City of London	0	0	0	0
Hackney	458	37.1	287	23.2
Hammersmith and Fulham	325	48.5	136	20.3
Haringey	488	54.3	154	17.1
Islington	369	37.5	39	4.0
Kensington and Chelsea	170	66.9	0	0
Lambeth	635	62.4	193	19.0
Lewisham	301	62.6	129	26.8
Newham	525	46.1	205	18.0
Southwark	425	49.2	155	17.9
Wandsworth	41	12.3	132	39.8
Westminster	215	56.1	47	12.3
Total for London	9,877	51.8	3,510	18.4

	Key Workers Low Cost Home Ownership		Key workers intermediate rent		
	Units	Percentage of total	Units	Percentage of total	Total units
Camden	67	15.8	78	18.4	424
City of London	0	0	0	0	0
Hackney	398	32.2	93	7.5	1,236
Hammersmith and Fulham	175	26.1	34	5.1	670
Haringey	203	22.6	54	6.0	899
Islington	275	27.9	302	30.7	985
Kensington and Chelsea	43	16.9	41	16.1	254
Lambeth	169	16.6	20	2.0	1,017
Lewisham	45	9.4	6	1.2	481
Newham	241	21.2	168	14.7	1,139
Southwark	226	26.2	58	6.7	864
Wandsworth	107	32.2	52	15.7	332
Westminster	45	11.7	76	19.8	383
Total for London	3,872	20.3	1,820	9.5	19,079

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many units of affordable housing for *(a)* rent and *(b)* sale were built with funding generated by recycled capital grant in 2003–04, broken down by Government office region; [185256]

(2) what reports he has received of recycled capital grant being used for purposes other than investment in new affordable housing. [185259]

Keith Hill: Information is not currently available on the number of affordable housing units provided with recycled capital grant in 2003–04.

Provisional reports from the Housing Corporation indicate that for 2002–03, a total of 2,733 units were completed using recycled capital grant. Of this amount, 400 units were for social rent, 426 units were for shared ownership, while 1,907 units were re-improvements to existing stock.

English Partnerships

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what share of its budget for remediation costs English Partnerships has brought forward into the first three months of the 2004–05 financial year to allow works to be undertaken before the implementation of the next phase of the Landfill Directive. [184946]

Keith Hill: Less than 1 per cent. of English Partnerships' total projected remediation costs for 2004–05 were brought forward into the first three months of the financial year to allow works to be undertaken before implementation of the Landfill Directive.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister by what *(a)* amount and *(b)* percentage English Partnerships has increased the allowance for remediation costs in (i) the Thames Gateway and (ii) the coalfields in its 2004–05 budget to meet anticipated additional costs arising from the implementation of the ban on co-disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes. [185090]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not had to provide any additional funding to English Partnerships in 2004–05 for increased remediation costs arising from the ending of the co-disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes. English Partnerships is committed to best practice and sustainability in regeneration and has always made allowances for remediation costs on the presumption of seeking the most economic waste treatment solution that minimises the removal of material to landfill. These efforts have been strengthened with the approach of the directive trigger date and English Partnerships has worked on a project level to mitigate cost effects on individual sites including examining feasibility for and effecting in-situ bio remediation.

Government Office of the East Midlands

Mr. Durrell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many full-time equivalent employees of the Government Office of the East Midlands there have been since the establishment of its current structure. [185496]

Phil Hope: The table below sets out the number of full-time equivalent employees of the Government Office for East Midlands at annual intervals since May 2000:

Date	Number of full-time equivalent employees
May 2000	213.5
March 2001 (nearest available figures)	204.2
May 2002	209.6
May 2003	240.4
May 2004	298.7

Figures prior to 2000 could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

The increase in the number of full-time equivalent employees reflects the fact that since 2000, staff from the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and the Home Office have joined the Government Office. The increased numbers between 2003 and 2004 reflect, in particular, growth in the Community Cohesion, Crime Reduction and Sustainable Communities teams.

Home Ownership Task Force

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 2 February, *Official Report*, column 739W, on the Home Ownership Task Force, if he will make a statement on the outcome of the Department's discussions with the Housing Corporation on the Home

Ownership Task Force's recommendation of greater transparency in the setting of rent and other charges for shared ownership housing. [185257]

Keith Hill: Greater transparency in rent setting and other charges continues to be discussed with the Housing Corporation as part of the implementation of the Government's response to the Home Ownership Task Force which was announced on 6 May 2004.

Housing (North-west)

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of current demographic trends in the north-west on the region's housing stock. [185284]

Keith Hill: This issue will be addressed in the forthcoming full review of regional planning guidance for the north-west.

Planning Applications (Wandsworth)

Tom Cox: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning applications approved by the London borough of Wandsworth have been opposed in each of the last three years. [185345]

Keith Hill: Assuming that the question is about call-in of planning applications by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister for his own determination following a public inquiry, the answer is as follows:

2001—None;

2002—Three;

2003—None;

Call-ins take place when my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister and First Secretary of State considers it necessary to call in the planning application to determine himself, instead of leaving the decision to the local planning authority. He will, in general only take this step if planning issues of more than local importance are involved. It would not be correct to regard call-in as an indication of his opposition to the proposals.

Regional Planning Guidance (North-west)

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of regional planning guidance on the affordability of homes in the north-west. [185283]

Keith Hill: This issue will be addressed in the forthcoming full review of regional planning guidance for the north-west.

Shared Ownership

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total amount of capital receipts from shared owners staircasing up their equity share was in each year since 1997. [185258]

Keith Hill: The following table shows the total amount of capital receipts from shared owners staircasing up their equity share in each year since 1997.

Recycled capital grant fund (RCGF) shared ownership staircasing analysis

	Number of units involved	*Amount (£ million)*
1997–98	1,913	26.144
1998–99	2,043	28.287
1999–2000	3,321	52.223
2000–01	3,210	49.394
2001–02	3,603	58.828
2002–03	4,554	79.986
Total	18,644	294.862

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 5 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 458–59W, on shared ownership housing, what the average rent and service charge was on the 50 per cent. stake held by the registered social landlord in a *(a)* one-bed, *(b)* two-bed and *(c)* three-bed shared ownership property in (i) Tower Hamlets, (ii) the eastern sub-region, (iii) London and (iv) England in the latest year for which figures are available. [185254]

Keith Hill: The following table shows the average rent and service charges for shared ownership properties where a 50 per cent. stake is held by the registered social landlord, broken down by the number of bedrooms, in Tower Hamlets, the east London sub-region, London and England in 2003–04.

Shared ownership sales during 2003–04
Average monthly rent and service charges for those who purchased a 50 per cent. stake

	Number of sales	*Monthly rent (£)*	*Monthly service charge (£)*
One bedroom			
Tower Hamlets	7	123.90	38.11
East London	27	151.15	57.43
London	165	155.55	58.66
England	339	139.83	50.30
Two bedrooms			
Tower Hamlets	5	209.84	51.36
East London	120	198.01	53.30
London	331	189.36	49.47
England	1,420	142.50	34.26
Three bedrooms			
Tower Hamlets	2	164.30	0.00
East London	39	201.63	26.88
London	89	197.24	25.16
England	682	152.79	19.27

1. Because the buyer took a 50 per cent. stake, the average price paid by the buyer represents one-half of the property.

2. The figures include the following schemes:

Do-It-Yourself Shared Ownership, Shared Ownership for the Elderly, Leasehold Schemes for the Elderly, Ordinary Shared Ownership Schemes

3. East London sub-region 1 is an amalgamation of Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Redbridge, Waltham Forest

Source:

Housing Corporation, CORE Sales

Starter Home Initiative

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* social workers and *(b)* nurses were assisted by the Starter Home Initiative in 2003-04. [185520]

Keith Hill: Between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004, the Starter Home Initiative helped nearly 100 social workers and over 1,200 nurses into home ownership.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Access to Work Scheme

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many disabled people in London are receiving help with fares to work under the access to work scheme. [185472]

Maria Eagle: Between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004, Access to Work helped 364 new customers in London with travel to work costs. A further 802 customers who had applied for assistance prior to 1 April 2003 continued to receive assistance during the same period.

Appointees

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what proportion of applications for appointeeship *(a)* involve an interview with the claimant and *(b)* rely on the discussion with a carer or professional alone; [182699]

(2) what monitoring takes place to ensure that appointees spend the benefit in the best interests of the claimant; [182701]

(3) how many cases there were in 2002-03 where concerns about appointeeship were brought to the attention of the Department; how many were investigated; and in how many cases the appointeeship was revoked. [182702]

Maria Eagle: Appointees are normally interviewed by a visiting officer to ensure their suitability and awareness of their roles and responsibilities; a visit will also be made to the customer, although exceptions may be made where the customer is in hospital.

While formal monitoring of appointeeships is not carried out thereafter, officers acting on behalf of the Secretary of State can revoke the authority of appointees where there are concerns that they are not acting in the interests of the person claiming benefit.

Information regarding the numbers and types of interviews carried out, and how many cases were investigated, is not available as statistics are not collected centrally.

Attendance Allowance (Over-80s)

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in London aged *(a)* 80 years and over, *(b)* 85 years and over and *(c)* 90 years and over are in receipt of attendance allowance. [184876]

Maria Eagle: The numbers of attendance allowance recipients in London by age are set out in the table.

	Thousand
All	123.1
Under 80	48.4
80 to 84	31.5
85 to 89	24.5
90 and over	18.7

Note:
Figures taken from a 5 per cent. sample at 29 February 2004.
Source:
AD information Centre.

Computer Systems

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of computer systems which support the delivery of pensions and income support have been replaced since 2000. [185058]

Jane Kennedy: None of the computer systems supporting the delivery of pensions and income support have been replaced. They are however subject to upgrading to reflect legislative changes and procedural improvements as required.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many copies of his Department's and predecessor Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication cost and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183878]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was created in June 2001 with a specific new purpose of promoting opportunity and independence for all. The Department has published three annual reports, in spring 2002, 2003 and 2004. Information on the number of copies produced and publication costs falling to the Department are shown in the table.

Year of publication of Departmental Report	*Number of copies printed*	*Publication costs falling to Department for Work and Pensions (£)*
2002	2,000	94,940
2003	2,500	73,089
2004	1,500	40,752

Other costs associated with sales and distribution are met directly by the publisher, The Stationery Office Ltd. (TSO), and do not fall to government. Information on the number of copies sold and sales revenue are matters for the publisher.

The Department of Social Security printed 1,075 copies of its annual report in 2001 at a cost of £66,537. Information on previous years is not available. As an agency of the Department for Education and Employment, the Employment Service was included in the annual reports of that department.

Departmental Re-branding

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost was of re-branding the Department in 2001. [185534]

Maria Eagle: The total cost of re-branding my Department to accommodate its name change in 2001 was £232,044, which includes the application of the logos to key items such as stationery, building signs and electronic media.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175680]

Maria Eagle: Information is not collected on the number of resignations or dismissals from the Department resulting from anxiety, stress, depression, or other mental health reason.

The number of medical retirement certificates issued for mental health reasons over the last four financial years is in the table.

	Number of certificates
2000–01	81
2001–02	85
2002–03	64
2003–04	55

Notes:
1. The figures relate only to the number of medical retirement certificates issued. These may not all have resulted in medical retirements taking place.
2. DWP was formed in June 2001. Figures for 2000–01 and April and May 2001 relate to the former Employment Service and Department of Social Security.
3. Figures were not collected prior to April 2000.

The Department is committed to providing a safe working environment for all of its staff and has a range of support in place to help identify and tackle the causes of work related stress, anxiety and depression. This includes both preventative policies, such as the use of the HSE's Management Standards, and policies to help manage those cases that have resulted in individuals taking time off work. For example, an Attendance Management policy, a confidential employee assistance counselling service; and an occupational health provider service who provides advice on medical conditions including mental and behavioural disorders.

Disability Discrimination Act

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to promote the development of *(a)* supported employment opportunities and *(b)* intermediate labour market solutions to help those who are blind or partially-sighted. [182539]

Maria Eagle: Like all jobless people, where they meet the eligibility criteria, disabled people or those with health problems can access the full range of Government employment programmes, including intermediate labour market initiatives.

Workstep provides support in jobs for disabled people who have more complex barriers to finding and keeping work but who, with the right support, are able to make a valuable contribution in their job and where appropriate develop and progress to open employment. Workstep providers are required to work with all clients on a qualifying benefit, including clients who are blind or partially sighted. Remploy, which is the largest provider of the Workstep programme, supports over 230 people with visual impairments in a variety of jobs.

A number of organisations with their roots in helping people who are blind or partially sighted are also directly involved with Workstep as providers. These organisations include: Action for Blind People, Royal London Society for the Blind, Royal Strathclyde Blindcraft Industries, the Royal Aberdeen Workshops for the Blind and Disabled and Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind. In line with the Workstep ethos, these organisations deliver support to clients with a range of disabilities.

The Access to Work programme is open to disabled people already in employment (including self-employment), people changing jobs and unemployed people about to start work. It helps towards the additional employment costs resulting from disability, for example, help with the costs of travelling to work, adaptations to premises and special equipment.

Health and Safety Executive

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many enforcement notices were issued by the Health and Safety Executive in each of the last seven years. [184681]

Jane Kennedy: Over the last seven years the Health and Safety Executive has issued the following number of enforcement notices. The figures for 2003–04 will be publicly available in the Offences and Penalties report, due for release in late October 2004.

Year[1]	*[2]Total enforcement notices issued*
1996–97	[3]7,444
1997–98	[3]8,911
1998–99	10,900
1999–2000	11,340
2000–01	11,056
2001–02	11,082
2002–03	13,324

[1] Year refers to operational year, which runs 1 April to 31 March.
[2] The table refers to total enforcement notices issued in Great Britain and includes improvement and prohibition notices.
[3] In 1996–97 and 1997–98, HSE issued "Notices of Intent" that required a satisfactory outcome be secured within two weeks so as to avoid serving an improvement notice. As a result, some improvement notices were not issued. If the notices of intent were not issued, the number of enforcement notices would have been about 540 higher in 1996–97 and 630 higher in 1997–98. This system is no longer used.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make it his policy to ensure that no recipient of incapacity benefit suffers a reduction of net weekly income due to withdrawal of income support and related benefits; what assessment he has made of the number of individuals whose net weekly income is reduced in this way; and if he will make a statement. [184745]

Maria Eagle: We have made no estimates of the number of incapacity benefit (IB) recipients who have experienced a reduction of net weekly income due to withdrawal of income support and related benefits.

In most cases, people will be better off receiving incapacity benefit than an income-related benefit. In addition, as the position of those who lose entitlement to income support is no different from that of any other person whose income is above income support levels, it would be unfair to introduce special arrangements for people in these circumstances.

New Deal for Lone Parents

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents were on the New Deal for Lone Parents in 2003–04; and what the associated budgetary cost was. [185719]

Jane Kennedy: Between April 2003 and March 2004, 226,280[1] individuals participated on New Deal for Lone Parents. The estimated outturn spend on the programme is £66 million.

[1]Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Pay Systems

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library the most recent review of *(a)* his Department's pay systems, *(b)* the pay systems of the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible and *(c)* the departmental equal pay action plan. [181357]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions looks at its pay systems every year to inform the annual pay award process. There is no review report; the outcomes are captured in the pay offer we make to staff. Of the five non-departmental public bodies (NDPB), which the Department is responsible for, two—Remploy and the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority—complete a yearly review, which they will place in the Library by the end of August 2004. Both the Disability Rights Commission and the Health and Safety Executive are currently reviewing their pay progression arrangements. The outcomes of both these reviews will be placed in the Library when completed. The Rent Service's most recent review was completed in 2002, and we will arrange for a summary to be provided for the Library by the end of August 2004.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is committed to reviewing its pay policies to ensure that they are compliant with the current equal pay legislation and do not either directly or indirectly discriminate against any group of employees.

An Equal Pay Audit was completed in January 2002 in accordance with Cabinet Office guidance. This was based on details from the agencies which formed the Department for Social Security. Following the creation of DWP and the consequent alignment of pay policies, the findings from this report are now out-of-date. The Department is currently undertaking an Equal Pay Audit to review existing DWP policies and to inform the further development of its reward strategy. Once this is complete, a copy of the action plan will be placed in the Library.

Although non-departmental public bodies (NDPB) are not committed to completing an equal pay review, they are encouraged by the Department to conduct them. NDPB's staffed by civil servants follow the Cabinet Office commitment (e.g. HSE). Of the five NDPB's that the Department is responsible for, two (the Disability Rights Commission and The Rent Service) have conducted equal pay reviews, and the relevant documents will be put into the library by the end of August 2004. The Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority has no current plans to complete an equal pay review, as they will cease to exist from 5 April 2005. Remploy will be making plans to complete an equal pay review on appointment of their new HR Director on the 26 July 2004.

The final NDPB, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), submitted a draft equal pay action plan to Cabinet Office in 2003. When a finalised version has been agreed that incorporates the findings from a current review of pay progression arrangements it will be placed in the Library.

Pension Centre (Swansea)

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his plans for the pension centre in Swansea. [185329]

Malcolm Wicks: Since the Budget announcement, detailed planning has been taking place across the Department. This has included discussions on the future size and shape of The Pension Service. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions issued a written statement on 29 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 8–9WS announcing the first phase of that transformation.

Planning continues across the Department and we will inform the House when firm decisions are made.

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the quality of work carried out at Swansea Pension Centre. [185330]

Malcolm Wicks: The Pension Service deploys quality support teams to assess the accuracy of payments made by pension centres. These teams sample pension credit payments and state pension payments for Swansea Pension Centre three times per year. Swansea Pension Centre also conducts a monthly survey of its customers to measure their satisfaction with the service provided.

Swansea Pension Centre is currently achieving all key performance targets.

Pension Credit

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the take-up of pension credit. [185418]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the Written Statement by my hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 77–78WS.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of pensioners he estimate will not be claiming pension credit by 2006. [185422]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the form requested. The Department has set a Public Service Agreement target for at least three million pensioner households, corresponding to around 3.7 million individuals, to be in receipt of pension credit by March 2006 and is on course to achieve this. A projection based on available data suggests that approximately 3.85 million households, corresponding to around 5 million individuals, are likely to be eligible for Pension Credit in Great Britain in 2005–06. This projection, rounded to the nearest 50,000 households or individuals, includes a number of assumptions which will be sensitive to change. It is subject to a wide margin of error and should be used as a broad indication of the likely eligible population only.

Sickness Absence

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many working days per 100,000 workers were lost for reasons of work-related injury and ill-health in each of the last seven years. [184675]

Jane Kennedy: The information is not available in the form requested. Estimates of the number of working days lost as a result of work-related injury are obtained every three years through the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The latest estimate, for 2000–01, is 27,900 working days lost per 100,000 workers, compared with an estimate of 25,800 in 1997–98.

For work-related illness, the only available estimate in the seven-year period is based on information obtained from the 2001–02 LFS. The survey estimated that 140,000 working days per 100,000 workers were lost as a result of self-reported work-related ill-health.

A combined estimate for work-related injury and ill-health, covering 2003–04, will be published later this year.

CABINET OFFICE

Job Losses (Civil Servants)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisors. [185470]

Mr. Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Chief Secretary to Her Majesty's Treasury (Mr. Boateng), on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 190W.

Lord Birt

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what areas of work Lord Birt is engaged upon. [182247]

Mr. Alexander: Lord Birt is the Prime Minister's unpaid strategy adviser and works alongside the Strategy Unit on a range of issues. He is also an external member of the Cabinet Office Strategy Board. The nature of Lord Birt's work is to provide private internal advice to the Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers. This advice is not disclosed under Exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Public Meetings (Access)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what action is being taken to encourage *(a)* central and *(b)* local government departments and agencies to ensure that public meetings are accessible for those with disabilities. [180912]

Maria Eagle: I have been asked to reply.

Where central and local government departments and their agencies are holding public meetings as a service to the public, they are covered by the service provider provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and have legal duties under Part 3 of the Act to make reasonable adjustments to enable disabled people to make use of them. In some instances, public meetings may form part of the function of a central or local Government department or its agencies. Currently, the access duties under Part 3 of the DDA do not extend to functions of public bodies. However, a proposal in the draft Disability Discrimination Bill would bring all such functions within the scope of Part 3 of the Act.

The Government are currently running a campaign to remind service providers of their duties under the DDA. The campaign focuses on the new duties being introduced from 1 October 2004, which require service providers to make reasonable adjustments to physical features of premises which make access to the service impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people.

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC), which is a non-departmental public body of the Department for Work and Pensions, published a revised statutory Code of Practice in 2002 explaining the service provider provisions, including the new duties from October 2004. In addition, the DRC has been working in partnership with the Local Government Association to raise awareness of the implications of the service provider duties for local authorities and to develop guidance on implementing the DDA duties within local authority service provision.

Security Vetting

Llew Smith: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what representations he has received on the merits of re-establishing an inter-departmental committee of security vetting authorities. [184398]

Mr. Alexander: The most recent periodic review of the Government's personnel security system recommended the creation of a new official committee focusing on this area. That was accepted and that committee will work to ensure the continued effectiveness of personnel security policy and practice throughout Government, and in those organisations with which Government works in partnership.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Ammonium Nitrate

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department keeps on file records of thefts of ammonium nitrate; *(a)* in the United Kingdom and *(b)* on farms within the United Kingdom. [172743]

Mr. Blunkett: In England and Wales, numbers of thefts of ammonium nitrate are not collected separately from other thefts. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Alun Michael) on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 857W. Ammonium nitrate in itself is not classified as an explosive.

Asylum Seekers

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals whose application for asylum had been rejected absconded in each year since 1997. [183924]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of asylum applicants who have absconded is not available except by examination of individual case-files at disproportionate cost.

Some asylum seekers who have "absconded" may have left the UK voluntarily; others may remain in the UK illegally. Applicants do not always inform the Immigration Service prior to leaving the UK. The Immigration Service's policy on contact management, the means by which the Home Office maintains contact with asylum seekers throughout the process, was introduced in 2002. The policy is being continuously enhanced with the proposed expansion of the detention estate; the development of more static reporting centres; the development of Immigration Service staff based at police stations; the rollout of induction centres at the beginning of the asylum process and the piloting of biometric reporting i.e. voice recognition, tagging and kiosk based reporting.

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department under what circumstances individuals are required to wear an electronic tagging device. [183925]

Mr. Browne: Individuals in England and Wales are required to wear a tag when sentenced by a court to a curfew order or curfew requirement with electronic monitoring; on release from prison under the Home Detention Curfew Scheme; or as a requirement of a bail or licence condition.

Individuals who are liable to detention under immigration legislation may, in future, be required to wear an electronic tagging device if a Chief Immigration Officer, adjudicator or judge of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission considers, following an individual risk assessment, that the risk of absconding can be managed through the additional safeguard of electronic monitoring by tagging as an alternative to detention.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what support is being offered to failed Iraqi asylum seekers being returned to Iraq. [184516]

Mr. Browne: Since July last year the Home Office has been facilitating the return of small numbers of Iraqi citizens who want to return home through the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Individuals returning under this programme receive independent advice and practical assistance with travel arrangements.

Enforced returns to Iraq will begin as soon as the practical arrangements for the returns programme are in place. The details of the returns programme have not yet been finalised, but are likely to include a package of support for returnees.

Failed asylum seekers of any nationality, including Iraqis, who are destitute and unable to leave the UK immediately for reasons entirely beyond their control may seek accommodation from National Asylum Support Service (MASS) under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Those who do not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria but who are willing to register with the IOM for a voluntary departure would be eligible for accommodation under section 4 while they are waiting for their voluntary return to be arranged.

Greater Manchester Police

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police officers and *(b)* community support officers there were in the Greater Manchester Police in each of the last 10 years; and what his projections are for the next three years' spending period. [184746]

Ms Blears: The information requested is set out in the table. The Greater Manchester Police had record police strength at the end of December 2003.

We have made no projections for force strength over the next three years. It is for the Chief Constable of the Greater Manchester Police to determine the mix of officers and support staff within the budget set by the police authority over the next three years.

As at 31 March	*Police Officer strength*	*Police (support) staff strength*	*Community Support Officer strength*
1993–94	6,967	2,638	—
1994–95	7,037	2,674	—
1995–96	6,938	2,749	—
1996–97	6,922	2,612	—
1997–98	6,949	2,661	—
1998–99	6,810	2,623	—
1999–2000	6,795	2,822	—
2000–01	6,909	2,858	—
2001–02	7,217	3,135	—
2002–03	7,343	3,173	160
2003–04	[1]7,770	Not available	[2]185

[1] Police officer strength as at 31 December 2003.
[2] CSO strength as at 31 March 2004.

Correspondence

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his officials at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will answer letters dated 22 February and 19 May from the hon. Member for Vauxhall about a constituent, reference number: S1003233. [184698]

Mr. Browne: I wrote to my hon. Friend on 21 July 2004.

Heathrow

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many immigration staff were employed at each of Heathrow airport's four terminals at 1 January in each year since 1997. [183301]

Mr. Browne: The following table sets out the number of full-time equivalent immigration officials employed at Heathrow airport, Terminals 1–4, at 1 January for the last eight years.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
TN1	187.1	209.2	189.8	194	179.4	203.1	210.3	234.9
TN2	231.7	225.7	201.6	192.5	188.2	208.8	205.7	193.1
TN3	[1]—	278.5	270	269.8	277.5	326.7	332.6	308.2
TN4	199.2	186.9	179.6	180	187.2	186.9	195.4	196.9
Total	618	900.3	841	836.3	832.3	925.5	944	933.1

[1] Figures are unavailable for Heathrow Terminal 3 for the years 1997. 1998 figure is for 1 February 1998 for Terminal 3.

In addition since 1 January 2004 127 officials have been trained or allocated training places for deployment at Heathrow airport.

Identity Cards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the race impact assessment of the identity card scheme. [182298]

Mr. Browne: The identity cards scheme will be an inclusive scheme, designed to cover everyone who has the right to be in the United Kingdom. It will show that everyone belongs to our society whether they were born here, have chosen to make their home here or are just staying for a while to study or work. It will help people prove their identity to access services such as free health treatment or benefits and give everyone confidence that legal migration will not result in increased fraudulent use of hard-pressed public services. If our communities have confidence in our immigration controls, they will be more welcoming of new arrivals, helping to promote a more cohesive society.

The identity cards scheme itself is non-discriminatory as it is intended to cover everyone in the United Kingdom for longer than a specified period (three months). The scheme will not, in general, require people to obtain a specific, additional document as it will be designed to make use of existing documents that will be designated as identity cards. Most members of the identity cards "family" will be enhanced versions of existing identity documents which are very widely held familiar documents that are already used as proof of identity.

A partial race impact assessment was published with the draft Bill (CM 6178). This was developed following consultation with representatives of black and minority ethnic groups and research undertaken with these groups. Further assessments will be made as the design of the scheme develops, focusing mainly on how the introduction of ID cards affects the use of existing police powers, how the scheme is administered and its use in relation to access to services and employment.

Immigration

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why the Indian passport and travel documents were sent to the constituent of the hon. Member for Walsall, North without explanation or information on how to proceed, ref 5773882. [185289]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* I understand that on the occasions that my hon. Friend's constituent applied for a No Time Limit (NIL) endorsement, his documents were returned to him with a covering letter explaining that a further endorsement cannot be placed in his passport whilst he is in possession of a valid travel document endorsed with an NIL stamp.

National Asylum Support Service

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vacant homes in the borough of Trafford are held under contract to the National Asylum Support Service, broken down by *(a)* local authority, *(b)* private landlords and *(c)* housing association properties; and at what cost. [182000]

Mr. Browne: Details of the properties and costs of accommodation contracted to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) cannot be disclosed since this information is part of the contract between NASS and the provider and must be treated as commercial in confidence.

Racist Visitors

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on allowing into the UK those with well-known racist and anti-semitic views who intend to speak at public meetings; and if he will make a statement. [183118]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 12 July 2004]:* The Immigration Rules make provision for a person to be refused entry if their presence in the UK is not considered to be conducive to the public good. Each case is considered on its individual merits. Once admitted to the UK a person is expected to abide by UK law.

UK Passports Service

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the efficiency of Special Mail Services in delivering United Kingdom passports; and if he will make a statement. [182803]

Mr. Browne: The United Kingdom Passport Service assesses the performance of Special Mail Services (SMS) on a regular basis. Since the new arrangements for secure delivery of UK passports commenced on 9 February SMS have successfully delivered just over

3 million passports and have surpassed their key performance target of delivering 97 per cent. of passports on the next working day. On current information recorded losses of passports total 219 over the five month period.

Based on the first five months of contract performance SMS and UKPS have identified a number areas of SMS's performance including the security of their premises and vetting of their staff where arrangements need to be strengthened. UKPS will be closely monitoring the implementation of planned improvements to their performance over the next few months.

The SMS contract was awarded following a competitive tender and the payments made to SMS are in line with the contract, delivering the anticipated value for money for passport customers.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is the practice of the UK Passports Service to cash cheques for passport applications before processing the application itself. [184201]

Mr. Browne: Yes, all payments for passport services are processed as soon as the application is received. There are good reasons for this. On security grounds, so that large sums of money are not held at passport offices. On grounds of regularity, so that passports are only issued to customers who have paid in full and for process efficiency. In processing over 5 million passport applications annually it would be impossible to keep payments with applications throughout the whole issuing process.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether compensation is payable for *(a)* delay and *(b)* distress in the case of an error by the UK Passports Service in transposing an incorrect photograph onto a passport application. [184218]

Mr. Browne: The compensation policy of the UK Passport Services (UKPS) which reflects good practice guidance issued by the Cabinet Office and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration, is to reimburse the reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred by customers as a direct consequence of clear errors or omissions by its staff. It is not UKPS's normal policy to make compensation payments for loss of enjoyment, distress or inconvenience arising from such errors. Each claim is treated on its merits, and for audit purposes documentary evidence is needed to confirm significant additional expenditure incurred by a passport applicant.

In the case of an error by the UKPS in inserting an incorrect photograph in an issued passport, under the terms of its policy, if additional costs have been incurred by the customer as a result of such an error, this would provide a basis for a claim on UKPS for compensation.

V2 Rocket Incidents

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether document reference number HO198/105, relating to V2 rocket incidents from September to December 1944, has been *(a)* retained by his Department and *(b)* withheld from the public domain. [182975]

Mr. Blunkett: The document (piece) has not been formally retained at the Home Office. It appears to have been lost after having been temporarily retained for administrative purposes when related records were transferred to The National Archives in 1972. The National Archives catalogue will be amended to show the piece is missing.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Anti-terrorism Measures

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress was made at the recent talks at Hassop Hall with his European counterparts on anti-terrorism measures. [184265]

Mr. Blunkett: I have been asked to reply.

This question has been referred to me as I hosted the meeting at Hassop Hall with my Interior Ministry counterparts from France, Germany, Italy and Spain. We discussed a range of issues that relate to co-operation on counter-terrorism. It was a very useful meeting covering a number of areas of joint interest.

ID cards can allow travel throughout the EU, so we need to ensure that security standards are on a par with those relating to EU visas, residence permits and passports.

We felt that it would be important to look at strengthening ID card security, specifically measures on the incorporation of biometric identifiers, and methods to ensure a more robust issuing procedure.

Following on from this we felt that strong support should be given to the Commission's proposals for further action in facilitating the exchange of information on lost, stolen and forged passports between member states and Interpol. This would be on a basis consistent with G8 and ICAO initiatives.

We discussed how there could be benefits in Europol focusing on a number of clearly defined tasks in the counter-terrorism field. This could be in addition to its main role on organised crime. Analyses of the links between organised crime and terrorism, and the flows of finances that support terrorist organisations were considered. We particularly welcomed presidency ideas concerned with the disruption of these flows.

Ensuring our security through co-operation is a key goal for all member states. I believe that through discussion and working together closely we can give impetus to these important areas of work in the EU and deliver real practical outcomes.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the Foreign Office spent on *(a)* recruitment consultants and *(b)* management consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [184503]

Mr. Straw: The figures for 1996–97 could be established only at disproportionate costs.

Expenditure on external consultants in general is reported annually in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) Departmental Report, available in the Library of the House and on the FCO's website: www.fco.gov.uk. Expenditure specifically on management consultants is not categorised separately and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Expenditure on consultants, the bulk of this being expenditure associated with our major Information and Communications Technology and estate construction programmes, for 2002–03 (the latest figures available) totalled £23.7 million. Out of that total the FCO spent £1.31 million on recruitment consultants.

Detention/Imprisonment Principles

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government recognises the UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment. [184829]

Mr. Rammell: The UK supported the adoption of the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment by the United Nations in 1988.

The Principles are not specifically embodied in UK domestic legislation. However, they are effectively applied by means of existing legislation and procedures governing the detention of individuals, and by the system of independent checks of places of detention by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, as well as by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture.

Diego Garcia

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library copies of all his Department's *(a)* legal, *(b)* environmental and *(c)* economic studies on Diego Garcia and the Chagos Islands; and what correspondence has taken place between Her Majesty's Government and the United States Administration since November 2000 on Diego Garcia. [184389]

Mr. Rammell: Reports of studies relating to the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) are placed in the Library of the House if they are likely to be of parliamentary or public interest. For instance the study into the feasibility of resettlement of the outer islands of the Territory was deposited in the Library in July 2002. Correspondence between the UK and US Governments about Diego Garcia is confidential to the two Governments and is withheld under exemption 1*(c)* of Part 2 the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on *(a)* dredging and *(b)* the expansion of naval facilities at Diego Garcia since 1980. [184966]

Mr. Straw: The US Naval Support Facility on Diego Garcia, which had been established pursuant to an agreement between the two Governments of February 1976 as a development of the previous US naval communications facility there. Following an Exchange of Notes between the Governments of the UK and the US in August and September 2001 the US Naval Support Facility was designated as a Bomber Forward Operating Location and various infrastructure upgrades to the facility were agreed. The 2001 Exchange of Notes recorded the understanding of the two Governments that this was consistent with the scope and purpose of the facility as provided for in the 1976 agreement. Further infrastructure upgrades were similarly approved by the two Governments in July 2002. In addition, an Exchange of Notes between the two Governments in June and July 1999 recorded their agreement to the construction and operation on Diego Garcia of a monitoring facility, primarily for inclusion in the International Monitoring System, established under the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty of 1996.

As regards dredging, it will be necessary to obtain this information from the authorities on Diego Garcia. When it has been received, I will write to the right hon. Gentleman and place copies in the Library of the House.

European Constitution

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what effect the European Constitution will have on the UK's existing international treaties. [184257]

Mr. MacShane: None.

Guantanamo Bay

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the ages are of the UK citizens in custody in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. [183302]

Mr. Mullin: The ages of each of the four British nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay are 24, 24, 31 and 36.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will provide an update on the situation of the British Guantanamo detainees. [183318]

Mr. Mullin: The Government have consistently sought to resolve the position of the British nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay. Our position is that the British detainees should either be tried fairly in accordance with international standards or returned to the United Kingdom.

Following discussions with the US Government, led for the Government by my noble Friend the Attorney-General, we concluded that the US military commission process would not provide sufficient guarantees of a fair trial in accordance with international standards. The Government therefore asked that all nine British detainees be returned to the UK. Five were returned in March.

Following a visit by officials to Washington in May, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister repeated our request that the remaining four detainees be returned to the UK. We continue to work to resolve their situation.

India

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations he has made to *(a)* the Indian

Government and *(b)* the Chief Minister of Orissa concerning the arrest of Pastor Suresh Samal and five other Christians from the village of Kilipal; [184988]

(2) what representations he has made to *(a)* the Indian Government and *(b)* the Chief Minister of Gujarat concerning (i) the kidnap and suspected rape of a Christian woman, Manulaben Dinana, by a gang connected with Hindu militant groups and (ii) the recent destruction of a Christian graveyard by officials in Ahmedabad; [184990]

(3) what representations he has made to *(a)* the Indian Government and *(b)* the Chief Minister of Tripura concerning the attack on Pastor Letthang Gangte, of the Evangelical Congregational Church of India and his family on 19 April in the village of Rajghat, West Tripura. [184991]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have not raised these specific incidents with the Government of India. We do however monitor reports of attacks against minorities and raise these issues with the Government of India. We continue to urge the Indian authorities to ensure the right to freedom of religion is upheld, and to raise our concerns about incidents of religious intolerance in India, including attacks against Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians; and to urge that those responsible should be brought to justice. In this context, we welcome the commitment by Dr. Manmohan Singh to maintaining communal harmony at all costs in India.

Iran

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made with Iran in recent months as regards its nuclear programme. [184238]

Mr. MacShane: The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) unanimously adopted a Resolution on 18 June calling for Iran to co-operate more actively with IAEA inspectors and to resolve outstanding questions regarding its nuclear programme.

Together with our French and German partners, the Government is urgently engaged in seeking to persuade Iran to re-engage fully with the IAEA, and to honour its commitments made in the Tehran Declaration of 21 October 2003.

We will continue to monitor developments closely.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what issues were raised at the recent EU/Iran Human Rights Dialogue meeting; and what assessment has been made of the progress being made by Iran on these issues. [185437]

Mr. Rammell: Discussions at the fourth meeting of the EU/Iran Human Rights Dialogue, held in Tehran on 14–16 June, covered a range of human rights issues in Iran. The EU delegation raised particular concerns about Iran's judicial and penal systems, the situation of religious and ethnic minorities, freedom of expression and assembly, discrimination against women and the conduct of this year's Majlis elections. The EU also raised the cases of a number of individuals in Iran. We are deeply disappointed that on many issues of concern there has been little or no progress in recent months.

Mr. Sandy Mitchell

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with Mr. Sandy Mitchell on the exchange of prisoners with the Saudi Arabian Government and the US Administration; and if he will make a statement. [182977]

Mr. Mullin: The release of Saudi detainees from Guantanamo is a matter for the US and Saudi Governments. It would not be appropriate for either Ministers or officials to discuss this matter with Mr. Mitchell.

Ministers, including my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, have spoken to Mr. Mitchell since his return to the UK. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials remain in contact with him. We were relieved that he was released and returned to the UK. This was something we worked very hard for.

North Korea

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made with North Korea in recent months as regards its nuclear programme. [184239]

Mr. MacShane: The six-party talks process, the aim of which is the creation of a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons, is continuing. While the United Kingdom is not involved in the talks we do fully support the process, and carefully monitor developments. We welcome the constructive approach that North Korea is taking towards the process.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183855]

Mr. Mullin: Foreign and Commonwealth Office costs in relation to 2003–04 are not yet available. The salary costs to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of employees working in public relations and publicity came to £1.8 million in 2001–02 and £2.1 million in 2002–03. These figures exclude the salary costs of employees working on public diplomacy (the objective of which is to promote the UK overseas), recruitment advertising, provision of public information such as travel advice, and production of annual reports. They also exclude costs associated with Press and Public Affairs Officers at overseas posts, which could be provided only at disproportionate costs. Figures for previous years are not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Rwanda

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the current situation in Rwanda. [184999]

Mr. Mullin: Rwanda has made impressive political and economic progress since the 1994 genocide and is on track to meet the targets outlined in its Poverty Reduction Strategy. But there is now a need to open up political space and build greater democratic

accountability. We continue to press the Rwandan Government on the need to improve human rights and democratic openness and we continue to monitor their progress.

Spending Review

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the oral statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1129–39, on the spending review, what the total value is of his Department's assets, broken down by those held *(a)* in the United Kingdom and *(b)* abroad. [185005]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: The total book value as at 31 March 2004 for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's fixed assets (i.e. non-current assets) is approximately £1,223 million.

Of this approximately 16 per cent. is UK based with the balance being located abroad:

	£ million
UK	195
Overseas	1,028

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the oral statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1129–39, on the spending review, whether the £51 million combined increase for the World Service and the British Council is included in the 1.4 per cent. departmental increase. [185006]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: Yes.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the oral statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1129–39, on the spending review, which assets his Department has identified *(a)* in the United Kingdom and *(b)* abroad which will be sold off. [185007]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has no property assets for sale in the United Kingdom.

Assets currently being sold overseas are:

	Assets to be sold
Abidjan	Offices
Beirut	House
Bilbao	Land
Bratislava	House
Bucharest	House
Budapest	Two flats plus garage
Buenos Aires	Two flats
Canberra	House
Caracas	Offices and house
Copenhagen	House
Dublin	House
Kuala Lumpur	House
Kampala	Land
Kiev	Flat
Lima	Offices
Lusaka	Office
Paris	Flats
Port Louis	House
Rio de Janeiro	Flat
San Salvador	Office and residence
Santiago	House plus flat
St. Georges (Grenada)	House
Tel Aviv	House
The Hague	House
Tashkent	House
Tunis	Land
Wellington	House

The FCO will continue to keep its estate holdings under review, and will participate in consultations with Sir Michael Lyons in due course.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will propose to the UN Security Council the invocation of Chapter VII of the charter with regard to Sudan. [178784]

Mr. Mullin: We have made clear that UN Security Council action will be needed if the Government of Sudan does not honour the commitments it has given to improve humanitarian access and security. Discussion of a US draft Security Council Resolution, which invokes Chapter VII of the UN Charter, is on-going.

Turkey

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what issues were raised at the UK/Turkey Human Rights Dialogue meeting on 15th July; and what progress has been made on these issues. [185438]

Mr. MacShane: At the fourth UK/Turkey Human Rights Dialogue on 15 July the following issues were raised: Turkey's bid to open accession negotiations with the European Union; fundamental freedoms, including of expression, religion, demonstration, and association; torture and ill treatment; women's rights; functioning of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies; the situation in the Southeast and cultural rights; measures taken within the UK to combat terrorism; implementation of European Court of Human Rights judgments; co-operation in international organisations; and bilateral project assistance. In addition, we passed a list of specific cases of concern to the Turkish delegation.

The UK side congratulated the Turkish side for the enormous progress made by Turkey and encouraged them to maintain the momentum of reform, indicating the areas where we saw a need for further progress. The Turkish delegation undertook to consider the points raised.

US/UK Entry Bans

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Foreign Office officials are in regular contact with their US counterparts concerning the co-ordination of intelligence on persons banned from entering the United Kingdom and the United States. [183775]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 14 July 2004]*: The US and UK co-ordinate closely on intelligence matters. It is the longstanding practice of successive Governments not to comment on intelligence and security matters. The security and intelligence agencies are outside the scope of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (paragraph 6, part 1).

NORTHERN IRELAND

Area Child Protection Committees

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when legislation will be introduced to give area child protection committees in Northern Ireland a statutory basis. [183587]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is currently developing a Strategy for Children and Young People in Need which will consider a wide range of child protection matters including placing Area Child Protection Committees on a statutory footing. Decisions on the need for primary legislation will follow on from the completion of the strategy.

Care Workers

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proposals he has to provide minimum guaranteed hours of employment to home helps and care workers. [184935]

Angela Smith: In Northern Ireland, decisions about minimum hours of employment for home helps and analogous staff are a matter for HSS Trusts in the context of presenting need, resources and service priorities.

The primary objective for HSS Trusts is to deliver effective, efficient and flexible community care services to persons in need. However, HSS Trusts do endeavour to allocate sufficient work to home helps and the other home care staff they employ that give viable work opportunities while seeking to manage the presenting demand for these services.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken in Northern Ireland *(a)* to make conditions of employment more attractive for and *(b)* otherwise to reward the dedication and service provided in the community by care workers and home helps. [184936]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is currently negotiating with representatives of local Social Services Staff with the aim of including this group of staff in the new pay system for Health Service staff, Agenda for Change. This is a major initiative being undertaken jointly by all four UK Health Departments in partnership with the main trade unions representing staff to modernise the NHS and HPSS Pay System. The objective of the new pay system is to ensure equal pay for work of equal value and to provide opportunities for staff to develop their knowledge and skills.

The new pay system is currently being tested within 12 sites in the NHS in England, and is scheduled to be introduced within the HPSS in Northern Ireland with effect from October 2004.

Electoral Fraud

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* arrests and *(b)* convictions for electoral fraud there have been in Northern Ireland in each of the last four years. [184560]

Mr. Pearson: Information is not available on the number of arrests made for electoral fraud. The most recent courts data available is 2002 and in the four years up to then there have been two convictions recorded for election offences in Northern Ireland:

In 2001 there was one conviction for "corrupt practice at local election"

In 2002 there was one conviction for "personation at a Westminster election".

Fisheries Conservancy Board Vessel

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the estimated cost of repairs to the new Fisheries Conservancy Board vessel have been since 5 May. [184831]

Angela Smith: No repairs have been made to the vessel since 5 May. Regarding the incident that occurred on 7 July 2004 when the vessel hit a submerged object at sea, an estimate of the cost of repairing it is not yet available. An assessor from the Fisheries Conservancy Board's insurance company has inspected the vessel and his report is awaited.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons the new Fisheries Conservancy Board vessel has needed repairs since it was launched. [184832]

Angela Smith: The vessel sustained damage to its propellers as a result of striking a submerged object while on patrol off the North Coast on 7 July 2004.

Flags Regulations 2000

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the Equality Commission about the effectiveness of the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000. [185085]

Mr. Spellar: There has been no such recent contact.

Juvenile Justice Centre

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many juveniles, broken down by gender, have been locked up in the Juvenile Justice Centre for *(a)* 20 hours, *(b)* 21 hours, *(c)* 22 hours, *(d)* 23 hours and *(e)* 24 hours in each month of this year. [185086]

Mr. Spellar: The Juvenile Justice Centre for Northern Ireland does not collect this information routinely at present. The information is contained in paper records. The cost of obtaining this information would be significant and disproportionate. The Centre has

recently amended its recording systems to collect information on single separation and the Centre is planning to store all such information on a database.

MRSA

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in what circumstances hospitals in Northern Ireland are required to provide strict isolation for MRSA sufferers; and if he will make a statement. [184775]

Angela Smith: The Government recognise that the emergence of Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) over the last twenty years represents a serious threat to the prevention, control and successful treatment of infection. It is committed to taking forward a wide range of actions to reduce the emergence and spread of MRSA and its impact on the treatment of infection.

In Northern Ireland, the Chief Medical Officer has issued guidance to health and social service trusts on MRSA and the management and control of hospital infection, and on resistance to antibiotics and other antimicrobial agents, in 1999 and 2000, respectively.

The guidance requires hospitals to carry out a risk assessment on a patient found to be colonised or infected with MRSA. The result of the assessment determines how the patient is managed and the type of isolation required, if any.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what surveillance has been undertaken by hospitals in Northern Ireland in respect of MRSA; and if he will make a statement. [184776]

Angela Smith: It has been a mandatory requirement for acute trusts to report MRSA bacteraemia rates since 2002 to the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, Northern Ireland. The Healthcare-Associated Infection Surveillance Centre (HISC) based at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast since 2001 was formed to assist acute trusts in Northern Ireland to undertake nosocomial infections surveillance at local level. HISC commenced its work on orthopaedic surgical site infections and is developing further modules.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many MRSA cases were recorded by the Northern Ireland equivalent of the Public Health Laboratory Service in each year from 1983; and if he will make a statement. [184778]

Angela Smith: Information on MRSA infection in Northern Ireland has only been available from 2001 when a pilot exercise on bacteraemias was undertaken prior to the introduction of the mandatory reporting system in April 2002. The following numbers of patient episodes of such MRSA infection were recorded:

	Number
2001-02	228
2002-03.	218

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what independent inspections are undertaken of hospital hygiene management programmes in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [184779]

Angela Smith: The responsibility for cleaning and inspection of hospital hygiene lies with each of the Trusts and information relating to independent inspections is not held centrally on behalf of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). However DHSSPS is aware that some Trusts do carry out internal inspections on their hygiene management programmes. Hospital hygiene management programmes in Northern Ireland are not inspected independently on behalf of DHSSPS.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assistance has been given since 19 March 1997 to the *(a)* development and *(b)* use in hospitals in Northern Ireland of new (i) paints and (ii) cleaning products able to kill known microbes; and if he will make a statement. [184780]

Angela Smith: The responsibility for refurbishment and cleaning of hospitals in Northern Ireland lies with each of the hospital trusts. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety does not hold information on the use of paints and cleaning products able to kill known microbes centrally.

New build facilities are however constructed to the standards specified in the NHS Estates, Health Building Notes, which provide for anti-microbial paint finishes in specialist sterile areas such as operating theatres.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action has been taken in Northern Ireland to implement the guidelines for combating MRSA set out in the report of the working party headed by Mr. G. Duckworth since its publication in 1990; and if he will make a statement. [184781]

Angela Smith: The 1990 guidance, revised in 1998, is followed in Northern Ireland. A combined working party made up of the British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy, the Hospital Infection Society and the Infection Control Nurses Association are currently revising the guidelines.

On receipt of the revised guidelines, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety will take forward the development of appropriately revised local protocols.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures he proposes to introduce to tackle MRSA in nursing homes in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [184782]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety issued guidelines for residential and nursing home staff for the management of residents with MRSA in 1996. These are in the process of being revised and updated. The Department's Regional Advisory Committee on Communicable Disease Control is currently considering a report commissioned on an infection control nursing strategy for Northern Ireland. It deals with the service to the statutory sector including community and secondary care services, the independent sector including nursing homes, and primary care.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which hospitals in Northern Ireland stock antibiotics against strains of MRSA; and if he will make a statement. [184783]

Angela Smith: All acute hospitals in Northern Ireland have access to antibiotics effective against strains of MRSA.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which antibiotics are deemed by his Department to be effective against strains of MRSA; and if he will make a statement. [184784]

Angela Smith: The majority of MRSA strains are sensitive to the following antibiotics: vancomycin, teicoplanin, linezolid, synercid, rifampicin, fucidin and the tetracyclines.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the percentage change in the incidence of MRSA was in Northern Ireland in each year since 1989; and if he will make a statement. [184785]

Angela Smith: Information on the incidence of MRSA bacteraemias in Northern Ireland is available only from 2001. These figures showed a reduction of 10 cases, 4.4 per cent., between 2001–02 and 2002–03. Figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidance he gives to the Ambulance Service in Northern Ireland on *(a)* combating MRSA and *(b)* infection control generally; and what additional resources he plans to make available for this purpose. [184786]

Angela Smith: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service developed a protocol for the management of MRSA patients during transportation, which was agreed by the relevant local specialists in infection control and local hospitals. The protocol was issued to all staff in 1999.

Training in general precautions and management of MRSA patients during transportation is provided to all operational staff during their basic training and as appropriate and necessary during their regular post proficiency training. The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service is currently reviewing this training and its compliance with the recently published Controls Assurance Standards for the Control of Infections.

The funding for this training is provided from within the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service annual training budget.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of deaths in Northern Ireland were caused by MRSA, or had MRSA as a contributing factor, in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by hospital; and if he will make a statement. [184787]

Angela Smith: The latest year for which figures are available is 2003. The number and percentage of deaths contributed to by MRSA in Northern Ireland, for this year are given in the following table. Information broken down by hospitals is not provided to prevent the possible disclosure of information on individuals. Work is under way to introduce specific codes for antibiotic resistance in conjunction with the World Health Organisation. Active efforts to automate mortality statistics also continue.

Number of registered deaths where the death certificate mentioned MRSA

	2003 (provisional data)
All deaths	14,462
MRSA	30
Percentage of deaths which mention MRSA	0.21

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the isolation procedures set down by the Department of Health to combat MRSA in England and which were operative as at 19 March 1997 are operative in Northern Ireland; when the procedures were last brought to the attention of hospitals; and if he will make a statement. [184788]

Angela Smith: The isolation procedures used to combat MRSA in England are also in use in Northern Ireland. The most recent Departmental guidance (HSS(MD)9/2000), "the Management and Control of Hospital Infection", was issued to the Health and Personal Social Services in Northern Ireland in April 2000.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures he has instigated with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ensure that *(a)* there is correct and consistent reporting of deaths caused by MRSA, or where it is a contributory factor, in Northern Ireland, and *(b)* death certificates in Northern Ireland are completed as directed by the Government. [184790]

Angela Smith: In the UK, the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is used to classify causes of death. ICD does not have a specific code for Methicillin Resistant "Staphylococcus aureus" (MRSA) but statistics on deaths where MRSA was a contributing factor can be obtained. This is done by identifying all deaths with specific ICD codes likely to be linked with MRSA and then manually checking the cause of death written on the death certificate. This is consistent with the approach taken in England and Wales.

Doctors are required to complete the cause of death medical certificate to the best of their knowledge and belief. Guidelines on completing death certificates are included at the front of every book of certificates. Certificates are not available without these instructions. Medical students receive training in their final year on completion of death certificates.

Public Housing

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of public housing stock was classified at each level of unfitness in each parliamentary constituency in the most recent year for which figures are available. [185117]

Mr. Spellar: The information is not available in the format requested. The rate of unfitness for all housing at the Northern Ireland level was 4.9 per cent. in 2001. The rate of unfitness in the Housing Executive and housing

association sectors was around 1 per cent. While it is not possible to provide a robust and precise figure below the Northern Ireland level because of the sample size, it is unlikely that there is any significant variation across parliamentary constituencies.

Traffic Calming Measures

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money has been spent on providing traffic calming measures in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years. [185116]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. Gregory Campbell dated 20 July 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how much public money has been spent on providing traffic calming measures in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years. I have been asked to reply as the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

The table as follows indicates the actual expenditure spent on Traffic Calming Measures from 1999/2000 to 2003/04.

	£k
	Expenditure
1999–2000	1,208
2000–01	1,027
2001–02	1,545
2002–03	1,859
2003–04	2,011

You may be aware that the Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland, published in July 2002, envisages a large increase in the amount of funding available over the next 10 years for road safety related works. It proposes a doubling of funds for traffic calming and a 50 per cent. increase in funding for collision remedial schemes. The actual funding allocated over the RTS period will, of course, depend on the outcome of the normal budgetary processes.

HEALTH

Drug Treatment Services

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps he is taking to ensure that local partnerships with voluntary sector and drug agencies are not adversely affected under regional commissioning; [184893]

(2) what evidence he has collated on whether regional commissioning of drugs or alcohol services lead to economies of scale. [184892]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The national treatment agency (NTA) for substance misuse is developing guidance on models of regional commissioning, to enable implementation of regional systems for the commissioning of residential drug and alcohol misuse specific services (Tier 4). Clear and concise guidance setting out recommended models for regional commissioning of Tier 4 services will be available shortly. This will be used by NTA regional teams to implement local commissioning mechanisms by the end of December 2004.

The regional commissioning implementation is part of the NTA's Tier 4 work programme which has been widely consulted on by key stakeholders in the substance misuse field, including voluntary sector agencies. The consensus in consultation was that regional commissioning would lead to more effective and efficient commissioning of Tier 4 treatment, and would improve client access. Although not directly targeted at alcohol specific services, this work is applicable for all substance misuse services.

The Tier 4 work programme is advised by an advisory group consisting of a broad range of representatives involved in Tier 4 treatment provision, including voluntary and statutory sector service providers, commissioners and service users.

Food Labelling

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prosecutions were launched for wrong or inadequate food information labelling over the last year, broken down by local authority. [184441]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I am informed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) that the latest available information is for the calendar year 2001. Local authority data reported to the FSA shows that, during 2001, 137 premises were prosecuted for food labelling and presentation issues in England. The local authorities which took the prosecutions and the number of premises subject to prosecution by each authority are shown in the table.

Local authorities taking food labelling and presentation prosecutions for the year 2001

Local authority	*Number of premises prosecuted for food labelling and presentation issues*
Barnet	1
Bedfordshire	1
Buckinghamshire	4
Burnley	1
Coventry	5
Derby City	2
Dorset	1
Dudley	3
Durham	1
Ealing	1
East Yorkshire	4
Essex	9
Forest of Dean	1
Gloucestershire	1
Hampshire	4
Harlow	3
Hounslow	4
Kent	7
Lancashire	3
Leeds	2
Lincolnshire	1
Manchester	4
Milton Keynes	1
Newbury (West Berkshire)	2
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	4
Newham	1
North East Lincolnshire	2
North Yorkshire	4

Local authorities taking food labelling and presentation prosecutions for the year 2001

Local authority	*Number of premises prosecuted for food labelling and presentation issues*
Northamptonshire	12
Nottingham City	3
Plymouth City	1
Reading	1
Salford	3
Shropshire	4
Somerset	1
South Oxfordshire	1
Southampton	1
St. Helens	3
Stockport	1
Stockton-on-Tees	1
Stoke-on-Trent	2
Surrey	2
Tameside	1
The Wrekin	3
Tower Hamlets	1
Warwickshire	1
West Sussex	3
West Yorkshire	14
Westminster	1
Total	137

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his discussions with the Trading Standards Institute on food information labelling. [184442]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Food labelling as part of the enforcement of food law is the responsibility of local authorities. The Food Standards Agency provides advice, information or assistance relating to enforcement of food law generally and liaises regularly with the Trading Standards Institute and its members on such issues.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on progress being made by the European Union on the implementation of a common system of food information labelling; [184443]

(2) what discussions the Food Standards Agency had on the issue of food information labelling, with specific regard to the evolution of a common EU approach. [184444]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Food labelling rules are agreed at European Union level. Directive 2000/13/EC and the Nutrition Labelling Directive 90/46/EC provide the legislative framework. The European Commission is currently carrying out a comprehensive review of both these directives. It has said that it expects to adopt a proposal for amendment of 90/46/EC later this year and has asked member states for views on issues to be tackled in the review. The Food Standards Agency is currently consulting stakeholders before responding to this request.

Lager

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what studies he has made of *(a)* the purity of lager that is sold and *(b)* additives to lager. [184835]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no specific United Kingdom legislation governing the purity of lager or other beers. Any food must comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990, which makes it an offence to sell food that does not comply with food safety requirements or which is not of the nature or substance or quality demanded by the purchaser.

Only a small number of additives are authorised to be used in lager and these have all been subjected to a rigorous safety assessment. No surveys have been conducted on the use of these additives in lager.

Allergy Services

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on allergy services in England; [183319]

(2) what the average length of time is that a patient has to wait to see a NHS allergy specialist. [183329]

Dr. Ladyman: The national health service improvement programme, "Putting People at the Heart of Public Services", sets out the commitment that the NHS will build a responsive service tailored to people living with long-term conditions including allergies. There are already substantial initiatives which will help patients with long term diseases, including:

The development of standards for better health.

The expert patient programme.

The chronic disease management programme.

Food Standards agency work on food allergy.

The new general practitioner contract.

It is the role of primary care trusts, in partnership with local stakeholders, to decide what services to provide to meet the health needs of their populations, including those with allergies. They are best placed to understand local health care needs and commission services to meet them.

Information on the average length of time a patient waits to see a NHS allergy specialist is not held centrally. This is because a patient with an allergy can be seen by a range of specialists including dermatologists, immunologists and respiratory disease physicians, as well as allergists. We expect that any patient being referred for a first outpatient appointment by their general practitioner should be seen within the national 17 week maximum waiting time.

Assisted Reproduction

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority inspects clinics outside the United Kingdom involved in egg and sperm collection; and if he will make a statement; [185015]

(2) how much the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority spent on overseas visits for *(a)* inspection and *(b)* public relations purposes in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement; [185030]

(3) which overseas fertility clinics the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority *(a)* visited in each year since 1997 and *(b)* plans to visit for inspection purposes; and if he will make a statement. [185031]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) does not inspect treatment or research establishments outside Great

Britain and Northern Ireland. Members and senior officers of the HFEA do make overseas visits to learn more about practice in other countries and to attend and speak at international conferences. They have also visited overseas establishments to investigate issues relating to the provision of treatment services within the United Kingdom. These included Cryos International Sperm Bank in Aarhus, Denmark in November 2003 and Global ART in Bucharest, Romania in July 2004.

The cost to the HFEA of overseas visits since 2003 are shown in the table:

Costs of overseas visits by HFEA members and staff 2003–04

	Cost (£)
2003[1]	5,481
2004[1,2]	10,039

[1] Includes attendance of a number of HFEA staff at the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology annual conference to meet requests for information and provide speakers for the main conference and fringe events.
[2] Figures from 1 January to 19 July 2004.

Figures from 1997 to 2002 can be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the sale of *(a)* human eggs and *(b)* human sperm is permitted in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [185016]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The sale of human gametes (sperm and eggs) is prohibited in the United Kingdom. Under section 12 of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990, no money or other benefits shall be given or received in respect of the supply of gametes unless authorised by directions from the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). These directions authorise a maximum payment of £15.00 per donation plus reasonable expenses. The HFEA's code of practice gives guidance to clinics on what claims could be considered as reasonable expenses.

Biochemical Assay

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions, in each of the last five years, NHS medical staff working within the chemical and laboratory facilities associated with the National Poisons Information Service have sent biological samples from patients for biochemical assay to agrochemical companies; which companies were used; for what exposures; and whether independent checks were carried out on the results. [184452]

Miss Melanie Johnson: No biological samples have been sent by the National Poisons Information Service associated laboratories for assay by the agrochemical industry. It may be possible that other national health service laboratories have sent such samples, but no central register is held.

Cancer

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of people who will suffer from cancer in *(a)* 2005, *(b)* 2010 and *(c)* 2020. [185508]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government has made no long-term estimate of the future numbers of people who will be diagnosed with cancer.

Care Homes

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many care homes *(a)* closed and *(b)* opened in east Devon in each of the past five years. [182048]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of homes opening and closing is not centrally available. The table shows the number of care homes in Devon as at 31 March for the years 1999 to 2001. Data on the number of care homes in east Devon is not centrally available.

Number of care homes[1] in Devon[2], 1999 to 2001

	Rounded numbers Number[1]
1999	1,380
2000	1,300
2001	1,220

Notes:
[1] Nursing data includes general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.
[2] Residential data refers to Devon council with Social Services Responsibilities. Nursing data refers to north and east Devon and south and west Devon health authorities.
Source:
RA and Rh(N) form A.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is responsible for collecting information on care homes in England from 1 April 2004; and previously the National Care Standards Commission from 1 April 2002. I understand from the chair of the CSCI that for technical reasons CSCI cannot currently provide sub-national data on the numbers of care homes.

Coronary Heart Disease

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes there were for *(a)* paediatric, *(b)* adolescent and *(c)* adult coronary heart disease treatment in (i) England and (ii) each strategic health authority in each year since 1996. [184101]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Delayed Discharges

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many delayed discharges were recorded in the South East in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04. [185506]

Dr. Ladyman: Figures for delayed transfers of care have been supplied for every quarter in 2002–03 and 2003–04, at primary care trust level and are available in the Library, including the latest figures for 2003–04, quarter 4 (March 2004). Nationally, the total number of patients of all ages occupying an acute bed with a delayed transfer, fell from 4,100 in March 2003 to 2,821 in March 2004.

Dentistry

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to increase the provision of dental treatment under the national health service in Essex. [184496]

Dr. Ladyman: The health economy in Essex has received an additional £1.5 million access funding from the Department, which primary care trusts (PCTs) will use to commission additional national health service dental capacity from existing practices and to provide new dental practices.

To ensure that more people can see a NHS dentist when and where they need, the equivalent of 1,000 dentists nationally will be recruited by October 2005.

In addition, NHS dentistry will benefit from unprecedented investment:

the Government will fund 170 extra undergraduate dental training places in England from October 2005, a 25 per cent., increase. Revenue costs for this will reach £29 million by 2010–11.

capital investment of £80 million over four years to support this expansion.

by 2005–06, NHS dentistry will receive extra funding of over £250 million a year, an increase of 19.3 per cent., compared with spending in 2003–04.

in recognition of the additional work and training dentists and their practice staff will need to prepare for changes, an extra £9 million will be provided to help dental practices prepare.

Additionally reforms will be introduced to modernise the dentistry profession for the 21st century through:

a new dentists contract making it possible for them to spend more time with patients and encourage preventative care.

using the skills of the entire dental team more efficiently with new roles for hygienists and dental nurses.

local PCTs, including those in Essex, will use the £1.6 billion devolved budget to ensure that local expenditure on dentistry is sustained.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of national health service dental treatment was in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1974 to 1998 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the boroughs of Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea in each year from 1998 to 2003. [184497]

Dr. Ladyman: The gross and net fees paid to dentists for the provision of general dental services (GDS) represent the main element of primary dental care costs and are the data most readily available by health authority area. Data since 1992–93 are shown in the table. These figures exclude some payments to dentists such as commitment payments, maternity and seniority payments as well as superannuation payments made on their behalf. There is a discontinuity in the figures in the middle of 2002–03 because of the change in health administration areas.

Community, personal and hospital dental services have not been included in this table; these are directly commissioned by individual health authorities from locally managed resources rather than funded from a central national budget as is the case with the GDS.

NHS dental service: Gross and net fees paid by the GDS—March ending each year

£ million

	Health authority/ primary care trust	*Gross fees*	*Net fees*[1]
1992–93	Essex HA	38.6	25.9
1993–94	Essex HA	37.2	24.7
1994–95	Essex HA	39.9	26.4
1995–96	Essex HA	39.8	26.4
1996–97	Essex HA	40.6	26.9
1997–98	Essex HA	41.4	27.1
1998–99	Essex HA	45.1	29.1
1999–2000	Essex HA	47.3	30.6
2000–01	Essex HA	51.0	32.8
2001–02	Essex HA	51.8	33.1
2002–03			
First half	Essex HA	36.6	27.0
Second half	Essex SHA	26.3	16.9
	Southend-on-Sea PCT	3.1	2.1
	Thurrock PCT	1.7	1.2

[1] Excludes patient charge.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients received dental treatment from the national health service in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1974 to 1998 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the boroughs of Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea in each year from 1998 to 2003. [184498]

Dr. Ladyman: The information in the table shows the number of people registered with a general dental service dentist in Essex at 30 September year from 1992 to 2003 and for Thurrock and Southend-on Sea for 2002 and 2003.

Registration started in October 1990 and the numbers did not stabilise until 1992. Registrations lapse if patients do not return to their dentist within 15 months and so the registration figures exclude patients who have not been to their dentist within the past 15 months. The figures also exclude patients who receive dental treatment from other national health service dental services including dental access centres and those patients who choose not to register and who seek treatment on an occasional basis.

General dental service: number of registered patients September each year (thousand)—Essex family health services authority (FHSA), health authority (HA) and strategic health authority (SHA) and primary care trusts (PCTs)

	Number
FHSA	
1992	636
1993	643
1994	642
1995	612
Essex HA	
1996	829
1997	821
1998	737
1999	764
2000	787
2001	774
Essex SHA	
2002	778
2003	767

General dental service: number of registered patients September each year (thousand)—Essex family health services authority (FHSA), health authority (HA) and strategic health authority (SHA) and primary care trusts (PCTs)

	Number
Southend-on-Sea PCT	
2002	83
2003	81
Thurrock PCT	
2002	43
2003	45

Source:
Dental Practice Board.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists undertook national health service treatment in *(a)* the County of Essex in each year from 1974 to 1998 and *(b)* the County of Essex and the boroughs of Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea in each year from 1998 to 2003. [184499]

Dr. Ladyman: The information shown in the table is for the number of general (GDS) and personal dental service (PDS) dentists in Essex in each year from 1974 to 2003 and for Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea Primary Care Trust (PCT) areas for the years 2002 and 2003, which covers the period that the two PCTs have been in existence.

General and personal dental service: number of dentists at September each year
Essex family practitioner committee (FPC), family health services authority (FHSA), health authority (HA), SHA and primary care trusts (PCTs)

	Number
FPC	
1974	284
1975	291
1976	308
1977	320
1978	305
1979	319
1980	339
1981	344
1982	366
1983	384
1984	389
1985	405
1986	405
1987	413
1988	414
1989	430
FHSA	
1990	418
1991	441
1992	438
1993	460
1994	465
1995	472
HA	
1996	476
1997	497
1998	513
1999	532
2000	560
2001	566

General and personal dental service: number of dentists at September each year
Essex family practitioner committee (FPC), family health services authority (FHSA), health authority (HA), SHA and primary care trusts (PCTs)

	Number
SHA	
2002	556
2003	542
Southend-on-sea PCT	
2002	56
2003	56
Thurrock PCT	
2002	39
2003	37

Note:
PDS figure covers dentists not already working in the GDS.
Source:
Dental Practice Board

Expert Patients Programme

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the implications of the Expert Patients Programme for the UK. [184566]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The implications of setting up an expert patients programme in the United Kingdom were assessed by the expert patients taskforce set up in 2000. It concluded that such a programme had the potential to create a cadre of expert patients—people who have the confidence, skills, information and knowledge to play a central role in the management of life with chronic diseases and to minimise the impact of disease on their lives. From the evidence base available it also concluded that the tangible benefits would include:

- reduced severity of symptoms;
- significant decrease in pain;
- improved life control and activity;
- improved resourcefulness and life satisfaction.

A copy of the report can be found at: http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4006801&chk=UQCoh9

An independent evaluation of the programme is being conducted by the national primary care research and development centre at the University of Manchester and the centre for health economics at the University of York. A copy of their report of a preliminary survey of patients to identify barriers to establishing functional self-management programmes in the National Health Service can be found at: http://www.npcrdc.man.ac.uk/PublicationDetail.cfm?ID=105

Fairer Charging Policies

Mr. John Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he plans to review the impact of the Fairer Charging Guidance; [183776]

(2) what examples of best practice he has identified in using income from charging for personal care to improve services for *(a)* people with disabilities and *(b)* older people; [183777]

(3) what assessment he has made of the effect of charging for personal care on community care services; [183778]

(4) what proportion of income derived from charging for personal care services has been spent on services for *(a)* people with a disability and *(b)* older persons; [183779]

(5) what plans he has to monitor the impact of the fairer charging policies for home care and other non-residential social services in England. [183812]

Dr. Ladyman: We plan in due course to monitor and evaluate the impact of the guidance, "Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care". Information on council's use of income from charging is not held centrally.

Fairfield Hospital, Bury

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses and *(c)* support staff were employed by Fairfield Hospital, Bury, in each of the last 10 years. [184747]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is only available from 1995 onwards and is shown in the table.

NHS hospital public health medicine and community health services: Medical and dental and non-medical staff by specified staff group in each specified NHS Trust—30 September each specified year

	Headcount								
	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Bury Health Care NHS Trust									
Medical and dental staff	171	183	183	193	202	215	220	—	—
Qualified nurses	906	874	881	878	907	944	997	—	—
Support to clinical staff—Total	738	724	690	738	762	775	892	—	—
Support to doctors and nurses	674	657	620	658	678	698	805	—	—
Support to ST&T	64	67	70	80	84	77	87	—	—
NHS infrastructure support—Total	348	333	316	311	313	333	340	—	—
Central functions	119	119	112	117	114	135	145	—	—
Hotel property and estate staff	208	192	186	175	180	178	175	—	—
Managers and senior managers	21	22	18	19	19	20	20	—	—
North Manchester Health Care NHS Trust									
Medical and dental staff	235	416	331	329	387	386	379	—	—
Qualified nurses	1,068	1,078	1,184	1,195	1,103	1,085	885	—	—
Support to clinical staff—Total	870	893	1,109	1,152	1,053	1,057	966	—	—
Support to doctors and nurses	794	817	1,035	1,048	942	946	855	—	—
Support to ST&T	76	76	74	104	111	111	111	—	—
NHS infrastructure support—Total	617	595	497	449	448	455	494	—	—
Central functions	264	257	250	225	226	244	282	—	—
Hotel property and estate staff	309	295	208	184	190	178	173	—	—
Managers and senior managers	44	43	39	40	32	33	39	—	—
Oldham NHS Trust									
Medical and dental staff	194	209	232	245	243	251	242	—	—
Qualified nurses	1,213	1,229	1,185	1,191	1,203	1,292	1,296	—	—
Support to clinical staff—Total	778	899	974	970	1,028	1,115	1,226	—	—
Support to doctors and nurses	655	771	841	839	875	955	1,017	—	—
Support to ST&T	123	128	133	131	153	160	209	—	—
NHS infrastructure support—Total	476	462	450	491	497	532	603	—	—
Central functions	167	159	159	192	191	208	187	—	—
Hotel property and estate staff	275	269	262	278	274	291	375	—	—
Managers and senior managers	34	34	29	31	32	33	41	—	—
Rochdale NHS Trust									
Medical and dental staff	167	179	182	180	195	187	182	—	—
Qualified nurses	990	983	1,001	1,040	859	1,015	915	—	—
Support to clinical staff—Total	868	952	908	936	1,183	1,065	1,300	—	—
Support to doctors and nurses	788	859	811	836	1,063	953	1,180	—	—
Support to ST&T	80	93	97	100	120	112	120	—	—
NHS infrastructure support—Total	389	401	400	395	406	392	507	—	—
Central functions	168	171	170	176	189	176	150	—	—
Hotel property and estate staff	218	217	217	206	196	197	309	—	—
Managers and senior managers	3	13	13	13	21	19	48	—	—
Tameside and Glossop Community and Priority Services NHS Trust									
Medical and dental staff	79	76	90	97	89	86	40	—	—
Qualified nurses	802	905	911	928	892	903	664	—	—
Support to clinical staff—Total	387	458	490	465	438	495	337	—	—
Support to doctors and nurses	344	416	449	423	378	429	271	—	—
Support to ST&T	43	42	41	42	60	66	66	—	—
NHS infrastructure support—Total	156	191	201	196	258	262	246	—	—
Central functions	105	118	120	114	114	111	114	—	—
Hotel property and estate staff	49	70	72	74	132	127	108	—	—
Managers and senior managers	2	3	9	8	12	24	24	—	—

NHS hospital public health medicine and community health services: Medical and dental and non-medical staff by specified staff group in each specified NHS Trust—30 September each specified year

	Headcount								
	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Bury PCT									
Medical and dental staff	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19	21
Qualified nurses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	240	243
Support to clinical staff—Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	181	184
Support to doctors and nurses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	164	163
Support to ST&T	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17	21
NHS infrastructure support—Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	152	179
Central functions	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	119	139
Hotel property and estate staff	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	11
Managers and senior managers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	20
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	963	746
Medical and dental staff	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	963	746
Qualified nurses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,922	3,221
Support to clinical staff—Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,162	3,430
Support to doctors and nurses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2,724	2,974
Support to ST&T	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	438	456
NHS infrastructure support—Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,856	1,707
Central functions	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	714	610
Hotel property and estate staff	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	987	959
Managers and senior managers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	155	138
Pennine Care NHS Trust									
Medical and dental staff	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	76	93
Qualified nurses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	637	797
Support to clinical staff—Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	714	1,031
Support to doctors and nurses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	674	989
Support to ST&T	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	40	42
NHS infrastructure support—Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	187	221
Central functions	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	67	91
Hotel property and estate staff	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	92	95
Managers and senior managers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	28	35

Notes:
1. The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust was formed in 2002 following the merger of Rochdale NHS Trust and the Oldham NHS Trust.
2. The Pennine Care NHS Trust was formed in 2002 following a merger of North Manchester Health Care Trust and Bury Health Care NHS Trust.

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Health Food Supplements

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to meet members of the health food supplements industry; what recent progress has been made with European Union directives which affect this industry; and if he will make a statement. [184297]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I met with representatives of the health food supplements industry on 20 and 21 July.

European Directive 2002/46/EC came into force on 12 July 2002. It has been implemented by The Food Supplements (England) Regulations 2003 and similar legislation in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which come into force on 1 August 2005.

HIB Vaccine

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce a booster dose of HIB vaccine for young children; and if he will make a statement. [184986]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Following the recent "Haemophilus influenzae" (Hib) booster campaign, the rate of Hib disease in children aged one to four has fallen by 87 per cent.

Before we can consider whether a booster dose of Hib should be offered routinely as part of the routine immunisation programme, an evaluation of the impact of the recent Hib campaign will need to be assessed and advice sought from the joint committee on vaccination and immunisation.

Intermediate Care

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS hospital trusts provide intermediate care facilities. [185003]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* This information is not collected centrally.

Manchester, Central

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public money has been spent on health in Manchester, Central in each of the last seven years. [184171]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Central Manchester, has increased from £582.33 in 1997–98 to £992.61 in 2002–03 (the latest year

available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head, as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Mental Health

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the financial position of the Manchester Mental Health Trust. [184738]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested on the financial situation of the Manchester Mental Health Care Trust is not available in-year.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the total number of NHS in-patients is comprised of mental health in-patients who have been in hospital for more than a year. [185558]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 July]*: There were 7,440[1] inpatients under the care of a mental illness consultant with a length of stay of a year or longer on 31 March 2003. On the same day, the estimated number of unfinished episodes in National Health Service hospitals for all specialties was 117,550 [1,2].

Therefore, the estimated percentage of the total number of all national health service inpatients on 31 March 2003 comprised of by mental health inpatients who had been in hospital for more than a year is 6.3 per cent.

[1] The information is from Hospital Episode Statistics.

Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

[2] Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many in-patients have been in NHS hospitals under the care of mental health consultants for more than a year, excluding those with *(a)* dementia and *(b)* learning difficulties. [185559]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: This information is not available, as centrally held data on unfinished hospital episodes cannot be broken down by diagnosis.

Myasthenia Gravis

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on myasthenia gravis; and what support is available for sufferers of the disease in Blackpool north and Fleetwood constituency. [184115]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Myasthenia gravis is a neurological condition characterised by fluctuating levels of muscle weakness. There is no cure but treatment includes medication, surgery and palliation.

The national service framework (NSF) for long term conditions will focus on improving services for people with neurological conditions. While the NSF will not cover myasthenia gravis specifically, it will recommend improvements in standards, care and support that will benefit everyone with a neurological condition. We are committed to publishing the NSF as soon as possible.

Primary care trusts, in partnership with other local stakeholders, determine how best to use their funds to provide health services for their populations, including those with myasthenia gravis.

Neuro Disability Centre (Newcastle)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the business case for a new neuro disability centre in Newcastle upon Tyne has been approved; and when he expects Hunters Moor hospital to close. [185560]

Miss Melanie Johnson: An outline business case for a new neuro disability centre in Newcastle upon Tyne was agreed by Northumberland Tyne & Wear Strategic Health Authority in September 2003. Work is now taking place on the full business case. This is expected to be completed in the autumn of this year.

It is expected that Hunters Moor hospital will close in late 2006.

Personal Care Charges

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list examples he has collated of best practice in councils income from charging for personal care to improve services for *(a)* disabled people and *(b)* older people. [183820]

Dr. Ladyman: We plan in due course to monitor and evaluate the impact of the guidance, Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care. Information on councils' use of income from charging is not held centrally.

Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for which Pesticides Safety Directorate and Health and Safety Executive approved pesticides and biocides there are no assays for biological samples in human poisoning cases held by the NHS. [184451]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD) does hold analysis methods for many of the active ingredients contained in the products licensed by them as pesticides.

There are currently no biocides approved by the Health and Safety Executive under the biocidal products directive.

Pesticide assays for biological samples are not offered routinely by most national health service laboratories. Assays for paraquat are available from a selected group of NHS laboratories. In exceptional circumstances, NHS laboratories are able to test for other compounds.

Schizophrenia

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of *(a)* research linking the regular consumption of cannabis with schizophrenia and *(b)* the effects of cannabis use on schizophrenia sufferers; and if he will make a statement; [184428]

(2) if his Department will commission further research into *(a)* the possible link between the regular smoking of cannabis with schizophrenia and *(b)* the effects of cannabis on schizophrenia sufferers; and if he will make a statement. [184429]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A number of recent Department funded policy research projects have been completed that have contributed to informing the Department's assessment on the scale and impact of the use of cannabis in those with mental health problems.

The Department has kept under review the national and international epidemiological and other research on these topics and has obtained expert advice on interpreting the research base.

The Department has no plans at present to commission further research into the possible link between the regular smoking of cannabis with schizophrenia. The Department has recently commissioned, jointly with the Medical Research Council, a multi-site, randomised controlled trial, "Evaluating a Psychological Intervention for clients with Schizophrenia and Co-morbid Substance Abuse". The Department is also currently considering commissioning additional work in this area.

The Department also monitors national and international research and has a range of expert advisers to inform policy.

Sleep Apnoea

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes there were for *(a)* paediatric and *(b)* adolescent obesity-related sleep apnoea treatment in (i) England and (ii) each strategic health authority in each year since 1996. [184100]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Solvent Abuse

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to require further warnings on aerosol cans of the dangers of solvent abuse. [184586]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has no immediate plans on placing further warnings on aerosol cans advising of the dangers of solvent abuse. Although voluntary, the British Aerosol Manufacturing Association estimates that approximately 90 per cent. of all cans carry warnings.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he last met *(a)* Solv-It and *(b)* Re-Solv to discuss solvent abuse. [184588]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Yvette Cooper) met with Re-Solv in November 2001 to discuss volatile solvent abuse. Departmental officials have continued to meet with Re-Solv.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the health effects of solvent abuse. [184589]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Adverse effects vary greatly with the specific substance and mode of administration.

There is a wide range of immediate physical health effects reported including: flushed face and neck; cold sweats; loss of balance, unsteadiness, lack of co-ordination; fainting; headache; nausea and vomiting; confusion, dizziness, disorientation; tachycardia, palpitations; drowsiness, sedation, unconsciousness and risk of accidental injury while intoxicated.

There is a range of potential immediate psychological adverse effects reported including: confusional states, disorientation; distorted perceptions, delusions, hallucinations, pseudo-hallucinations, and aggression, agitation or fear.

A number of immediate socially significant adverse effects have been reported including: accidents (road traffic accidents, swimming accidents, fires, falls); disinhibition, possibly leading to engagement in high risk behaviour (dangerous driving, unsafe sexual practices), or the risk of becoming a victim of crime; acute intoxication that may possibly result in aggressive and violent behaviour, or disorderly conduct; relationship problems and impairment of educational achievements in adolescents.

Adverse effects of longer-term use that have been reported include: peripheral neurological damage and brain damage; renal failure; hepatotoxicity; severe gastrointestinal upset; muscle damage, and in the very long term, for example, 10 years or so, lasting impairment of brain function—affecting especially control of movement. Some of these effects may be reversible on stopping use.

Fatal toxicity varies greatly with the specific substance, and the causes of death can be unclear. A number of causes of death through solvent abuse have been described including: most commonly, cardiac arrhythmia or accident; loss of consciousness and death through choking on vomit; suffocation, for example, if a plastic bag is placed over the head to inhale and asphyxiation from blocked airways, (due to intense cooling in mouth) and laryngeal spasm caused by squirting lighter fuel down throat.

Combining use with alcohol and other central nervous system depressants will bring increased risk of asphyxiation and death.

Solitary use in potentially dangerous settings may increase risk of injury.

Tuberculosis (Asylum Seekers)

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of UK induction centres offer asylum seekers screening for tuberculosis. [184846]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are two induction centres operating in the United Kingdom: one in East Kent and the other in Yorkshire and Humberside. Both offer screening for tuberculosis.

Ungraded Eggs

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made by the Food Standards Agency of the possible risks to human health of allowing ungraded eggs to be sold unmarked. [184196]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The microbiological status of eggs does not affect whether they are graded and marked.

The sale of ungraded eggs, whether marked or not, is subject to the same food safety rules that apply to graded eggs, and in the circumstances, no particular assessment has been made of the possible risks to public health of allowing ungraded eggs to be sold unmarked.

Women's Health

Diana Organ: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many NHS locations perform *(a)* hydro thermo ablation, *(b)* microwave ablation, *(c)* balloon ablation and *(d)* uterine fibroid embolisation for the treatment of menorrhagia or uterine fibroids; [181139]

(2) how many people in the last year suffering from menorrhagia or uterine fibroids were treated by *(a)* hydro thermo ablation, *(b)* microwave ablation, *(c)* balloon ablation and *(d)* uterine fibroid embolisation. [181140]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information in the form requested is not available. Data from hospital episode statistics (HES) giving counts of admissions to national health service hospitals is shown in the table.

Primary diagnosis (ICD-10 Diagnosis Codes D25, N92.-, N95.0) Selected combinations of main operations and secondary operations
Count of finished admission episodes. NHS Hospital, England, 2002–03

Operation	*Total episodes*
Endoscopic, theraputic and other operations on uterus	9,923
b) Microwave ablation	1,116
c) Balloon ablation	1,317
d) Uterine fibroid embolisation	286

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
3. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the HES data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
4. The main operation is the first recorded operation in the HES data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode.
5. Diagnosis Codes
The ICD10 codes for menorrhagia and uterine fibroids are:
Primary Diagnosis
N92.- Excessive, frequent and irregular menstruation.
N95.0—Postmenopausal bleeding.
D25.- Leiomyoma of uterus.
Procedure Codes
a) Hydro thermal ablation
No specific OPCS4 code but would be in either Q16.- or Q17.- (data above provided as background).
b) Microwave ablation
Main Operation
Q16.8 Other specified, other vaginal operations on uterus. Or
Q17.4 Endoscopic destruction of lesion of uterus nec.
Secondary operation
Y11.4 Radiofrequency controlled thermal destruction of organ nec.
c)Balloon ablation
Main Operation
Q16.8 Other specified, other vaginal operations on uterus.
Secondary operation
Y11.8 Other specified, other destruction of organ.
d)Uterine fibroid embolisation
Main Operation
L71.3 Percutaneous Transluminal embolisation of artery nec.
Secondary operation
Z38.8 Specified terminal branch of aorta nec.
Source:
Hospital episode statistics, Department of Health.

Information relating specifically to hydro thermal ablation is not available. However, this would be included in the count under the heading "Endoscopic, therapeutic and other operations on uterus".

117 trusts performed hydro thermo ablation, microwave ablation, balloon ablation or uterine fibroid embolisation for the treatment of menorrhagia or uterine fibroids. Information on which trusts performed hydro thermo ablation for the treatment of menorrhagia or uterine fibroids is not available.

Yellow Card Scheme

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the validity of criticisms of the Yellow Card scheme published in the "International Journal of Risk and Safety of Medicine" (2003, 16, 3–17); what account he has taken of the view of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency on the matter; and what steps he has taken *(a)* to ensure that there has been no significant miscoding and misinterpretation of Yellow Card adverse drug reaction reports for paroxetine and *(b)* to ensure that there has been effective follow-up of reports relating to suspected paroxetine-induced suicidal behaviour. [178431]

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency criticisms of the Yellow Card scheme published in the "International Journal of Risk and Safety of Medicine" (2003, 16, 3–17); and what assessment he has made of *(a)* the adequacy of the coding and interpretation of Yellow Card adverse drug reaction reports for paroxetine and *(b)* the effectiveness of the follow-up of reports relating to suspected paroxetine-induced suicidal behaviour. [178696]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Yellow Card scheme was recently subject to an independent review led by Dr. Jeremy Metters and the recommendations of the review are out to consultation, apart from the recommendation to introduce direct patient reporting, which has been accepted in principle.

The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has carefully reviewed the criticisms made in the article by Medawar and Herxheimer in relation to follow up and coding of reports of suspected adverse reactions associated with paroxetine (Seroxat) received through the yellow card scheme. Professor Herxheimer and Mr. Medawar contributed to the Metters review.

Yellow cards submitted by health care professionals are held as scanned images and coded data are transposed onto the adverse drug reactions online information tracking (ADROIT) system. This is a relational database of around 500,000 reports, which enables complex analyses to be performed to detect new or changing drug safety hazards. Data from the yellow

card scheme cannot be used to quantify the risk of an adverse reaction. Standard operating procedures are in place which ensure quality control of data.

Errors in transposition onto the database occur at a low rate and are kept to a minimum by quality checks. These transposition errors do not impact on signal detection and risk evaluation.

The standardised terms used for coding were based on what has become the internationally adopted standard in drug regulation, MedDRA—the medical dictionary for regulatory activities. The ADROIT classification procedure reflects as closely as possible the words used by the reporter rather than introducing further interpretation of the reporter's words. The image of the original yellow card is available alongside the electronic record. This enables the MHRA to assess the totality of the yellow card data, which are routinely examined when risk assessment is undertaken, along with other data sources.

The MHRA will respond directly to the authors of the article and a copy of that reply will be placed in the Library.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Clinical Negligence

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) how many legal aid funded clinical negligence cases were successful in each year since 1997; [185043]

(2) in how many clinical negligence claims legal costs exceeded damages paid to patients in each year since 1997; [185044]

(3) if he will list the *(a)* legal costs and *(b)* damages awarded for clinical negligence cases in each year since 1997. [185045]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission is unable to provide the information necessary to answer the questions immediately. I will write to the hon. Member once the information becomes available.

Community Legal Service

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what areas of activity are covered by the Community Legal Service. [185151]

Mr. Lammy: The Community Legal Service (CLS) provides access to legal advice and representation across a number of common categories of law: family, housing, welfare benefits, debt, immigration and nationality, employment, mental health, consumer and general contract, clinical negligence, personal injury, actions against the police, education, community care, and public law.

These categories relate to all in the community but particularly focus on the problems that face some of the most vulnerable members of society.

Support is provided for a range of services within these categories including legal help, help at court, legal representation, family mediation, help with mediation and general family help.

Community Legal Services

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how the new Community Legal Services Directory line will be monitored for *(a)* quality of advice, *(b)* access to advice and *(c)* capacity. [185262]

Mr. Lammy: The new Community Legal Service (CLS) Direct telephone has been designed to produce management information that will enable all key aspects of service to be monitored closely.

Advice delivered through the telephone service is subject to the same CLS specialist quality mark assurance that applies to CLS-funded face to face advice. There is also an additional set of quality requirements that apply solely to telephone advice, and telephone contractors are audited against these criteria. A sample of the advice given by the telephone contractors will also be subject to peer review by recognised experts, to ensure that it is of high standard.

The statistics generated relating to CLS Direct will give the Legal Service (LSC) an excellent new method of surveying where and how advice is accessed, the areas where demand for advice is greatest, and how this compares with supply. Telephone advice offers an easy means of accessing advice for people with disabilities, people in remote areas and people who have caring responsibilities. The LSC uses client feedback surveys to monitor whether telephone advice is effectively reaching these groups.

The number of calls received and cases opened will be monitored to establish trends. The telephone service can be easily scaled up to keep pace with demand. Advice providers within CLS Direct are contracted to deliver an agreed volume of advice hours per year, and one of the criteria the LSC used to select contractors was their ability to expand their number of advice hours if required.

Housing

Mr. Webb: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs for how many empty houses his Department is responsible; and if he will make a statement. [182151]

Mr. Lammy: There are no empty houses on the departmental estate.

Individual Case Contracts

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what savings have been made since the introduction of individual case contracts for very high cost criminal cases. [185037]

Mr. Lammy: From September 2003 the Legal Services Commission (LSC) has been bringing all new eligible cases under contract. Research prior to the introduction of VHCCC contracts suggested that savings of about 30 per cent. might be achieved. The LSC is conducting

a survey of non-contracted VHCCC cases in order to establish a benchmark to compare with contracted VHCCC cases. However VHCCC cases are by their nature, long and complex and their attributes vary greatly from case to case. It will therefore be some time before a sufficient number of contracted cases have been completed before sensible comparisons can be made between contract and non-contract cases and before a reliable estimate of the savings can be made. However, the LSC calculates that during 2003–04 savings of around £26.5 million were achieved.

Prior to 2003–04 a pilot scheme was operated. While relatively few contracts were managed during this period the LSC estimates that savings of around £7 million were realised.

Judicial Appointments Commission

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whom the Judicial Appointments Commission will consist of. [185022]

Mr. Leslie: Schedule 12 of the Constitutional Reform Bill provides that the Commission will consist of a lay chairman, five judicial members, two professional members (a barrister and a solicitor), five lay members, a tribunal (or similar) member and a lay justice.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the planned costs are of the proposed Judicial Appointments Commission. [185040]

Mr. Leslie: Our estimate for the annual running cost of the Judicial Appointments Commission is £8.5 million per year, reducing to £8 million, from 2008–09 due to its planned partial relocation out of London and the south-east.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Judicial Appointments Commission will be set up. [185041]

Mr. Leslie: The timetable for the setting up of the Commission is dependent on the passage of the Constitutional Reform Bill through Parliament. If the Bill receives Royal Assent by spring 2005, we would aim to launch the Commission in spring 2006.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the proposed establishment of an independent Judicial Appointments Commission. [185042]

Mr. Leslie: The Constitutional Reform Bill, currently before Parliament, will establish a Judicial Appointments Commission for England and Wales. The Commission will be responsible for selecting candidates for judicial appointment. The manner in which the Commission does so will be for it to determine, subject to the overriding criterion that selection must be on merit, and subject to any guidance which the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs may issue, for example, in requiring the Commission to seek to expand the pool of candidates from which a selection may be made.

Legal Adviser Costs

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much the Government has paid to *(a)* profit-making and *(b)* not-for-profit legal advisers for legal aid cases in each year since 1997. [185035]

Mr. Lammy: Payments made in each year since 1997 to *(a)* profit-making and *(b)* not-for-profit legal suppliers for legal aid work were as follows:

£ million

	Payments to profit-making agencies[1]	*Payments to not-for-profit-making agencies*[1]
1997–98	1,948.6	12.9
1998–99	2,039.8	17.3
1999–2000	1,950.6	18.5
2000–01	2,035.4	29.2
2001–02	2,065.2	47.5
2002–03	2,189.0	56.9
2003–04	2,316.0	58.1

[1] All payments are gross of contributions paid by funded clients and costs and damages paid by other parties.

Legal Aid

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost of post-charge legal aid has been in each year since 1997. [185033]

Mr. Lammy: The cost of providing post-charge legal aid in England and Wales for each financial year since 1997–98 was as follows:

	£ million
1997–98	609.1
1998–99	651.0
1999–2000	640.7
2000–01	705.3
2001–02	810.7
2002–03	907.8
2003–04	985.4

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what reforms are planned for post-charge legal aid. [185036]

Mr. Lammy: My Department published the Draft Criminal Defence Service Bill together with a consultation paper on 17 May 2004, copies of which were placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The proposals set out in the Bill fall into two parts. Firstly, the transfer of the responsibility for grant of criminal legal aid from the courts to the Legal Services Commission, and secondly the re-introduction of the means test.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs for what categories of charge the Government plans to abolish post-charge legal aid. [185928]

Mr. Lammy: The Government is not planning to abolish post-charge legal aid for any category of charge.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost was of providing legal aid in immigration cases in each year since 1997. [185047]

Mr. Lammy: The overall costs for immigration and asylum advice, assistance and representation since 1997 in England and Wales were as follows:

	£million
1997–98	35
1998–99	53
1999–2000	61
2000–01	81
2001–02	129
2002–03	176
2003–04	200

The Legal Services Commission cannot separate the cost of immigration and nationality cases from asylum cases, but the vast majority are thought to relate to asylum. The substantial increase in legal aid expenditure has been due, in large part, to the introduction of legal aid for representation at appeal, efforts to reduce the backlog of asylum cases and increases in asylum seeker numbers. Cash figures are expected to remain high in 2004–05 as work continues to clear immigration and asylum backlogs.

We expect that costs will fall in subsequent years as a result of the current lower intake of asylum seekers and measures to control spending.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* not for profit organisations and *(b)* private practice firms are undertaking legal aid work; and what fields of work are covered by the former organisations. [185038]

Mr. Lammy: 414 Not for Profit (NfP) agencies and 5,033 solicitors' offices had a contract with the Legal Services Commission at 31 March 2004. Some solicitors' offices hold contracts in both civil and criminal work.

The total number of offices with General Civil Contracts at 31 March 2004 was 4,715. Of this figure, 4,301 were solicitors' firms and 414 were NfP agencies.

2,669 solicitors' offices were operating under Criminal Defence Services (CDS) contracts on 31 March 2004. As at 1 July 2004, on the introduction of the new General Criminal Contract, 2,525 firms had signed the contract.

NfP agencies undertake civil legal aid work in a range of categories within the civil category of law. In 2004 NfPs agencies held contracts in the following categories: family, community care, consumer, debt, education, employment, housing, immigration, mental health, public law and welfare benefits.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many firms have stopped doing legal aid work in each year since 1997. [185039]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission is able to provide figures for the number of solicitors' offices in England and Wales that have had civil contracts withdrawn each financial year since 2000, as follows:

	Number
April 2000 to March 2001	700
April 2001 to March 2002	539
April 2002 to March 2003	408
April 2003 to March 2004	633

The figures above do not distinguish between firms withdrawing from the legal aid scheme and those that have had their contracts terminated, as the Commission's systems do not make this distinction.

Contracting for criminal legal aid began in April 2001 with 2,931 suppliers. During 2001–02, 146 contracts were terminated and 151 were terminated in 2002–03. Between April 2003 and March 2004, 317 suppliers had criminal contracts terminated.

Figures prior to the introduction of contracting in 2000 are not available, as under the previous advice and assistance scheme there was no method of calculating how many firms stopped legal aid work.

Legal Services Commission

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans there are to charge interest on sums owed to the Legal Services Commission. [185032]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission already attaches interest to the majority of debts attributable to it. Cases relating to the statutory charge have since 1988 attached interest. The rate of interest is linked to the Bank of England base rate and currently stands at 5 per cent. simple interest. £50 million of the gross debt due to the Commission relates to interest.

Of other debts due to the Commission interest is not sought as they are normally payable immediately. Where it is necessary to pursue them through the issue of court proceedings interest at the standard debt rate (8 per cent.) is claimed.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will break down by type of debt the money owed to the Legal Services Commission. [185950]

Mr. Lammy: The break down by type of debt of the money owed to the Legal Services in 2003–04 is as follows:

	£ Amount
Contribution due from funded clients	29,509
Costs to be recovered	25,431
Statutory charge	263,896
Damages	12,904
Amounts due from suppliers	31,718
Recovery of defence costs orders	1,722
Accrued income European social fund	82
Prepayments and other accrued income	404
Total	365,666

Legal Services Direct

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many

telephone advisers will provide advisory services for Community Legal Services Direct *(a)* in total and *(b)* at any one time. [185150]

Mr. Lammy: The Community Legal Service (CLS) Direct helpline has 50 'full time equivalent' advisers. 41.5 advisers offer advice in three categories of law (debt, welfare benefits and education) in England and Wales and 8.5 advisers are contracted to offer advice in housing and employment law in particular targeted areas. There are also non-qualified call centre agents, providing services within the CLS Direct telephone system in relation to the CLS Directory and leaflets. Four more advisers, focusing on debt, benefits and housing advice in Wales, are planned to come on stream in late summer.

There is no fixed number of advisers present at any given time. The national helpline service has been designed to be able to react to demand and the Legal Services Commission monitors the distribution of calls throughout the day working with its contractors to ensure that the number of advisers available is proportionate to demand.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much the Government grant to Legal Services Direct is for the next financial year. [185218]

Mr. Lammy: No separate allocation for Community Legal Service Direct has been allowed in the total funding for the Legal Services Commission for 2005–06.

The overall cost of Community Legal Service Direct in 2004–05 is expected to be £6.5 million.

This is made up of the cost of the national telephone service, the website (formerly JustAsk!), CLS Directory and CLS information leaflets.

It includes all payments made to technical contractors, contracted telephone advisors, all staffing and management costs within the Community Legal Service Direct team, and associated promotional costs.

Solicitors

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans the Government has for reducing unproductive time spent by defence solicitors in *(a)* courts and *(b)* police stations. [185034]

Mr. Lammy: The Government are anxious to ensure that solicitors' time is spent productively at court and at police stations. Last year we consulted on proposals to focus both the court duty solicitor scheme and the police station duty solicitor scheme on those cases where an individual's liberty was at real risk or where an individual's interests could be properly advanced. These changes were introduced in regulations and in the General Criminal Contract on 17 May 2004. The Fundamental Legal Aid Review (FLAR) is looking at the efficiencies of the processes for defence solicitors in police stations, as is the Effective Trial Management Programme (ETMP) for the courts.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 22 July 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Iraq

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what percentage of households in Iraq have *(a)* working electricity and *(b)* running water; [184275]

(2) what percentage of the Iraqi population live below the poverty line for the country. [184276]

Hilary Benn: Social statistics available for Iraq are currently limited and unreliable. DFID is considering ways in which to assist building statistical capacity in Iraq and has made available £30 million to the UN, including for statistical support, through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility For Iraq.

The UN is working with the Iraqi Central Statistics Organisation and Ministries to develop up to date statistics. A United Nations Development Plan (UNDP) survey of Living Conditions of Iraqi Households is due to be completed in November this year and will include economic indicators such as income, day to day expenditures, availability of health and education facilities and access to public services. A World Food Programme Baseline Food Security Assessment, due next month, is likely to produce estimates of the amount of poverty in Iraq.

In early July, peak production was averaging around 4,500 MW, just above pre war production levels. Progress has not been as rapid as planned, primarily as a result of sabotage and security constraints. High summer demand due to increased temperatures has resulted in reduced hours of electricity supply to most areas of Iraq. Significant programmes of long-term rehabilitation of electrical infrastructure continue.

Estimates suggest that immediately after the conflict, 60 per cent. of urban and 30 per cent. of rural populations had access to safe water. Considerable work has taken place since the end of the conflict to improve the quantity, quality and reliability of water supplies. There are no reliable statistics of current coverage, but informal estimates by the former Coalition Provisional Authority (South) indicate that, in the south, coverage has increased by 10–15 per cent. since May 2003. Water quality and volume in Basra is expected to exceed pre-conflict levels during the summer of 2004.

The joint UN and World Bank Needs Assessments of last year estimated that of the 70 per cent. of the Iraqi population that live in urban areas, 30 per cent. live near the poverty line. Approximately 60 per cent. of the population is dependent on free food rations under the Public Distribution System (PDS). Poverty in southern Iraq is particularly serious. A 2003 World Food Programme study on chronic poverty calculated that approximately 21 per cent. of Iraq's centre/south population were chronically poor or unable to meet their basic needs over long periods of time, even after assistance provided through PDS.

Advertising

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money was spent on advertising and promotional literature for his Department's initiatives, broken down by year since 1997. [183804]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's expenditure on publicity, which forms a part of our effort to raise development awareness and understanding of international development issues in the UK, has been as follows:

£

	Amount
1996–97	579,916
1997–98	399,755
1998–99	674,531
1999–2000	879,354
2000–01	1,484,281
2001–02	1,286,053
2002–03	1,300,000
2002–04	773,772

DFID does not hold a separate advertising budget, the majority of advertising relates to recruitment advertising in newspapers and journals. Figures for the four calendar years 2000–03 are as follows. Expenditure figures for the previous years are not available:

£

	Amount
2000	751,972
2001	1,208,191
2002	914,571
2003	871,246

Africa (Trade)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what policies the Department has to stimulate trade between African countries. [185838]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) is supporting a number of initiatives on developing trade and regional integration between African countries. As part of the G8 Africa Action plan DFID has committed to support African efforts to advance regional economic integration and intra-African trade, including the development of regional institutions. This includes support for the work of the Trade and Regional Integration Department at the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the Africa Union's Trade, Customs and Immigration Ministerial Committee.

DFID is also supporting the regional economic communities in Africa to implement free trade areas and customs unions. One example is the £12 million regional trade facilitation programme to help expand trade in Southern Africa, and improve the incomes of poor people by increasing economic opportunities in the region. The programme will cover the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern African (COMESA) secretariats and member states.

The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) which are currently being negotiated between the EU and the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries also offer an opportunity to promote regional integration in Africa. One of the key objectives in the Cotonou agreement for EPAs is the development of trade between neighbouring countries. The UK is pressing the European Commission to ensure EPAs progress towards this objective as well as supporting capacity building in African countries to purse this in the negotiations.

Capacity Building Projects

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the institutional and regulatory capacity building projects *(a)* initiated and *(b)* funded by his Department each year since 1997 in (i) Asia, (ii) Europe, (iii) Central America, (iv) South America, (v) Oceania and (vi) Africa including the amounts (A) of money and (B) of aid in kind (1) pledged and (2) delivered to each; and if he will make a statement. [186231]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: It is not possible to give this information without incurring a disproportionate cost. DFID's "Policy Information Marker System" does not include specific markers for institutional or regulatory capacity building projects. While a substantial proportion of DFID projects have a capacity building component not all do so. To identify those that do would require examining all projects approved since 1997 individually. Since 1997 over 4,500 individual projects, each with a commitment level exceeding £100,000, have been approved. There are, of course, many other projects that have been approved below this ceiling.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost was of running the Overseas Development Administration's canteen facilities in 1996–97; and what the cost of running his Department's canteen facilities was in the latest year for which figures are available. [185568]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The costs of running DFID's canteen facilities in 1996–97, and for the last financial year, are as follows:

£

	Amount
1996–97	51,214
2003–04	181,237

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost has been of refurbishments to the fabric of buildings owned by his Department *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* overseas since May 1997. [185569]

Hilary Benn: Refurbishments to DFID buildings in the UK over the period in question are as follows:

1 Palace Street, London

(a) Refurbishment project over the period 2000–01—2001–02, total cost £27 million

(b) Maintenance and repair works to exterior of building, in accordance with

requirements of lease, 2003/04, cost £1.2 million

(c) Refurbishment/replacement of lifts, 2003/04, cost £350,000.

20 Victoria Street, London

(a) Refurbishment of building over the period 2001–02, total cost £1.2 million.

Abercrombie House, East Kilbride

(a) Refurbishment project over the period 2002–03 to date (due for completion late 2004), total cost £16 million.

Information on refurbishment costs in our overseas offices is not collated centrally and is not readily available. To give the figures requested would incur a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether office furniture designated for overseas offices owned by his Department is purchased *(a)* locally and *(b)* from the UK. [185570]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Responsibility for the procurement of furniture in our overseas offices is normally delegated to the head of the office concerned. In the vast majority of cases procurement is carried out locally.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost has been of replacement office furniture within buildings owned by his Department *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* overseas since May 1997. [185546]

Hilary Benn: The total cost of replacement furniture within buildings owned by DFID, purchased within the UK since May 1997, is £3,128,000. Information on expenditure on furniture in our overseas offices is not collated centrally; to provide the figures requested would incur a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost was of printing *(a)* Overseas Development Administration headed notepaper in 1996–97 and *(b)* Department for International Development headed notepaper in the last year for which figures are available. [185561]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not use pre-printed headed notepaper, and has not done so for many years, including the period in question. Headed paper is produced using templates on our internal IT systems.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent by *(a)* the Overseas Development Administration in 1996–97 and *(b)* his Department in the last year for which figures are available on academic consultants;

and how many academic papers were published as a result of their work in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the last year for which figures are available. [185562]

Hilary Benn: DFID's headquarters procurement group issued consultancy contracts to universities worth £15,189,439 in 1996–97 and £7,093,078 in 2003–04. Information from overseas offices is not held centrally and could only be provided by incurring a disproportionate cost.

DFID does not maintain a record of academic papers published.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent by *(a)* the Overseas Development Administration in 1996–97 and *(b)* his Department in the last year for which figures are available on (i) advertising, (ii) public relations consultants and (iii) press officers, broken down by grade. [185563]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not hold a separate advertising budget, the majority of advertising relates to recruitment advertising in newspapers and journals. Expenditure figures for years prior to 2000 are not available; the figure for the last calendar year, 2003 is £871,246.

DFID does not keep central records of all staff working on communications across the Department and this information could not be gathered without incurring a disproportionate cost for the years specified. Information on the press office and publicity staff is available from 1996–97 and is set out as follows.

	Number of officers	*Grades*	*Annual cost £*
1996–97	6 (press only)	Not available	195,000
2003–04	10	1xA1 4xA2 3xB1 2xB2	373,500

Disaster-prone Regions

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what actions have been taken to improve the Department's strategies for disaster-prone regions since the publication of the National Audit Office's report on Responding to Humanitarian Emergencies, HC 1227 of Session 2002–03; [186056]

(2) whether his Department systematically analyses and reduces disaster risks within its development planning and programming; [186057]

(3) when his Department will formulate a strategy to mainstream disaster preparedness and mitigation into its development work; and if he will make a statement; [186058]

(4) what plans his Department has to take disaster risks into account in its approach to development; and if he will make a statement. [186059]

Hilary Benn: A reduction in the incidence and impact of natural and man-made disasters is an essential precondition for poverty reduction in many countries.

DFID accepts that we need to give due weight to ensuring that our development policies are risk aware and that people's vulnerability to risks is reduced. For example, DFID's Global Environmental Assets team is seeking to promote the integration of climate change risk into development planning. DFID's Central Asia, South Caucasus and Moldova team has carried out a review of disaster preparedness and response capacity in Central Asia to analyse gaps in support of disaster reduction and prevention.

DFID has agreed to change the guidance for DFID country teams preparing Country Assistance Plans to ensure that disaster risk reduction issues are taken into consideration. DFID's guidance to country teams on environmental screening instructs country teams to examine disaster risk issues.

DFID is in the process of reviewing how we might step up our work in this area. A scoping study, commissioned by DFID and undertaken by the Overseas Development Group, will report soon on how the development community and DFID can tackle disaster risk most effectively. It will also advise on ways to better mainstream disaster risk reduction and mitigation into development work. DFID expects to develop a forward strategy for DFID on disaster reduction in the light of the findings of this study. The findings will be disseminated to interested parties.

The Government are commissioning a report to document UK civil society work in disaster reduction in preparation for the World Conference on disaster reduction to be held in Kobe, Japan next January, it is hoped this will enable networking and skill sharing within the disaster community.

HIV/AIDS

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the impact on children with HIV/AIDS of the shortage of specially designed drugs. [185351]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Every day, about 1,700 children become infected with HIV. There are an estimated 2.1 million children under age 15 living with HIV in the world today. The vast majority of these are in developing countries.

Including children with HIV in treatment and care programmes is critical. Brazil has successfully implemented antiretroviral (ARV) treatment for children and adolescents as part of its national treatment policy. A number of other countries, including Uganda, Zambia, and South Africa, are beginning to enrol large numbers of children with HIV in their programmes.

However, the absence of specially designed drugs for children causes problems. Many ARVs are not available in paediatric formulations that can be given to small children as a liquid, and tablets are often not

manufactured in small enough doses for a child's body weight, requiring pharmacists and doctors to guess how to break up tablets or dose according to weight.

The UK, through its recently published strategy on HIV and AIDS and DFID's new policy on HIV and AIDS treatment and care, has committed to support research into paediatric treatments including paediatric ARVs, and future treatment options. Indeed, the new HIV and AIDS Strategy prioritises the needs of children alongside those of women and vulnerable and marginalised groups. The UK has committed £150 million over the next three years on work to respond to the needs of orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS. DFID has also endorsed UNICEF's Strategic Framework on Orphans and Vulnerable Children. We will work to ensure children have access to treatment and care.

Overseas Aid/Funding

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding the UK provided *(a)* directly, *(b)* through the EU and *(c)* through trade agreements to (i) Nicaragua, (ii) the Philippines, (iii) Romania and (iv) Ukraine in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement. [185650]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The table shows how much funding DFID provided directly and through the EU, for the relevant countries:

UK Aid

£000

	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Nicaragua	1,996	3,780	636	613	2,397
Philippines	10,220	6,424	2,245	5,744	1,177
Romania	4,158	3,744	3,439	5,396	6,167
Ukraine	8,619	8,442	9,331	8,877	7,892

EU multilateral share

£million

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Nicaragua	2.6	3.3	3.0	5.2	3.6
Philippines	3.0	3.9	3.4	3.4	2.9
Romania	11.4	19.1	2.8	32.2	57.5
Ukraine	0.8	11.2	8.4	8.8	11.8

There is no separate funding under trade agreements. Any funding relating to trade agreements is included in the above figures.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding the UK provided *(a)* directly, *(b)* through the EU and *(c)* through trade agreements to (i) Honduras, (ii) Kazakhstan, (iii) Macedonia, (iv) Moldova and (v) Mongolia in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [185652]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The following table shows how much funding DFID provided directly and through the EU for the relevant countries:

UK aid

£000

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Honduras	3,351	2,097	1,371	1,220	1,075
Kazakhstan	1,359	1,077	896	699	720
Macedonia	530	12,326	2,185	8,066	1,837
Moldova	825	829	1,074	1,584	3,354
Mongolia	477	322	1,408	542	395

EU multilateral share

£ million

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
Honduras	0.7	1.3	1.8	2.2	1.7
Kazakhstan	1.3	1.4	1.9	0.8	0.9
Macedonia	1.0	3.0	9.7	10.6	6.7
Moldova	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.7	0.6
Mongolia	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.7	0.4

There is no separate funding under trade agreements. Any funding relating to trade agreements is included in the figures.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding the UK provided *(a)* directly, *(b)* through the EU and *(c)* through trade agreements to (i) Albania, (ii) Azerbaijan, (iii) the Dominican Republic, (iv) El Salvador and (v) Georgia in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [185653]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Details of funding are as set out as follows:

UK aid

£000

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Albania	643	15,240	2,288	4,178	2,582
Azerbaijan	498	697	688	479	269
Dominican	253	35,209	646	11,082	17,362
El Salvador	299	318	6,265	4,572	945
Georgia	1,272	958	2,789	2,447	2,386

EU

£ million

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
Albania	2.2	9.7	13	10.6	7.6
Azerbaijan	2	3	2.6	2.5	1.6
Dominican	2.3	4.1	3.2	1.6	1.6
El Salvador	1.5	2.4	1–6	1.8	1.8
Georgia	2	2.7	3.2	1.7	2.9

There is no separate source of funding for trade agreements and any such assistance is included in the figures.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* monetary aid and *(b)* aid in kind his Department has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to (A) Albania, (B) Azerbaijan and (C) the Dominican Republic (1) in each financial year since 1997–98 and (2) in each month since January 2003; what new programmes his Department has *(y)* initiated and *(z)* funded in each country since January 2003; and if he will make a statement. [185654]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The table as follows shows what has been delivered to Albania, Azerbaijan and Dominican Republic in terms of aid in kind and monetary aid from 1997–8 to 2003–4 (latest figures). DFID does not keep monthly records of pledges or expenditures specifically in terms of aid in kind or monetary aid; DFID also does not keep records of how much has been pledged specifically in terms of aid in kind or monetary aid.

Bilateral aid by country

£

		Monetary aid	*Technical cooperation*	*Aid and trade provision*	*Grants and other aid in kind*	*Humaintarian assistance*[1]	*DFID debt relief*[2]	*Total DFID programme*
Albania	1997–98	—	399	—	64	286	—	749
	1998–99	—	589	—	35	19	—	643
	1999–2000	—	628	—	29	14,583	—	15,240
	2000–01	—	850	—	57	1,381	—	2,288
	2001–02	—	3,446	—	108	624	—	4,178
	2002–03	—	2,360	—	157	65	—	2,582
	2003–04[4]	—	1,806	—	315	200	—	2,321
Azerbaijan	1997–98	—	501	—	20	391	—	912
	1998–99	—	448	—	49	—	—	498
	1999–2000	—	643	—	53	—	—	697
	2000–01	—	343	—	11	334	—	688
	2001–02	—	411	—	5	63	—	479
	2002–03	—	256	—	13	—	—	269
	2003–04[4]	—	113	—	48	—	—	161
Dominican Republic	1997–98	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1997–98	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1998–99	—	23	—	—	59	—	82
	1999–2000	—	—	—	40	—	—	40
	2000–01	—	—	—	48	—	—	48
	2001–02	—	—	—	31	—	—	31
	2002–03	—	—	—	75	—	—	75
	2003–04[4]	—	—	—	72	—	—	72

1. Humanitarian Assistance comprises food aid and other humanitarian assistance.
2. This comprises both interest and principal foregone under Retrospective Terms Adjustment. Amounts reported are repayments which would have fallen due each year.
3. 2001–02 is a unique year in that total DFID expenditure is understated by around £140 million due to move to resource accounting.
4. The figures for 2003–04 are still provisional.

There are two new programmes in Albania: Support to Tax Administration Reform. The goal of this project is "To strengthen and stabilise the role of the State in order to alleviate poverty in Albania through the positive effect of economic activity and stability" at a cost of £1.2 million over two years; National Strategy for Socio-Economic Development Support Programme (NSSED): Albania, the goal of this programme is to mainstream the NSSED in public policy processes over the next three years at a cost of £1.2 million.

DFID does not have a bilateral programme in Azerbaijan. Direct funding to Azerbaijan is however provided through the Small Grants Scheme (SGS) administered by the British embassy. For 2004–05, the budget for the SGS is £36,450.

Together with the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence, DFID is supporting work in the South Caucasus through the Global Conflict Pool (GCPP). From September 2003, the UK has been supporting Conflict Resolution work in Nagorno Karabakh. This aims to improve understanding of the conflict among stakeholders, strengthen conflict sensitivity amongst national and international actors working in the region and implement activities that contribute to peace. DFID's contribution to this work is £2.4 million over three years.

DFID gave support to the Dominican Republic and Haiti on the 1 May (40,000) after the flooding there.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* monetary aid and *(b)* aid in kind his Department has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to (A) El Salvador, (B) Georgia, (C) Honduras, (D) Kazakhstan, (E) Macedonia, (F) Moldova, (G) Mongolia and (H) Nicaragua (1) in each financial year since 1997–98 and (2) in each month since January 2003; what new programmes his Department has (x) initiated and *(y)* funded in each country since January 2003; and if he will make a statement. [185715]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The following table shows how much monetary aid and aid in kind DFID has delivered in each financial year since 1997–98.

Bilateral aid by country

£000

	Monetary aid	*Technical cooperation*	*Aid and trade provision*	*Grants and other aid in kind*	*Humanitarian assistance*[1]	*DFID debt relief*[2]	*Total DFID programme*[3]
El Salvador							
1997–98	—	25	—	187	—	—	211
1998–99	—	8	—	252	39	—	299
1999–2000	—	3	—	315	—	—	318
2000–01	—	—	—	369	1,451	—	1,820
2001–02	—	—	—	271	160	—	431
2002–03	—	76	—	235	27	—	338
2003–04[4]	—	8	—	99	—	—	107
Honduras							
1997–98	—	627	—	259	—	280	1,166
1998–99	—	444	—	330	1,526	280	2,580
1999–2000	—	579	—	537	608	373	2,097
2000–01	—	305	—	691	2	373	1,371
2001–02	—	430	—	465	—	324	1,220
2002–03	—	231	—	317	434	93	1,075
2003–04[4]	—	453	—	251	—	93	797
Kazakhstan							
1997–98	—	1,978	—	118	50	—	2,145
1998–99	—	1,284	—	58	—	—	1,342
1999–2000	—	993	—	83	—	—	1,077
2000–01	—	821	—	76	—	—	896
2001–02	—	674	—	25	—	—	699
2002–03	—	688	—	32	—	—	720
2003–04[4]	—	1,212	—	21	—	—	1,233
Nicaragua							
1997–98	—	414	—	511	50	36	1,011
1997–99	—	204	—	413	1,379	—	1,996
1999–2000	—	270	—	549	334	—	1,153
1999–01	—	161	—	464	11	—	636
2000–02	—	125	—	338	150	—	613
2001–03	—	626	—	417	—	—	1,043
2003–04[4]	255	241	—	534	—	—	1,029

Bilateral aid by country

£000

	Monetary aid	Technical cooperation	Aid and trade provision	Grants and other aid in kind	Humanitarian assistance[1]	DFID debt relief[2]	Total DFID programme[3]
Georgia							
1997–98	—	714	—	72	317	—	1,103
1998–99	—	739	—	45	488	—	1,272
1999–2000	—	582	—	36	340	—	958
2000–01	—	827	—	5	1,956	—	2,789
2001–02	—	1,947	—	86	414	—	2,447
2002–03	—	1,679	—	131	575	—	2,386
2003–04[4]	—	1,701	—	94	301	—	2,096
Moldova							
1997–98	—	608	—	38	—	—	645
1998–99	—	795	—	30	—	—	825
1999–2000	—	754	—	75	—	—	829
2000–01	—	1,034	—	40	—	—	1,074
2001–02	—	1,582	—	2	—	—	1,584
2002–03	—	3,352	—	3	—	—	3,354
2003–04[4]	—	2,383	—	49	—	—	2,433
Macedonia (FYR of)							
1997–98	—	666	—	58	—	—	725
1998–99	—	481	—	48	1	—	530
1999–2000	—	837	—	50	11,409	—	12,296
2000–01	—	1,151	—	98	936	—	2,185
2001–02	3,000	1,564	—	71	3,430	—	8,066
2002–03	—	1,620	—	77	94	—	1,791
2003–04[4]	—	1,255	—	105	80	—	1,440
Mongolia							
1997–98	—	81	—	378	—	—	458
1998–99	—	89	—	380	—	—	470
1999–2000	—	35	—	255	32	—	322
2000–01	—	536	—	275	597	—	1,408
2001–02	—	206	—	247	89	—	542
2002–03	—	129	—	166	100	—	395
2003–04[4]	—	14	—	253	—	—	267

[1] Humanitarian assistance comprises food aid and other humanitarian assistance.
[2] This comprises both interest and principal foregone under retrospective terms adjustment. Amounts reported are repayments which would have fallen due each year.
[3] 2001–02 is a unique year in that total DFID expenditure is understated by around £140 million due to move to resource accounting.
[4] Figures for 2003–04 are provisional.

DFID does not keep monthly records of pledges or expenditures specifically in terms of aid in kind or monetary aid.

The following table shows new programmes DFID has initiated and funded in each country since January 2003.

£

Country	Programme	Commitment
El Salvador	Network to combat commercial sex exploitation	223,000
Georgia	Poverty reduction and good governance assessment	4,000
Georgia	Technical assistance to the Ministry of Health to establish a sustainable and affordable system of primary healthcare	5,220,000
Georgia	Technical assistance to the Ministry of Finance to enable the Government to utilise resources effectively	165,000
Honduras	Poverty reduction strategy	1,582,000
Honduras/ Nicaragua	HIV/AIDS programme	1,900,000
Central America including Honduras/ Nicaragua/ El Salvador	Support to regional unit for technical assistance (RUTA) to promote rural development	700,000
Macedonia	Public administration reform phase 2	3,000,000

£

Country	Programme	Commitment
Moldova	Support for the national rural development strategy	9,000
Moldova	Support to the rural investment services project	2,680,000
Moldova	Poverty synthesis study to strengthen poverty reduction and improve programme effectiveness	5,000
Moldova	Contribution to the population census	200,000
Moldova	Continuation of support to the Ministry of Finance for the development of a medium term expenditure framework	500,000
Moldova	Work through the global conflict prevention pool on a peace-building framework project to facilitate civil society engagement in conflict reduction (with the FCO)	440,000
Nicaragua	Civil society monitoring	434,000
Nicaragua	DFID/Inter-American development bank (IDB) cooperation to enhance social inclusion	1,669,250
Nicaragua	Maximising access to appropriate quality adolescent reproductive health services	500,000
Nicaragua	Violence reduction	720,000
Nicaragua	Promoting women's citizenship	179,000
Nicaragua	Youth sexual and reproductive health rights	500,000
Nicaragua	Promoting equity through economic growth	2,500,000

There have been no new programmes initiated in Kazakhstan or Mongolia since January 2003. DFID provides direct funding to these countries through the Small Grants Scheme (SGS) administered through the British Embassy. For 2004–05 the budget for the SGS is £45,000 and £200,000 respectively.

Policies (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185106]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) recognises that environmental assessment is essential to ensure that environmental sustainability is integrated into international development policy, planning and operations.

All DFID's development initiatives with a spend of more than £1 million are subject to environmental screening, which is also advised for projects of less than £1 million where there is a likelihood of significant environmental impacts. Where appropriate, screening will initiate a more comprehensive appraisal and assessment for policies, plans and programmes. The procedures, and guidance on the screening process, are detailed in DFID's Environment Guide (2003), which is available on the Department's public website www.dfid.gov.uk.

In the last year, the rate of application of environmental screening to projects has almost doubled (from 34 per cent. in 2002–03 to 62 per cent. in 2003–04), following a review and strengthening of the procedures. A new team has been established within DFID to monitor and strengthen these procedures.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183843]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Communication is integral to DFID's mission. DFID does not keep central records of all staff working on communications across the Department and this information could not be gathered without incurring a disproportionate cost for the years specified. Information on the press office is available from 1997 and is set out in the following table for all completed financial years to 2003–04.

	Number of press officers	Annual cost
1997–98	6	243,000
1998–99	4	240,000
1999–2000	3.3	100,000
2000–01	4.5	150,000
2001–02	4	148,000
2002–03	5	191,000
2003–04	6	230,000

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Comptroller and Auditor General's Report

Mr. Heath: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission when the Speaker's Committee will publish the Comptroller and Auditor General's statutory value for money report to it for 2002–03 on the Electoral Commission. [186065]

Mr. Viggers: At its meeting on 14 July, the Speaker's Committee agreed to publish the Comptroller and Auditor General's report, which deals with the Commission's expenditure on its Public Awareness Strategy in 2002–03, as an Appendix to its First Report

2004. This report has been laid before the House and published today, 22 July, as House of Commons Paper No. 924. Copies are available in the Vote Office.

Postal Voting

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what information he has as to when the Electoral Commission expects to publish its reports on the June 2004 all-postal pilot elections. [186438]

Mr. Viggers: I understand that the Commission has advised the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs of its intention to submit its evaluation of the June 2004 all-postal pilots to him on 27 August 2004. On this date the Commission will electronically publish on its website (www.electoralcommission.org.uk) all four regional reports as well as an overarching report. This will enable its conclusions to be available before Parliament returns from its summer recess in September.

Printed copies of all the reports will be available from 13 September and the Commission will send a copy of each of the reports to every Member of the House.

ADVOCATE-GENERAL

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Advocate-General whether her Department *(a)* has a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and *(b)* has a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186037]

The Advocate-General for Scotland: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given today by my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Fish Stocks

1. **Chris Grayling:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to preserve fish stocks. [185740]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are a range of national and EU measures in place to conserve fish stocks in our waters. Today I announced the Government's intention to seek a closure of the bass pair trawl fishery off South-West England.

Off-road Motor Cycles

18. **Andy Burnham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to restrict the use of off-road motor cycles in *(a)* rural and *(b)* semi-rural areas. [185761]

Alun Michael: I recently consulted on a range of measures to tackle the problem of inappropriate use of off-road vehicles and to curtail inappropriate use of off-road motorcycles and other mechanically propelled vehicles on public rights of way. These proposals are relevant to both rural and semi rural areas. I shall respond to the consultative process and the views expressed in the near future.

Horticulture

19. **Mr. Grogan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on policy towards the horticultural sector. [185762]

Alun Michael: The Government welcome the contribution of horticulture to the UK economy. It is worth some £2 billion at the farm gate and supports substantial downstream activity in packhouses, processing and the garden industry. We will continue to work with the industry through the Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy, by funding research and development and through the England Rural Development Programme.

Access Rules Review

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made by the European Commission in completing the review of access rules referred to in Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 2371/2002; and what the latest anticipated timescale is for the completion of this review. [184159]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* The Commission has sought and secured a delay in the production of a report into the effectiveness of access restrictions, which was originally intended to be made available by 31 December 2003. During 2003 and 2004, the Commission secured agreement on the scope of the review, established a scientific expert group to agree its terms of reference and established scientific expert sub-groups to conduct reviews and draft reports for evaluation of each access rule. The Commission's scientific expert groups first met in April 2004, the sub-groups are now preparing their reports. No revised timescale for the Article 19 review has been agreed, but the Commission's final report and corresponding proposals are expected before the end of 2004.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* submissions and *(b)* representations have been made to her by the Scottish Executive in relation to the review of access rules referred to in Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 2371/2002. [184160]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* In the course of routine business the Scottish Executive has made numerous written and oral representations to Defra on several aspects of the Article 19 review, concentrating on the implications of the review for the Shetland Box access arrangements. Representations from Scottish Executive have included views on the proper scope and timetabling of the review, the membership and terms of reference for the Commission's scientific expert groups, and the UK strategy for anticipating and handling proposals arising from the Commission's report, including effective stakeholder engagement and consultation.

The Scottish Executive provided Defra with detailed submissions on the effectiveness of the Shetland Box during the negotiations leading to the reformed framework regulation of the Common Fisheries Policy. No further submissions have been provided.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* submissions and *(b)* representations she has made to the European Commission in relation to the review of access rules referred to in Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 2371/2002. [184161]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* UK submitted written comments on the scope of the Article 19 review, made necessary analytical data available to the Commission and offered active co-operation in the establishment and membership of necessary scientific expert working groups.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether, in relation to the review of access rules referred to in Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 2371/2002, she intends to seek to justify the continued existence of the Shetland Box in terms of conservation and sustainable exploitation objectives. [184162]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* Yes, the UK agrees that the Shetland Box access conditions should be strengthened and updated but considers the Shetland Box arrangement to be a vital protection for an important ecosystem—and also believes its continuation is also justified in other terms.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether, in relation to the review of access rules referred to in

Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 2371/2002, she intends to seek to justify the continued existence of the principle of relative stability in terms of conservation and sustainable exploitation objectives. [184163]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* No. The principle of relative stability is not being reviewed. Following working group discussions in 2003–04, it was agreed that the Article 19 review shall be limited to include the Shetland Box, the Plaice Box and certain access restrictions in the outermost territories of the Community.

Air Freight (Food)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate the *(a)* value and *(b)* quantity of food airfreighted into the United Kingdom between 1999 and 2003. [185174]

Alun Michael: An assessment of airfreighted food is being made as part of a wider study commissioned by the Department on the impact of food transportation. The report of the study of "The Validity of Food Miles as an Indicator of Sustainable Development" will be published soon. I will write to the right hon. Member to inform him when the report is published.

Ammonium Nitrate

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how often she meets industry representatives to discuss the manufacture and safe storage of ammonium nitrate fertiliser; and whether she has held such meetings since March. [184604]

Alun Michael: Officials from Defra and other key Government Departments have met industry representatives on a regular basis (weekly or more frequently), both before and since March, to discuss the manufacture and safe storage of ammonium nitrate fertiliser.

Aviation Emissions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate the carbon dioxide emissions from the aviation sector in each year since 1990; and what the projected figures are for each year to 2020. [184852]

Mr. Morley: Table A shows the estimated emissions of carbon dioxide from domestic and international flights departing from UK airports. The estimates are expressed in million tonnes of carbon per year (MtC/yr), for the period 1990–2002 as published in the latest UK Greenhouse gas inventory, released in April 2004.

Table A: Emissions of CO_2 from aviation, 1990–2002, MtC/yr

	Domestic	International	Total
1990	0.59	4.03	4.62
1991	0.58	3.97	4.55
1992	0.61	4.40	5.00
1993	0.62	4.70	5.32
1994	0.61	4.89	5.50
1995	0.65	5.20	5.85
1996	0.68	5.54	6.21
1997	0.70	5.90	6.60
1998	0.73	6.60	7.33
1999	0.75	7.23	7.98
2000	0.76	8.02	8.79
2001	0.80	7.53	8.33
2002	0.80	7.34	8.14

Projected total emissions from aviation are published in the DfT's "Aviation and Global Warming" technical paper. Table B shows these data for the UK, also in MtC/yr.

Table B: Total (international plus domestic) projected emissions for UK aviation emissions, MtC/yr

	Total emissions
2010	10.8
2020	14.9

These projections are based on emissions from all flights departing the UK. Emissions projections for intervening years to 2020 are not available.

British Beef

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost to the UK of France's ban on British beef; and what steps she has taken to recover such costs. [184006]

Mr. Bradshaw: The value of beef exports from the UK to France in 1995 was £250 million. However a large proportion of this was in the form of carcase beef from Over Thirty Month cattle. Exports of such beef are not permitted under the EU rules of the Date-based Export Scheme (DBES). Trade would also have been affected by factors such as the exchange rate, consumer confidence in France and the need for any UK slaughterhouses wishing to export to be approved under the stringent requirements of the DBES.

Compensation for losses resulting from the ban must be sought by those directly affected. It is not for the Government to seek compensation for damages to UK interests because it is not directly involved from a legal point of view. We would provide full support in terms of information and practical assistance to those who wish to seek compensation (although, as a matter of policy, we will not provide funding or detailed legal advice).

Cetacean By-catch

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has received the results of this year's monitoring of cetacean by-catch; and if she will make a statement. [184227]

Mr. Bradshaw: As I explained in the written statement that I made earlier today on this subject, I have concluded, in the light of results from this season's monitoring of the UK element of the offshore bass fishery, that current levels of bycatch in the fishery as a whole may constitute a threat to the common dolphin population. In the course of this research conducted by the Sea Mammal Research Unit on our behalf, 169 dolphin casualties were observed. It has also become clear from our research that exclusion devices which previously showed some potential in reducing bycatch are not currently sufficiently developed to reduce bycatch to more acceptable levels in the immediate future.

Community action to address this problem is needed. We will therefore be requesting that the European Commission introduce emergency measures to close the fishery while more permanent measures are developed. If the case for emergency action is not accepted then I will consider other options, including restricting the number of vessels allowed into the fishery and seeking a ban on pair trawling within 12 miles of the UK.

CFCs

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what quantities of CFC have been collected and safely destroyed under the licensed facilities operating in the UK under EU Regulation 2037/2000 on ozone depleting substances in each year since implementation of the regulations; and what percentage of potential CFCs available for recovery this represented in each year. [184557]

Mr. Morley: The information on CFCs is not held in the form requested. However, the following information is provided:

Tonnes

	Recovery of ozone depleting substances (ODS) including CFCs	*Total ODS destroyed (including halon)*
2002	387	979
2003	494	819

In addition, a significant number of refrigerators leave the UK for treatment—418,000 in 2002 and 377,000 in 2003—and it will fall to the receiving EU state to recover the associated ODS, and report upon it.

It is not possible to state the percentage of potential ODS available for recovery that the destroyed amounts represented. One of the key reasons for this is ODS loss during a product's service life.

CITES

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what Regulatory Impact Assessment she has obtained for her review of charges for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species licences and permits. [184713]

Mr. Morley: The Department issued a consultation on CITES charges on 1 April 2004. At this stage, a partial Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) has been completed and was issued with the consultation documents to stakeholders.

A partial RIA follows on from an initial RIA carried out at the first stages of policy development, it is informed by discussion, data gathering and informal consultations and in liaison with the Small Business Service.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the *(a)* cost to pet retailers of selling individual Hermann's tortoises and *(b)* cost to wholesalers importing large numbers of Hermann's tortoises as a consequence of the proposed charges for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species licences and permits. [184714]

Mr. Morley: No specific assessment has been made within the regulatory impact assessment of the effects on pet retailers selling tortoises. However, the assessments made over a range of traders in CITES protected species assume that the additional costs will be passed on to the consumer and that costs will rise by the amount of the proposed increase in the fee levels.

As a general practice wholesale importers apply for an import permit to cover a number of specimens of the same species and their costs will therefore be lower when apportioned between individual specimens.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the cost to UK breeders of Hermann's tortoises resulting from the proposed changes to charges for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species licences and permits. [184715]

Mr. Morley: The partial Regulatory Impact Assessment developed for the consultation looked at a small sample of different businesses and how they might be affected by the proposed increases. UK breeders of Hermann's tortoises were not one of the businesses sampled.

The final Regulatory Impact Assessment, which will accompany any legislation, will be developed in the light of the information given during the consultation period and any further analysis indicated will be carried out before a final decision on how to proceed with the question of charges for CITES licences and permits.

Civil Service Relocation

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her Department's plans to relocate jobs from London and the South East to Yorkshire. [185756]

Alun Michael: The Department's Spending Review settlement includes a commitment to relocating 390 posts out of London and the South East by 2007–08. The Department is currently reviewing which posts will be relocated and exactly where these will be located.

Common Fisheries Policy

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Government's policy is towards the planned change in the European Common Fisheries Policy. [184261]

Mr. Bradshaw: In line with the UK's negotiating objectives we agreed important and wide-ranging reforms to the Common Fisheries Policy in December 2002. The reformed CFP provides a strong framework for policies and decisions which are more environmentally and economically sustainable. It provides for a stronger regional dimension, better stakeholder involvement, and better integration of environmental concerns. We remain committed to building on this reform.

Cormorants

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1084, on cormorant predation, when she expects to announce extra measures to help fishery owners and angling clubs to deal with the problem of predation by cormorants. [182312]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are currently considering the extra measures we can put in place to help inland fisheries. I expect to be able to announce these before the seasonal influx of cormorants from coastal areas which takes place during the autumn.

Curry Commission Report

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent progress has been made by the Government in response to each of the recommendations of the 2002 Curry Commission Report. [184764]

Alun Michael: The Government accepted 101 of the 105 recommendations in the report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food. These are being taken forward through the Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food. However, the onus is not on Government alone to deliver these changes: many of the Commission's recommendations were targeted wholly or partly at industry, which has a pivotal part to play in this process.

We are making good progress towards delivering the Strategy's objectives, most significantly through implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy reform agreement in June 2003. The deal will provide a more sustainable basis for European agriculture and reflect the wider environmental and rural development objectives which society seeks to achieve. The decoupling of payments will break the link between subsidy and production, so the farming industry will be free to react directly to market signals, not encouraged to follow the unsustainable production patterns of the past. CAP reform is expected to deliver significant economic benefits for the UK. These are estimated at between £400 million to £550 million a year at present exchange rates. The introduction of the Single Payment means that farmers will be freed from many of the bureaucratic rules associated with production linked subsidies and will have greater opportunity to restructure their businesses to best meet the needs of the market. We estimate that overall there will be an increase in farm incomes up to £150 million which represents around 5 per cent. of UK Total Income From Farming in 2003.

Enhancing our environment is central to the vision set out in the Strategy. A new agri-environment scheme, Environmental Stewardship, is being introduced in England in 2005 and this includes the new Entry Level Stewardship (ELS). The ELS will be at the heart of improving farming's environmental performance. It will be open to applications from all farmers, enabling them to deliver what society wants: the sustainable management of our countryside as a whole.

A series of initiatives in the food chain is designed to achieve a more efficient and competitive supply chain. These include the Food Chain Centre and English Farming and Food Partnerships, two industry bodies set up with Government support to increase competitiveness and encourage co-operation.

The Government recognise the need for smarter regulation of agriculture, focusing on outcomes rather than processes in order to minimise burdens on the industry. We are working to join up regulatory requirements into a whole farm approach which will reduce bureaucracy. The Whole Farm Appraisal is one of the key initiatives being developed to assist the farming industry in streamlining regulation; this has been successfully piloted and will be launched in autumn 2005.

Other initiatives being taken forward to deliver the Strategy include the establishment of a Non-Food Crops Centre to provide information and advice on non-food crop production; work on animal health and welfare, including the recent launch of the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy; consultation on the goals and priorities for the Food and Health Action Plan under the "Choosing Diet" strand of the Department of Health's "Choosing Health?" consultation and delivery of a Learning Skills and Knowledge programme.

The Government announced a sum of £500 million to implement the Strategy as part of the 2002 Spending Review, in addition to existing spending by Defra and other Government Departments which is already being used to deliver aspects of the Strategy. This sum covers a number of major aspects of the Strategy. These include the new Environmental Stewardship Scheme and the IT system to underpin all the England Rural Development Programme schemes; improvements in livestock traceability and other major animal health and welfare measures, and the new food chain initiatives.

Dairy Farmers

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of dairy farmers have shown profits in the last financial year; and if she will make a statement. [185231]

Alun Michael: The latest available data on farm incomes is for the 2002–3 farm accounting year from the Farm Business Survey. This survey covers around 2200 full time farm businesses in England, of which around a fifth are classified as dairy farms. Based on this survey data, the average net farm income of dairy farms in

2002–3 was £18,300 and 80 per cent. of dairy farm businesses showed a positive net farm income. Net farm income is defined as the return to the farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and on the tenant type capital of the business. It does not include the cost of farmer and spouse labour.

Dairy farm incomes are forecast to rise slightly in 2003–4, principally due to an increase in milk prices although higher feed prices during the latter part of the year offsets some of this increase.

Departmental Buildings (Refurbishment)

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost has been of refurbishments to the fabric of buildings owned by her Department since May 1997. [185940]

Alun Michael: Expenditure on fabric refurbishment each year since Defra was established was:

	£
2000–2001	2,351,000
2001–2992	850,000
2002–2003	3,525,000
2003–2004	2,464,799

Eggs

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who represented the United Kingdom at the Council of Ministers meeting that decided to remove the derogation from marking for ungraded eggs. [184191]

Alun Michael: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, and my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Commons) represented the UK at the meeting in question.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the United Kingdom voted against the decision of the Council of Ministers to remove the derogation from marking for ungraded eggs; and if she will make a statement. [184192]

Alun Michael: Throughout the negotiations, the UK opposed the Commission's proposal. At the Council of Ministers, we abstained and gave the following statement formally to record our position;

> "The United Kingdom has not felt able to support the proposal to require all eggs at local public markets to be marked. The Commission has produced no evidence demonstrating that there is actually a food safety or enforcement problem that needs to be addressed. The proposal is therefore likely to lead to unnecessary additional burdens on small-scale producers. A facultative provision, allowing those member states which do have concerns about local markets to take necessary action, would have been more appropriate."

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which member states *(a)* supported and *(b)* opposed the Council of Ministers' decision to remove the derogation from ungraded eggs. [184193]

Alun Michael: The UK abstained from voting but all other member states voted in favour.

Emissions Trading Scheme

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the carbon emissions reductions from the EU emissions trading scheme. [185758]

Margaret Beckett: The overall emissions reductions from the scheme will depend on the price of carbon, which in turn is dependent on the total number of allowances in the EU market. The number of allowances to be allocated by the UK in the first phase of the scheme (2005–2007) is based on the UK reducing carbon dioxide emissions below our Kyoto Protocol target and towards our domestic goal.

Energy Efficiency

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the external costs associated with energy wasted from inefficiencies, with particular reference to the environmental costs. [184581]

Mr. Morley: In January 2002, a Government Economic Service working paper "Estimating the Social Cost of Carbon Emissions" was published as a joint Defra-Treasury publication. The GES paper suggested £70 per tonne of carbon (within a range of £35 to £140/tC) as an illustrative estimate for the global damage cost of carbon emissions.

The Government's recently published Energy Efficiency Action Plan identified target annual savings of 12.1 M tonnes of carbon by 2010. The corresponding total annual value of the reduced environmental damage is therefore around £850 M/y.

Environmental Business Growth Action Programme

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the role of the Environment Agency is in the management of the Environmental Business Growth Action Programme, with particular reference to the west Midlands. [184147]

Mr. Morley: The Environmental Business Growth Action Programme is designed to assist small and medium enterprises to take advantage of the market for environmental goods and services. The Environment Agency is the accountable body for the programme, managing funds provided by Advantage West Midlands and the Government office for the west Midlands. The programme only operates in the west Midlands.

Water Leakage

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the external costs associated with water leakages and inefficient use of water, with particular reference to the environmental costs. [184584]

Mr. Morley: Water companies produce long-term (25 year) water resource plans to balance the supply and demand for water. These plans, which are reviewed annually and revised every five years, include economic leakage appraisals that form the basis of annual leakage targets. The plans are submitted to Ofwat and the Environment Agency for scrutiny as part of the business

planning process and contain companies' assessments of the relative costs and benefits of different options for balancing the supply and demand for water. The guidance for producing water resource plans requires water companies to take account of all costs and benefits, including environmental and social ones, in their assessments. The final mix of resource schemes, leakage reduction and demand management schemes chosen to balance supply and demand will be at the least cost to both customers and the environment.

Flooding

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the external costs associated with flooding, with particular reference to the environmental costs. [184585]

Mr. Morley: The Department has undertaken a number of estimates of the national costs associated with flooding. The impact of flooding will vary from case to case. However, the national level estimates have shown that in most cases flood damage estimates are dominated by damage to residential, commercial and industrial property and its associated contents. Work to evaluate other impacts includes:

recent research by the Flood Hazard Research Centre (FHRC) at Middlesex University which suggested that emergency response costs are probably some 11 per cent. of physical damage costs;

the FHRC also provides guidance on assessing the benefits to recreation of flood defence and coast protection works;

research lead by Risk and Policy Analysts Ltd. has identified the average value of health and stress due to flooding at £200 per household per year for those in high risk areas.

There have been many studies of the value of other environmental impacts, including a current study by the University of East Anglia that will report in 2005 on the functional value of wetlands. Current Defra guidance suggests that appropriate water level management for wetlands can have a benefit of between £175 and £300 per hectare per year. In the latest national assessments these figures were used to quantify environmental benefits from increased flooding of some lower grade agricultural land.

The above are included in current Defra guidance to operating authorities for project appraisal purposes.

Farm Payments

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications for each category of farm payments, and of what value, were due to have been paid by 30 June but have not yet been paid; and if she will make a statement. [184939]

Alun Michael: The only category of farm payments due to be paid by 30 June are those for the 2003 bovine schemes. The following table shows the number of applications, the number paid, the value paid, the number unpaid and the value unpaid for each category of farm payment. For completeness the same data is also shown for the other categories of 2003 farm based schemes at the regulatory closing date for payments.

Category	*Number of applications*	*Number paid*	*Value paid (£)*	*Number unpaid*	*Percentage unpaid*	*Value unpaid (£)*
Bovine schemes	256,533	251,620	365,086,982	4,913	1.92	3,082,749
Sheep Annual Premium Scheme (SAPS)-closing date 31 March 2004	26,851	26,810	113,055,712	41	0.15	175,079
Hill Farm Allowance-closing date 31 March 2004	11,052	9,646	33,987,521	201	2.04	2,258,310
Arable Area Payments (AAPS) Main claims-closing date 31 January 2004	40,535	40,048	954,411,819	405	0.9	40,535
Non-food-closing date 31 March 2004	4,427	4,346	20,417,026	81	1.82	4,427

All 2003 scheme year payment targets were met. The excellent payment performance of previous years was maintained on AAPS (main claims) and SAPS and for the first time since the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) was created, the payment target was met for AAPS non food claims and all bovine schemes.

Flood Defence Projects

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's total spending was in each of the last three years on flood defence projects. [184944]

Mr. Morley: In the years under consideration, Defra provided grant aid as a percentage of eligible costs to the flood and coastal defence operating authorities—the Environment Agency (EA), local authorities and internal drainage boards—to assist with improvement works and studies to manage flood and coastal erosion risk. Grant aid was also made to the EA to assist towards the cost of national initiatives (such as the national flood and coastal defence database, flood warning public awareness and catchment flood management plans) and in 2001–02 exceptional funding was provided to the EA following the floods of autumn 2000 for repair works and feasibility and design costs for accelerated river defences.

Grant aid (including Supplementary Credit Approval for local authorities) was £90 million in 2001–02, £120 million in 2002–03 and £127 million in 2003–04. These figures include funding for projects to protect against coastal erosion but many of these also provide significant benefits in terms of reducing risk of flooding from the sea.

Further Government support was provided by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's local government funding system. This supported, among other things, levies paid by local authorities to the EA which funded the balance of the cost of EA improvement projects after Defra grant.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department is taking to ensure that all timber purchased for flood defences comes from legal and sustainable sources. [184945]

Mr. Morley: While Defra has overall policy responsibility for flood and coastal erosion risk in England, we do not build defences, nor do we have any power to direct the operating authorities' choice of materials for their projects. However, we have provided guidance to operating authorities since the mid-1990s.

In 1994, the Chief Engineer of the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, a predecessor of this Department, wrote to maritime district councils to encourage them to consider the use of alternative materials and to procure timber from well-managed and sustainable sources.

In 2000, the then Environment Minister, Michael Meacher, announced that Government Departments and agencies, including the Environment Agency, must actively seek to procure timber and timber products from sources independently validated as legal and sustainably managed.

In 2002, Mr. Meacher wrote to all English local authorities to encourage them to adopt responsible timber procurement policies.

Fruit

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate the proportion by *(a)* value and *(b)* quantity of fruit consumed in the UK that was produced in the UK in each of the last three years for which records are available. [185173]

Alun Michael: The following table provides details of the quantity and value of UK fruit production and supply.

UK fruit production and supply

	Quantity (Thousand tonnes)			*Value (£ million)*		
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
UK production	330	290	242	238	253	281
Imports	2,868	2,988	2,979	1,482	1,612	1,712
Exports[1]	73	69	78	41	47	48
Total supply[2]	3,125	3,209	3,143	1,679	1,818	1,945
Production as percentage of total supply	11	9	8	14	14	14

[1] Exports includes imported fruit subsequently re-exported.
[2] UK production plus imports less exports.

Customs and Excise overseas trade information does not distinguish exports of fruit produced in the UK from re-exports of imported fruit. Also food consumption survey data does not distinguish UK and imported produce. This makes it difficult to provide accurate information on consumption of UK produced fruit. Therefore information has been presented to show the proportion of the total supply of fruit in the UK that is represented by UK production.

The main fruits produced on a commercial scale in the UK include apples (where the production as a percentage of total supply was 21 per cent. by quantity in 2003), pears (20 per cent.), strawberries (53 per cent.) and raspberries (63 per cent.).

For other fruits, for example oranges, bananas, peaches, nectarines, grapes, and pineapples, the UK is virtually entirely dependent on imports.

Fuel Poverty

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress in eradicating fuel poverty. [185763]

Mr. Morley: The Government's Second Annual Progress Report highlighted the progress made in tackling fuel poverty. The outlook is encouraging. In 2002 it is estimated there was a drop in the number of fuel poor households in the UK to around 2½ million, from 3 million in 2001. We remain committed to tackling the issue of fuel poverty.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185112]

Mr. Morley: My noble Friend, the Lord Whitty, is Defra's Green Minister and in this role is a Member of the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. I chair the Sub-Committee. However, it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees.

Sustainable development is the overarching aim of Defra. Therefore, the work of all Defra's ministers, including the Green Minister, contributes to this aim. Consequently, it is not possible to separate the role of the Green Minister from Lord Whitty's other work in the financial year 2003–04.

Important pieces of work that Lord Whitty has been involved with over the last year include publication of a UK Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production in conjunction with the DTI, the Sustainable Food and Farming Strategy, the UK initiative on developing a global Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership and agreement on several chapters of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. Lord Whitty also represented Defra on the Ministerial Group for Implementation of the Energy White Paper and covers energy efficiency and fuel poverty.

Greenhouse Gases

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the external costs associated with greenhouse gas emissions, with particular reference to the environmental costs. [184580]

Mr. Morley: A Government Economic Service working paper "Estimating the Social Cost of Carbon Emissions" was published as a joint Defra-Treasury publication, and this contains estimates of the external costs associated with greenhouse gas emissions. This paper is available on the Defra website at www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/carbon-cost/index.htm along with other papers describing the Government's work on the social cost of carbon.

Hazardous Waste

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the amount of hazardous waste produced in 2003–04, broken down by *(a)* quantity and *(b)* type. [183813]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 July 2004]:* None. Data on hazardous waste (as consigned special waste) are reported by calendar year. That for 2003 is currently being processed by the Environment Agency and is expected to be available in September.

Home Energy Efficiency Scheme

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Northampton have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme. [184840]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 873 households in Northampton received assistance from the Scheme.

Departmental Housing

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for how many empty houses her Department is responsible; and if she will make a statement. [182155]

Alun Michael: The Department is currently responsible for three empty houses. Our agents have been instructed to dispose of them by sale on the open market.

Kite Flying

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance her Department issues to *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* others relating to the banning of kite flying in certain public places. [184120]

Alun Michael: Our guidance notes on the procedures for making byelaws explain how to ban kite flying in the countryside. There is additional guidance in "Managing Coastal Activities: A Guide for Local Authorities". Both of these documents can be found on the Defra website. Hard copies of the general guidance may be obtained by writing to Defra's countryside recreation branch, Zone 1/03, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Bristol, BS1 6EB. The guidance on coastal activities is available from Defra Publications, Admail 6000, London, SW1A 2XX, Tel: 08459 556000.

There are occasions, particularly in relation to public safety, when byelaws are the only answer to managing recreational activities; we encourage local authorities and others to look first at other solutions. Schemes for self-regulation can enable the public to continue to enjoy as wide a range of activities as possible.

Landfill

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much hazardous waste has been disposed of to landfill in each year since 1997. [183828]

Mr. Morley: Data for the fate of consigned special waste have been collated centrally by the Environment Agency from 1998 to 2002 and are as follows; 2003 data are in preparation.

Special waste consigned to landfill disposal for the years:

	Million tonnes
1998–99 (combined)	2.3
2000	2.1
2001	2.3
2002	2.0

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs where funds diverted to the Treasury from the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme since 2003 have been spent, broken down by *(a)* region and *(b)* project. [184643]

Mr. Morley: As part of the reform of the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme approximately £84/92/92 million has been allocated to sustainable waste management in England (£100/110/110 million to the UK as a whole) for the financial years 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06. A new public expenditure programme, delivered jointly by Defra and the Waste and Resources Action Programme, has been established for England. The new Waste Implementation Programme is designed to accelerate progress towards meeting the landfill directive targets.

The Waste Implementation Programme is taking forward a package of strategic measures recommended by the Strategy Unit in "Waste Not Want Not", published in November 2002. Key areas of action so far (including indicative three-year funding allocations) include the following:

£ million

Project	*Budget allocation*
Four programmes for waste minimisation	40
Kerbside taskforce to help local authorities maximise potential for kerbside collection of recyclables and to boost the recycling of organic materials	15
Programme for education and awareness	30
Two programmes for data and research	22
Programme of development of new technologies,	37

Project	£ million Budget allocation
including pilots	
Programmes designed to help local authorities with their recycling strategies, and ensure they are offered targeted assistance	10

In addition to these programmes, the Waste Implementation Programme contributed £29 million in 2003–04 and 2004–05 to boost Defra's Waste Minimisation and Recycling ("Challenge") Fund. This fund provides project-based funding to local authorities to enable them to roll out high-quality recycling and home composting schemes in their area.

The Waste Implementation Programme has also provided £20 million in targeted grants to local authorities in 2004–05. This grant is designed to reduce the pressure faced by councils to fund services such as waste management through increases in council tax.

Milk

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to what factors does she attributes the difference in gross payments per litre of milk produced in the UK compared with prices in *(a)* France *(b)* Germany and *(c)* other EU member states. [184730]

Alun Michael: As has been stated in response to parliamentary questions on a number of occasions, KPMG's report, "Prices and Profitablitily in the GB Supply Chain", concluded that low farmgate prices in the UK were largely due to the structure of the UK industry, the low value of the product mix and the low level of product innovation within the UK compared with some member states.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what checks are carried out on the quality of milk imported *(a)* from (i) new and (ii) longer-standing, members of the EU and *(b)* from elsewhere; and if she will make a statement. [185228]

Alun Michael: All milk imported into the UK from other EU member states must have been produced in accordance with the Community rules laid down in Council Directive 92/46/EEC. All milk and milk products placed on the market in the EU must conform to the requirements of that Directive irrespective of whether they originate from new or existing member states. Community rules permit random spot checks at destination on milk imported into the UK from other EU member states. Plants in the new member states which could not meet the requirements of Directive 92/46/EEC on accession were granted transitional status and allowed to place products on their domestic market for a limited period as long as they bore a special health mark which identified them as being only for the domestic market.

The above Directive lays down the hygiene rules which apply to the production wrapping, storage and transportation of milk to ensure human and animal health are protected.

Ensuring that all member states comply with their Community obligations in properly implementing and applying the Directive is the responsibility of the European Commission, whose Food and Veterinary Office carries out regular programmes of inspection visits to all member states. All milk imported into the UK from third countries must come from EU approved establishments in approved countries and must be accompanied by appropriate animal and public health certification signed by a veterinarian of the competent authority. The milk must enter via an approved Border Inspection Post (BIP) where it is subject to veterinary inspection to ensure that conditions of import have been complied with and to ensure that it has remained in a satisfactory condition during transport. The checks ensure that all the required documentation is correct and applies to the consignment in question. 50 per cent. of consignments of milk imported for human consumption are also given a physical check which can include taking samples for laboratory analysis.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many litres of imported milk have been rejected in the last five years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [185229]

Alun Michael: There are no figures available on the amount of milk imported into the UK that has been rejected.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much milk has been imported in the last five years for which figures are available, broken down by country of origin; and if she will make a statement. [185230]

Alun Michael: The table below show the UK imports of liquid milk in each of the last five years to 2003, broken down by country of despatch.

UK imports of liquid milk 1999–2003

Thousand litres

Country	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Grand Total
Irish Republic	60,342	60,199	54,835	26,233	19,495	221,105
Denmark	30,334	25,166	9,421	795	425	66,140
Germany	17,078	19,531	11,196	5,629	3,888	57,323
France	13,288	8,514	9,667	10,299	8,600	50,368
Belgium	6,786	6,922	3,811	2,345	3,759	23,624
Netherlands	3,620	462	919	2,198	1,027	8,227
Austria	2,844	1,355	—	—	—	4,200

UK imports of liquid milk 1999–2003

Thousand litres

Country	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Grand Total*
Italy	114	214	91	101	70	590
Portugal	—	0	—	—	40	40
Spain	23	14	—	—	—	37
Sweden	1	—	—	—	—	1
EU 15 Total	134,431	122,378	89,940	47,600	37,303	431,653

Source:
H M Customs and Excise.
Data prepared by Statistics (Commodities and Food) Consultancy, Trade and IT, ESD, DEFRA.
Note:
2003 data one provisional and subject to amendment

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will provide figures for *(a)* UK imports, *(b)* exports, *(c)* production, *(d)* domestic use and *(e)* self-sufficiency of major milk products for (i) 2002, (ii) 2003 and (iii) 2004 (estimated). [184815]

Alun Michael: The information requested is given in the following table. Care is needed when interpreting forecasts for 2004 as only a small proportion of data for 2004 are so far available and market developments from now until the end of the year remain uncertain.

UK milk products: Production and supplies of milk products manufactured by both dairy companies and on farm

Thousand tonne (unless otherwise specified)

	2002	*2003 (provisional)*	*2004 (forecast)*
Butter (a) (b)			
Production *(c)*	136	148	152
Imports	116	118	122
Exports	39	44	41
Total new supply *(d)*	213	222	233
Increase in stocks *(e)*	1	-2	-2
Total domestic uses *(d) (e)*	212	224	234
Production as percentage of total new supply for use in UK	64	67	65
Closing stocks *(e)*	19	17	15
Cheese			
Production *(c)*	380	362	370
Imports	285	320	318
Exports	82	90	100
Total new supply	583	593	588
Increase in stocks	-3	-5	4
Total domestic uses	585	598	584
Production as percentage of total new supply for use in UK	65	61	63
Closing stocks *(f)*	12	7	0

Policies (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced by her Department in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185108]

Mr. Morley: All Defra's new policy proposals or changes in policy which were likely to have a direct or indirect impact (whether benefits or cost) on business, charities and the voluntary sector were the subject of Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs). In accordance with Cabinet Office guidelines, these were required to include the full range of potential impacts on all stakeholders, including environmental impacts where relevant. Separate environmental appraisals were not required. All completed RIAs were published on Defra's website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/ria/default.htm.

In 2002–03, 26 RIAs were published on Defra's website. Of these nine included consideration of environmental impacts. However in the other 17 the policy assessed was considered not to have significant environmental impacts, indicating that environmental appraisal would not have been necessary. This is in accordance with departmental guidance. In 2003–04[1], 41 RIAs were published on Defra's website, and 21 included consideration of environmental impacts. A further 18 were considered not to have significant environmental impacts.

[1]http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/economics/appraisal/index.htm

Polish Fishing Fleet

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has had discussions with representatives of the Polish Government on arrangements for access to Polish fishing vessels to British waters. [184816]

Mr. Bradshaw: No. Poland has no access to the 6–12 mile zone from the UK's shoreline. And whilst the principle of free access in the Community's Exclusive Economic Zone from 12 to 200 miles offshore applies to all member states the only access Poland has to any quota stocks where the UK has an interest is limited to 1096t of mackerel in western Community waters, out of a total allowable catch of 545,500t.

Polish Milk Products

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate *(a)* the change in volumes of *(a)* milk and *(b)* milk products from Poland since its accession to the European Union on 1 May and *(b)* full year imports in 2005. [184720]

Alun Michael: Post-accession trade figures are not yet available and insufficient time has elapsed since accession to enable reliable yearly forecasts to be made. There were no imports of milk or milk products into the UK from Poland in 2003 or during the first quarter of 2004.

Post-consumer Paper Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much post-consumer paper waste was produced in the UK in each of the last three years; what percentage of post-consumer paper waste was collected for recycling in the UK in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003; and what the projected annual percentages are for the collection of post-consumer paper waste for recycling in the UK for the next five years. [184949]

Mr. Morley: Estimates from the Confederation of Paper Industries give UK recovered paper usage. The results and corresponding percentages produced from total paper production are listed in the following table.

	Recovered paper usage (thousands tonnes)	*Percentage of UK production*
2001	4,612	74
2002	4,610	74
2003	4,533	73

No official projections of post-consumer waste recycling for the UK are available.

Quality Status (Yorkshire)

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* parish and *(b)* town councils have been awarded quality status in (i) Barnsley, (ii) Doncaster and (iii) South Yorkshire. [184110]

Alun Michael: There are a number of challenging criteria that town and parish councils have to pass in order to gain Quality Status. One criteria is that the clerk needs to be qualified in the Certificate in Local Council Administration. In addition there are other criteria such as democratic accountability, communications and audited accounts.

To date nationally there are 55 town and parish councils that have gained Quality Status and there are 500 clerks registered for the Certificate in Local Council Administration.

The Yorkshire and Humber Training Partnership has held 12 training events with 400 delegates attending. In addition the Countryside Agency has sponsored an event which was attended by a further 160 delegates.

The Yorkshire and Humber Training Partnership have received 40 registrations from clerks that are working towards the Certificate in Local Council Administration. An additional 40 are also working towards the qualification but have not yet registered. We anticipate that there will be 80 town and parish councils in this region applying for Quality Status in the coming 12 months

No applications for Quality status have yet been received from parish councils or town councils in Barnsley, Doncaster or South Yorkshire.

Radiation Risks

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what the dates were of the meetings reported on the web-site of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks from Internal Emitters; [185119]

(2) what the origin was of the dosimetric data used in investigating the radiological significance of increases in leukaemia among children aged up to one year in the Federal Republic of Germany between 1 July 1986 and 31 December 1987 by the Committee Examining Radiation Risks from Internal Emitters. [185118]

Mr. Morley: The CERRIE Secretariat has informed me that the committee held 16 meetings on the following dates

4 December 2001;
7 February 2002;
20 March 2002;
6 June 2002;
8 August 2002;
1 October 2002;
11 December 2002;
27 February 2003;
30 April 2003;
26 June 2003;
22 October 2003;
16 December 2003;
24 February 2004;
31 March 2004;
19 May 2004; and
24 June 2004.

The Committee also convened a workshop on 21, 22 and 23 July 2003, which all Members attended.

The Department has not yet received the final version of the CERRIE report, which is still in preparation. It would not be appropriate to comment on the report until the Committee has finalised it and presented it to its parent body, COMARE, and to Ministers. I understand the report is expected to be published in October this year.

Ragwort

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if her Department will ask local authorities to publish their ragwort control policies; and if she will make a statement. [186075]

Alun Michael: The Code of Practice on control of Ragwort that I published recently set out what needs to be done by all land managers including local authorities to prevent the spread of Ragwort. It recommends that where a medium or high risk to animal welfare from ragwort has been identified, land managers, including those with responsibility for public land, should put in place and implement a control policy.

It is for individual local authorities to decide their control policy and to decide whether to make their control policy publicly available.

Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what

discussions she has had with farmers on the effects on them of a renewable transport fuel obligation; and if she will make a statement. [185213]

Mr. Morley: The Department has had a number of discussions with farmers and farming industry representatives on the effect of the renewable transport fuel obligation on farmers. In addition, we have received a large number of letters and petitions from farmers supporting the obligation.

The Department for Transport is currently considering the response to its consultation on the implementation of the EU Biofuels Directive, including the option of a renewable transport fuel obligation. The Government has included permissive clauses in the Energy Bill that would allow the Secretary of State to introduce such an obligation. The Government would consult extensively on the detail with all relevant stakeholders, including the farming community, if an obligation is assessed to be the best way forward.

We recognise that transport biofuels have potential for UK agriculture and we are keen to develop new market opportunities for farmers.

Slaughterhouses

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many animal welfare personnel there are at slaughterhouses; how many animals have been slaughtered without animal welfare personnel present for each year from 1994 to date; and if she will make a statement. [184845]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995, a slaughterhouse occupier must ensure that a competent person is available whenever there are live animals on the premises. This person must have the authority to take whatever action may be necessary to safeguard the welfare of the animals in accordance with the Regulations. The legislation is enforced by Official Veterinary Surgeons of the Meat Hygiene Service in licensed slaughterhouses, and by Veterinary Officers of the State Veterinary Service elsewhere.

The Regulations do not require the competent person to be physically present at the point of slaughter when animals are being slaughtered or killed. Therefore, there is no data on the number of livestock slaughtered without animal welfare personnel present.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in her Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisers. [185463]

Alun Michael: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 190W.

Stewardship Applications

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many stewardship applications have been made in the last *(a)* quarter, *(b)* half-year and *(c)* year for which figures are available, broken down by county; and if she will make a statement. [185211]

Alun Michael: There is an annual application period for the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. 2,056 applications were received during the period, which closed on 31 March 2004. This total includes applications for the renewal of agreements coming to an end in 2004. A breakdown by county is not currently available.

Timber

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice will be given to non-departmental public bodies regarding the use of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [184942]

Mr. Morley: Central Government departments are responsible for communicating Government policy and related information to the non-departmental public bodies they sponsor. I expect whatever information on a central point of expertise on timber (CPET) is communicated to central departments to be passed on by those departments to the bodies they sponsor if those bodies purchase timber or products made from timber.

The CPET Phase 1 contract will result in revised guidance being issued to central departments. This contract is expected to be completed in September 2004.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans there are to make the services of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber available to local authorities. [184943]

Mr. Morley: The Government's plan is that all UK public sector bodies and their suppliers will have access to guidance published by the Central Point of Expertise on Timber Procurement (CPET). Furthermore, plans are being formulated for the CPET to operate a help line service that would be available to all UK public sector bodies. Implementation of these plans has cost implications that will be subject to resource availability and this will be reviewed in the autumn of 2004.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance will be produced by the Central Point of Expertise on Timber; how it will be distributed to Government departments; and if she will make a statement. [184951]

Mr. Morley: The Central Point of Expertise on Timber Phase 1 is: *(a)* reviewing existing guidance to establish robust contract definitions for legal and sustainable timber; *(b)* devising a methodology for assessing whether individual certification schemes meet UK Government requirements for identifying legal and sustainable timber and *(c)* undertaking such assessments for five certification schemes. This work will result in revised guidance that will be communicated by email to heads of procurement and environmental managers in central Government departments, to the devolved administrations and to the Improvement Development Agency. In addition the revised guidance will be published on a CPET web site that will be

publicised by a press release. Future phases of the CPET service will build on this work and it is expected that a similar communication strategy will be adopted.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance will be issued to Government departments regarding the use of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [184952]

Mr. Morley: Central Government departments will be advised to apply guidance published under the name of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET) when they identify a need to procure timber or products derived from timber and to follow that guidance throughout the procurement process. When the CPET is operating a help line service departments will be advised to use that service whenever they or their suppliers encounter difficulties acquiring their timber and timber products from legal and sustainable sources or are in any doubt over claims made by suppliers in that respect. Departments will also be advised to avail themselves of any other services that the CPET may provide, including, for example, training workshops for procurement personnel.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her plans are for phase two of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber; how it will be funded; and over what time period it will run. [184953]

Mr. Morley: Building on the foundations laid through Phase 1 of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET), the Government plan to commission further services as follows:

Assessment of certification scheme bodies not covered by CPET Phase 1;

Development of criteria to evaluate the suitability of suppliers' assurance that is not based on certification schemes and provision of guidance for procurement officers, facilities managers, estate managers, architects and suppliers;

Consultations with certification scheme bodies and other key stakeholders on the application of the CPET service and its effect on their operations;

Provision of guidance, training and education for heads of procurement, buyers and specifiers, e.g. through the website, workshops, voluntary audits and a helpline;

Raising awareness throughout the supply chain.

Whether all the services outlined above would be covered by CPET Phase 2 has yet to be decided. That decision will depend on resource availability. The CPET is a new concept and investment has to be soundly based. The full CPET service is being created in phases so that experience gained can be applied to future development. The detailed plans and resource allocation for Phase 2 will be considered in the autumn of 2004 with a decision expected by the end of November 2004. The resource implications of expanding the CPET client base beyond central Government buyers will need careful consideration. The extent to which a CPET could generate income from fees, sponsorship and other commercial activities is one of a number of options that will be investigated.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the estimated costs are of *(a)* establishing and *(b)* running for the first 12 months the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [184957]

Mr. Morley: To establish the Central Point of Expertise on Timber Procurement to operate a wide range of services as originally envisaged and run those services for a year is estimated to cost in the region of £300,000 in total.

Waste Disposal

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total volume of *(a)* domestic, *(b)* commercial and *(c)* other waste was in each region in each year since 2001–02; what this represents (i) per head of population and (ii) broken down by the proportion of waste (A) sent to landfill, (B) incinerated and (C) disposed of by other means. [184860]

Mr. Morley: Information on domestic waste from the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey for 2001–02 and 2002–03, split by Government region is shown as follows:

	Household waste Tonnes (Thousand)	*Kilogrammes (Per head)*	*Landfilled (Percentage)*	*Incinerated (Percentage)*	*Other (Percentage)*
2001–02					
North East	1,313	521	78	16	7
North West	3,846	568	86	2	11
Yorkshire and The Humber	2,516	506	84	4	12
East Midlands	2,183	522	77	6	16
West Midlands	2,664	504	57	32	12
East	2,809	520	80	1	18
London	3,411	467	73	20	8
South East	4,227	527	79	0	21
South West	2,584	523	81	0	19
England	25,554	583	77	9	14
2002–03					
North East	1,376	548	76	14	10
North West	3,935	581	84	3	14
Yorkshire and The Humber	2,525	506	79	7	14
East Midlands	2,214	525	77	6	17

	Household waste Tonnes (Thousand)	Kilogrammes (Per head)	Landfilled (Percentage)	Incinerated (Percentage)	Other (Percentage)
West Midlands	2,694	508	54	32	14
East	2,820	520	79	1	20
London	3,379	459	71	20	9
South East	4,249	529	76	0	23
South West	2,625	529	78	0	22
England	25,819	521	75	9	16

Notes:
1. Totals and percentages might not add up due to founding.
2. Household disposal methods estimated from published municipal totals.

The latest year for which full information on industrial and commercial waste is available is 1998–99, from the Environment Agency's National Waste Production Survey, Strategic Waste Management Information for England and Wales. Results can be found at: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Information on construction and demolition waste is available from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Survey of Arisings and Use of Construction and Demolition Waste in England and Wales in 2001, published in October 2002. Results can be found at: www.odpm.gov.uk

Water and Sewerage Services

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average monthly cost to consumers is of *(a)* water services and *(b)* sewerage services in each water supply area (i) in total and (ii) broken down by those who were (A) metered and (B) unmetered in 2003–04. [184861]

Mr. Morley: Water bills and sewerage bills are set separately by each water and sewerage company and water company in England and Wales.

The average monthly costs to household consumers of water and sewerage services in each supply area in total and broken down into metered and unmetered customers in 2003–04 are set out in the following table.

Average monthly cost in 2003–04

£

Company	Water Measured	Sewerage Unmeasured	Total	Measured	Unmeasured	Total
Anglian	8	11	10	11	16	13
Dwr Cymru	7	11	10	7	14	13
United Utilities	9	10	10	9	11	10
Northumbrian/Essex and Suffolk	7	9	8	—	—	—
Northumbrian	6	8	8	9	10	10
Essex and Suffolk	7	11	10	—	—	—
Severn Trent	8	10	9	8	9	8
South West	8	12	10	13	23	18
Southern	7	8	8	11	14	13
Thames	8	9	9	8	8	8
Wessex	8	11	10	10	13	12
Yorkshire/York	8	10	9	—	—	—
Yorkshire	8	10	9	8	10	10
York	6	8	8	—	—	—
Bournemouth and W. Hampshire	7	9	8	—	—	—
Bristol	8	9	9	—	—	—
Cambridge	7	8	8	—	—	—
Cholderton	15	12	12	—	—	—
Dee Valley	6	10	9	—	—	—
Folkestone and Dover	9	13	11	—	—	—
Mid Kent	9	11	11	—	—	—
Portsmouth	7	6	6	—	—	—
South East	9	11	10	—	—	—
South Staffs	7	7	7	—	—	—
Sutton and East Surrey	9	11	10	—	—	—
Tendring Hundred	11	16	13	—	—	—
Three Valleys/North Surrey	8	10	10	—	—	—
Three Valleys	8	10	10	—	—	—
North Surrey	8	10	9	—	—	—
Industry average	8	10	9	10	11	10

Level of average bills for 2003–04 are based on estimated data provided by each company.

Wheat

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the price of wheat. [185141]

Alun Michael: Wheat prices rose sharply last year as a response to the lower than expected harvest in central and southern Europe, but have since fallen to more normal levels in response to the gradual improvement in the supply situation and forecasts for the level of the harvest in 2004. In this immediate pre-harvest period, there is a certain amount of price volatility as old stocks are run down and the trade waits for more certainty about the availability and quality of the new harvest. Quotes for feed wheat currently range from £88.50-tonne spot July to £65.50-tonne at harvest.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Appeals Service (Liverpool)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has for changes to the Appeals Service office in Liverpool. [185121]

Mr. Pond: This is a matter for Christina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Appeals Service. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Christina Townsend to Mr. Peter Kilfoyle, dated 22 July 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to respond to your question regarding planned changes to the Appeals Service in Liverpool.

The Appeals Service is currently considering a number of proposals about its current organisation.

No decisions have yet been made on how many operating sites the Appeals Service will have in the future. However, agreement has been reached with the Pensions Service to take over their Burnley site which it is planned will be a future operating centre.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Automated Payments

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions in the last year automated payments of benefits and pensions have been delayed; for how long payments were delayed; and what recompense was offered to recipients for the delay. [185673]

Mr. Pond: There have been four occasions in the last year when automated payments of benefits have been paid late to DWP customers. Some disability living allowance customers received their payment two banking days late on one occasion, and one banking day late on another. The other occasions delayed payments to some jobseeker's allowance customers and income support customers by one banking day. Departmental policy provides a scheme for financial redress for maladministration. This scheme is available to consider ex-gratia payments for customers who face financial inconvenience or distress because of late payments. This is dependent on the individual circumstances of the case.

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average weekly amount of *(a)* housing benefit fraud and *(b)* council tax benefit fraud was (i) in total and (ii) for each local authority, detected under the Security Against Fraud and Error scheme in 2002–03. [183167]

Mr. Pond: For local authorities, the Weekly Benefit Saving (WBS) scheme was replaced by the Security Against Fraud and Error (SAFE) scheme on 1 April 2002. Unlike WBS which recorded fraud only, the SAFE scheme records fraud and error.

The average weekly amount of housing benefit fraud and error detected under the SAFE scheme for 2002–03 was £52.52 and the average weekly amount of council tax benefit fraud and error detected under the SAFE scheme for 2002–03 was £11.97.

The available information about the average weekly amount of housing benefit and council tax benefit fraud and error for local authorities has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many calls were received by the National Benefit Fraud Hotline in 2003–04; and how many *(a)* investigations, *(b)* prosecutions and *(c)* convictions resulted. [184683]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

National Benefit Fraud Hotline

April 2003 to March 2004	*Total*
Number of calls received	211,054
Investigations	44,127
Prosecutions	672
Convictions	619

Note:
Some convictions may relate to prosecutions from previous years.
Source:
National Benefit Fraud Hotline and Fraud Information by Sector system

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases of benefit fraud were detected in 2003–04; and how many of these resulted in *(a)* prosecutions and *(b)* convictions. [184684]

Mr. Pond: The number of cases of benefit fraud detected is not available. The number of cases resulting in prosecution and cases resulting in conviction is in the table.

2003–04

	DWP	*Local authorities*
Prosecutions	9,204	4,601
Convictions	9,091	3,747

Note:
Some convictions may relate to prosecutions from previous years.
Sources:
1. DWP—Fraud Information by Sector and National Investigation Service.
2. Local authorities—local authority subsidy claim forms.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the *(a)* operational and *(b)* advertising costs of the National Benefit Fraud Hotline in 2003–04. [184685]

Mr. Pond: The operational cost of the National Benefit Fraud Hotline in 2003–04 was £1,038,505. The cost of advertising is not separately assessed.

Notes:

1. Since the Targeting Benefit Fraud advertising campaign started in 2003, the NBFH has been included in the campaign advertising and has not been the subject of its own advertising.

2. Operational costs include staffing and goods and service costs.

3. The operational costs of administering the NBFH include the costs of administering report-a-cheat-online. These costs cannot be separated.

Source:

National Benefit Fraud Hotline (NBFH)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the recorded benefit fraud savings for *(a)* his Department and *(b)* local authorities were in 2003–04. [184686]

Mr. Pond: The available information is in the table.

For local authorities, the Weekly Benefit Savings (WBS) scheme was replaced by the Security against Fraud and Error (SAFE) scheme in April 2002, with some local authorities joining in April 2001. Like WBS, the SAFE scheme provides rewards for detected overpayments. However, it provides rewards for the detection of both fraud and claimant error overpayments and it is not possible to identify fraud overpayments separately.

Monetary Value Adjustments (MVA) by DWP in 2003–04

	MVA (£)
2003–04	14,588,905

Notes:

1. MVA is the difference between the weekly amount of benefit, which would have been paid or would have continued to be paid and the benefit paid following the decision maker's decision on the information gathered. It includes both increases and decreases.

2. The figure includes Instrument of Payment (IOP) adjustments

3. The figure includes adjustments in addition to those attributable to fraud as it is not possible to separate them out.

Source:

Fraud Information by Sector and General Matching Service.

Benefit Payment Arrangements

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners received benefit payments by order book on the latest date for which figures are available; and by what date he expects all pensioners to have transferred to the new system. [175928]

Mr. Pond: There were 5,270,170 order book accounts held by pensioners, live and in payment from the latest data available at 17 April 2004. Payments due from March 2005 will be made by a different method of payment.

Benefit Processing Centres

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will list the locations, broken down by parliamentary constituencies, of all the offices identified in his announcement on 29 June relating to the centralisation of benefit processing centres; [184335]

(2) if he will list the locations, broken down by parliamentary constituencies, of each of the proposed benefit processing centres referred to in his announcement on 29 June; and within what timescale decisions on the locations of the remaining benefit processing centres will be made; [184336]

(3) what the proposed timescale is for carrying out the centralisation of benefit processing referred to in his announcement on 29 June. [184337]

Maria Eagle: The offices impacted by the announcement on 29 June were the ten pension centres referred to in the following table, together with details of the constituency in which each is located:

Office	*Constituency*
Burnley Pension Centre	Burnley
Derby Pension Centre	Derby South
Liverpool Pension Centre	Liverpool Walton
Norwich (Baltic House) Pension Centre	Norwich South
Nottingham Pension Centre	Nottingham South
Plymouth Pension Centre	Plymouth, Devonport
Stockton Pension Centre	Stockton South
Wolverhampton Pension Centre	Wolverhampton South West
Wrexham Pension Centre	Wrexham
York Pension Centre	Ryedale

Of the 10 sites identified, six will become part of the Jobcentre Plus Network predominantly as benefit processing centres. These are Derby, Norwich (Baltic house) Nottingham, Wolverhampton, Stockton and Wrexham.

The plans for the remaining pension centres are being developed and we are looking for opportunities to transfer estate and people to other parts of the department, other Government Departments or the private sector. I will inform the House as soon as plans are final and firm decisions are made.

The announcement also signalled the intention of Jobcentre Plus to begin centralising their processing work—moving from a large number of dispersed sites nationally to a smaller number of larger sites.

Detailed planning work is currently underway to determine the number and location of these sites. I will report these locations when planning is complete. The centralisation of benefit processing will be implemented in a rolling programme for completion by 2008 at the latest.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will require the Child Support Agency to copy to hon. Members' letters which it sends to constituents whose cases hon. Members have taken up with the Agency. [181991]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John Lyons, dated 22 July 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will require the Child Support Agency to copy to hon. Members letters which it sends to constituents whose cases hon. Members have taken up with the Agency.

The Agency wishes to understand and where possible to meet the needs of Members of Parliament. It does not automatically copy to Members letters which it sends to constituents whose cases Members have taken up with the Agency. It will carefully consider any such request on a case by case basis.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Strathkelvin and Bearsden (Mr. Lyons) of 7 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 758W, on the Child Support Agency, for what reasons cases have been moved from the old to the new computer system; and if he will make a statement. [185013]

Mr. Pond: Cases will move from the old to the new computer system if they are linked to a case in the new child support scheme. Some cases will subsequently convert to the new scheme. These will include, for example, cases where a non-resident parent who already has an old scheme assessment is also the non-resident parent in relation to a new scheme application.

It would neither be fair nor workable for people to have a liability under two different schemes, so it is best to move these linked cases onto the new scheme together.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the projected costs are of closing the Basingstoke Child Support Agency office; and how long he expects it will take to recover those costs. [183285]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Mike Hancock, dated 22 July 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the projected costs are of closing the Basingstoke Child Support Agency office; and how long he expects it will take to recover those costs.

We are currently engaging elsewhere in the Department for Work and Pensions and with other Government Departments to consider potential re-deployment opportunities. Until that work is complete we will not take a final decision on the closure of the Basingstoke site and are thus unable to finalise the business case and therefore the associated costs.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to re-deploy staff when the Basingstoke Child Support Agency office closes. [183287]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Mike Hancock, dated 22 July 2004:

In reply to your recent parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has to re-deploy staff when the Basingstoke Child Support Agency office closes. The Agency developed a Redeployment Plan that is being shared with the relevant trade unions. As part of that, we are engaging elsewhere within the Department for Work and Pensions and with other Government Departments to establish potential re-deployment options. Alongside this all staff in Basingstoke have been seen to establish their preferences. Additional skilled staff have been allocated to support this activity.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what organisations he consulted and what representations he has received from *(a)* the local council and *(b)* other interested bodies on the proposal to close the Basingstoke Child Support Agency office. [183289]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Mike Hancock, dated 22 July 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what organisations he consulted and what representations he has received from *(a)* the local council and *(b)* other interested bodies on the proposal to close the Basingstoke Child Support Agency office.

A public consultation commencing on 19 June 2003, formed part of the Lyons Review. It created a total of 207 responses, of which, 105 came from Local Authorities and 11 from interested parties. A full list of consultation respondents can be found in the Lyons Report (appendix 2), along with details of the representations made.

The Agency is committed to a policy of open communications with its staff. It therefore told people of its intention to cease its operations in Basingstoke at the earliest opportunity. Formal consultation is now taking place with staff and trade unions. We are currently engaging elsewhere in the Department for Work and Pensions and with other Government Departments to consider potential redeployment opportunities. Until that work is complete we will not take a final decision on the closure of the Basingstoke site. No representations have been received from the local council or any other interested body other than the Public and Commercial Services Union.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether a business case has been drawn up to support the closure of the Child Support Agency office in Basingstoke; and if he will make a statement. [183581]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John McDonnell, dated 22 July 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether a business case has been drawn up to support the closure of the Child Support Agency office in Basingstoke; and if he will make a statement.

Our intention is to maximise the deployment of staff elsewhere in the Department for Work and Pensions. We are currently in discussions with colleagues elsewhere in the Department and until these discussions are complete no final decision on the closure of the Basingstoke site will be taken. No business case can be finalised until we have been able to quantify those alternative opportunities.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what consultation was undertaken before the announcement of the closure of the Child Support Agency office in Basingstoke. [183582]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John McDonnell, dated 22 July 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what consultation was undertaken before the announcement of the closure of the Child Support Agency office in Basingstoke.

The Agency is committed to a policy of open communications with its staff. It therefore told people of its intention to cease its operations in Basingstoke at the earliest opportunity. Formal consultation is now taking place with staff and trade unions. Our intention is to maximise the deployment of staff elsewhere in the Department for Work and Pensions. We are currently in discussions with colleagues elsewhere in the Department. Until these discussions are complete no final decision on the closure of the Basingstoke site will be taken.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what options have been considered as alternatives to the closure of the Basingstoke Child Support Agency office. [183583]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John McDonnell, dated 22 July 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what options have been considered as alternatives to the closure of the Basingstoke Child Support Agency office.

We are charged with reducing the size of our estate based on an expectation of a significant reduction in headcount. Basingstoke falls within the geographic region covered by the Lyons Review and we have accepted the findings of this review. We are intending to move the Agency's operations from Basingstoke in line with the review and a direct alternative was not therefore considered.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the number of families in receipt of income support and income-based jobseeker's allowance, also receiving full council tax benefit and assistance with mortgage interest payments, that will migrate to child tax credit. [185056]

Mr. Pond: As at February 2004, there were 54,000 families receiving income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance, and also receiving assistance with their mortgage interest payments; all of whom will migrate to child tax credit in due course.

There is no comparable data from which to determine the number that also receive council tax benefit; however, it is likely that the majority of these families will receive council tax benefit.

Notes:

1. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to sampling variation.

2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will estimate how many individuals have experienced a drop in their income as a result of migrating to the child tax credit from income support and jobseeker's allowance; [181580]

(2) how many interviews his Department has conducted to help to secure the position of those who have been floated off income support and jobseeker's allowance as a result of their benefits being passported to the child tax credit; and if he will make a statement. [181581]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

To date there have been 3,658 interviews recorded with families likely to float off income support or jobseeker's allowance.

Civil Partnerships Bill

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what savings on income-related benefits he anticipates making once the Civil Partnerships Bill is introduced for, and the living together test extended to, same-sex couples. [184728]

Maria Eagle: If the Civil Partnership Bill is enacted same-sex couples, whether they have formed a civil partnership or are living together as civil partners, will be treated in the same way as opposite-sex couples in the income-related benefits. It is possible that DWP will realise some savings as a result.

There is very little information about the number of same-sex couples in this country. The Labour Force Survey suggests that there are about 50,000 cohabiting same-sex couples in the UK, very few of whom are pensioners.

However, there is likely to be some under-reporting, because individuals' reluctance to disclose information about their personal circumstances. Further, the Department does not have any statistical information about individuals currently receiving income related benefits who are cohabiting with someone of the same sex. Savings are, therefore, difficult to assess with any degree of confidence and it has not been possible to include estimates in the Regulatory Impact Assessment of the Civil Partnership Bill.

Sutton Disability Benefits Centre

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of how changes in civil service numbers announced by the Chancellor in his statement on the Spending Review will affect the Sutton Disability Benefit Centre. [185799]

Maria Eagle: The Department's contribution to Sir Michael Lyons's Review of Public Sector Relocation identified work at a number of sites in London and the South East which could be relocated subject to more detailed consideration in each case. Final decisions have yet to be taken about how the Sutton Disability Benefits Centre may be affected.

Civil Service Redundancies

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether the proposed job reductions in his Department will be achieved through *(a)* voluntary and *(b)* compulsory redundancies; [186066]

(2) what the timescale is for job reductions in his Department; [186068]

(3) if his Department will take part in cross-departmental negotiations concerning civil servant job losses to ensure that past and future job losses do not fall disproportionately on any individual community. [186069]

Maria Eagle: Following the Spending Review announcement, detailed business and staffing plans continue to be developed across all parts of the Department in order to manage the overall reduction of 30,000 posts over the four years to March 2008.

At this stage of planning it is too early to quantify the likely number of voluntary or compulsory redundancies. Compulsory redundancies, if required, will be a last resort after all other options have been considered.

The Department is fully engaged with the Cabinet Office to ensure cross Government co-ordination of staff redeployment and surplus management activity is effectively managed.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what contingency plans are in place to ensure that his Department's staffing levels are sufficient to cope with an increase in unemployment; and whether a need for additional staff would be met from the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sectors. [186070]

Maria Eagle: The Department's workforce strategy and planned staffing levels take account of key economic assumptions provided by HM Treasury. The current assumptions suggest that unemployment levels will remain static over the next four years.

The Department's workforce strategy will be kept under review to account for any changes in these economic assumptions and the potential impact on staffing requirements in particular parts of the Department.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the estimated number of Civil Service jobs expected to be lost to the Department arising from the Spending Review is; [186171]

(2) which local offices are included in his Department's closure programme arising out of the Spending Review; and what the timetable for closures is. [186173]

Maria Eagle: As announced in the Spending Review, the Department proposes to realise a net reduction of 30,000 posts by March 2008.

Detailed business and staffing plans continue to be developed across all parts of the Department in order to manage the proposed reductions. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State issued a written statement on 29 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 8–9WS, outlining the first phase of this transformation. We will inform the House as further planning decisions are made.

Communicating Difficult Messages

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a copy of the memorandum to his Department's offices entitled Best Practice in Communicating Difficult Messages. [185708]

Jane Kennedy: The document requested has been placed in the Library.

The Best Practice in Communicating Difficult Messages document was produced in-house by Jobcentre Plus drawing on good practice from within the communication industry.

The document was intended to provide brief, and easy to absorb information to support local managers when communicating to their staff about aspects of Jobcentre Plus business which could have an impact on people's jobs.

Community Sentences and Benefits Pilots

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he next expects to be able to report on the results of operational improvements to the community sentences and benefits pilots. [182128]

Mr. Pond: We have said that the scheme would continue, with operational improvements, for a further year. We will report on the results of the improvements once they have been thoroughly evaluated.

Departmental Accountancy Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions who the Finance Director of *(a)* the Department and *(b)* the Child Support Agency is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183418]

Mr. Pond: The Finance Director of the DWP is John Codling who is CIPFA qualified. The Finance Director of the Child Support Agency is Jim Edgar who is CIMA qualified.

The DWP and its predecessor Department, DSS, has had its resource accounts qualified in each of the years since published resource accounts were first produced in

1999–2000. Since the DWP was formed in 2001–02 its resource accounts have been qualified in both 2001–02 and 2002–03 due to:

significant levels of estimated fraud and error in benefit expenditure recorded in the operating statement;

weaknesses in the Department's audit trails relating to contributory and non-contributory benefit customer over-payments debtors and the encashment control creditor. The Department has a programme in place to address these long standing system weaknesses.

The 2003–04 resource accounts will be available later this year.

Prior to 1999–2000 the Department's accounts were produced on a cash basis and the DSS Vote 1 Account was qualified on the basis of fraud and error since 1990–91 along with the National Insurance Fund Account which was the responsibility of the Department prior to its transfer to the Inland Revenue in 2001–02.

In the past five years, all other accounts within the Department, with the exception of the Child Support client funds account, have been produced free of a qualified audit opinion.

The Child Support Agency administration account has never been qualified. The client funds account has been qualified each year due to largely historic errors in the underlying maintenance assessments resulting in misstatements in receipts and payments, and in the maintenance balances outstanding.

The 2003–04 CSA client fund account will be available later this year.

Departmental Publications

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many publications his Department has issued over the past three years; and what the print run distributed was in each case; [186174]

(2) how much the Department spent on departmental publications in the past three years. [186172]

Maria Eagle: The Department and its customer-facing businesses produce a wide range of publications, ranging from reports to Parliament, other official documents and research reports through to booklets and leaflets designed to inform the citizen of their rights and responsibilities.

The detailed information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183867]

Jane Kennedy: The Department for Work and Pensions had 420 publication titles and a total of 7,307,933 copies in storage at its five main stores on 13 July 2004. Our main stores are a mix of departmental and contractor stores. The two main departmental stores are at Heywood and Beacon Road, Norcross. The three contractor stores are Meads at Nottingham, Belmont Press at Northampton and Astron at Chadderton. Retention and storage of materials at commercial stores are a matter for the Publisher who may rely on the use of on-demand printing facilities to meet the Department's demand.

In addition small buffer stocks of leaflets and guidance material for our customers are held at about 1,800 offices across our national network.

A small number of leaflets, associated with major advertising campaigns, are also held for the duration of the campaign by companies who operate campaign response mechanisms for the public.

Departmental Redundancies

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the *(a)* organisations and *(b)* agencies which his Department will consult before deciding upon the locations for potential job reductions. [186029]

Maria Eagle: The detail of where and when staff reductions will happen is still being developed.

As more information becomes available the department will consult with appropriate public and private sector organisations in the relevant locations as well as our trade unions.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what funding has been set aside to retrain staff of his Department that are likely to lose their jobs. [186030]

Maria Eagle: Following the Spending Review announcement, detailed business and staffing plans continue to be developed across all parts of the Department in order to manage the reduction of 30,000 posts by March 2008. Until these plans are finalised it is too early to predict the numbers of staff requiring retraining, the exact nature of the training and the level of funding provision required.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many jobs it is proposed will be lost in his Department, broken down by pay grade in *(a)* percentage and *(b)* actual terms; [186031]

(2) if he will express the number of proposed job cuts in his Department as a *(a)* total and *(b)* percentage of the work force in each region of the UK. [186032]

Maria Eagle: Following the Spending Review announcement, detailed business and staffing plans continue to be developed across all parts of the Department in order to manage the reduction of 30,000 posts by March 2008. Until these plans are finalised it is too early to say how the planned reduction in posts will affect each grade in the Department or the percentage reductions in each region.

The first phase of the plans were announced in a written statement by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 29 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 8–9WS. Further detailed plans are currently being developed. These plans will enable us to determine how the staffing reductions will be profiled across each Government office region.

Departmental Staff (Wales)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were employed by his Department in Wales in each of the last 15 years, broken down by location. [186076]

Maria Eagle: Information on staff numbers broken down by location in Wales is not available. Information on the number of staff in Wales as a whole is not available prior to September 2001. Information at that date and each year thereafter is in the following table.

As at 30 September	*Number*
2001	6,581
2002	7,491
2003	7,697

Notes:

1. Numbers are based on headcount not Whole Time Equivalents.
2. Numbers are consistent with Cabinet Office definitions other than the inclusion of staff on paid maternity leave.
3. Numbers are point in time at the date shown.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applications for disability living allowance were initially *(a)* granted and *(b)* refused in the last year for which figures are available; and how many of those refused were subsequently allowed after review or appeal. [186054]

Maria Eagle: The available information is set out in the table.

Disability living allowance: Numbers of initial awards; claims disallowed; awards increased on review and appeals decided in favour of the appellant: From 1 March 2003 to 29 February 2004

	Number
Initial Awards[1]	217,300
Claims Disallowed[1]	220,200
Awards increased on review[2]	56,400
Appeals in favour of appellant[3]	37,200

[1] Figures taken from a 100 per cent. sample at 29 February 2004.
[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
[2] Figures taken from 100 per cent. sample at 29 February 2004.
[2] Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
[2] Figures include reconsiderations and supersessions.
[3] All figures are subject to change as more up to date data becomes available.
[3] Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

Sources:

[1, 2] MJS

[3] 100 per cent. download of the Generic Appeals Processing System.

Fatal and Major Injury Accidents

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the incidence rate of fatal and major injury incidents was in each of the last seven years. [184676]

Jane Kennedy: The incidence rate of fatal and major injuries (per 100,000 employed), reported to all enforcing authorities in the period 1997–98 to 2002–03 is shown in the following table:

	Employee		*Self-employed*	
	Fatal injury rate	*Major injury rate*	*Fatal injury rate*	*Major injury rate*
1996–97	0.9	127.5	2.3	38.4
1997–98	0.9	127.6	1.8	23.3
1998–99	0.8	121.7	1.9	20.3
1999–2000	0.7	116.6	1.7	19.7
2000–01	0.9	110.2	2.4	19.2
2001–02	0.8	110.9	1.3	27.8
2002–03[1]	0.7	113.0	1.3	31.9

[1] Provisional.

Notes:

1. Incidence rates are derived from reports made to HSE and local authorities under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995.
2. Incidence rates are expressed per hundred thousand employees or self-employed people as appropriate.
3. The annual basis is the planning year from 1 April to 31 March.
4. Statistics are those reported to all enforcing authorities.

Formal Child Care (Take-up)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how he plans to increase the take-up of formal childcare by lower income families. [185061]

Jane Kennedy: The Government are committed to helping children in low income families by providing and improving take up of good quality formal childcare. We are working to increase the availability, accessibility, affordability and variety of formal childcare and, importantly, to ensure parents understand the choices open to them.

We have provided substantial investment via the Sure Start Unit and its predecessors—£4.2 billion invested since 1997 and a further £4.3 billion earmarked in the Spending Review for the period up to 2008—and have broadened the range of childcare opportunities available. For example, we have introduced Extended School Childcare Pilots to provide the childcare lone parents need to enter employment and Childcare Taster Pilots to give lone parents the opportunity to experience formal childcare.

To further increase parents' knowledge, we have made individual and tailored advice available through the new deal and Jobcentre Plus and as part of the range of services offered by Sure Start Local Programmes and Children's Centres. Meanwhile, Jobcentre Plus has introduced dedicated Childcare Partnership Managers to coordinate Jobcentre Plus's programmes and strategies with local childcare development plans.

Through tax credits we have made significant improvements to the financial assistance for child care available to working parents—up to £140 a week can be claimed—and have made plans for a voluntary accreditation scheme, extending the types of childcare

that parents can receive financial support for. We have also invested in the Support Childminder Scheme, to engage existing childminders in supporting new people, including informal carers, in registering with Ofsted.

Departmental Staffing (Fylde)

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list his proposed staffing reductions for each of his Department's areas of responsibility in Fylde, for each year from 2004 to 2008. [184575]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* Following the announcement in the Budget statement on future departmental staffing levels work has been taking place across the Department to develop detailed business and staffing plans. The first phase of these plans was announced in a statement by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 29 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 8–9WS. Further detailed plans are currently being developed. These plans will enable us to determine how the staffing reductions will be profiled across each part and location of the Department and its businesses.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185128]

Jane Kennedy: The Department's Green Minister is Baroness Hollis of Heigham. Baroness Hollis is a member of ENV(G), the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. However, it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees.

The Department actively contributes to the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development through its core objectives to combat poverty and social exclusion and to eliminate child poverty. Baroness Hollis' ministerial role on these issues is interwoven with her Green Minister role.

During the past year, Baroness Hollis has also been involved in communications with the Treasury to further develop the integration of qualitative assessment into cost benefit analysis. This will allow analyses to better demonstrate social, economic and environmental balance.

The Department issued its third Sustainable Development Annual Report in the autumn of 2003.

Health and Safety Executive

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Health and Safety Executive *(a)* regulatory contacts and *(b)* investigations were carried out in each of the last seven years. [184679]

Jane Kennedy: The numbers of regulatory contacts and investigations carried out by the Health and Safety Executive over the last seven years are as follows.

Report year (April to March)	*Regulatory contacts*	*Investigations*
1997–98	186,065	33,585
1998–99	183,292	32,200
1999–2000	185,496	35,551
2000–01	192,693	40,774
2001–02	195,695	37,855
2002–03	218,574	34,724
2003–04	206,460	27,816

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* incidents and *(b)* complaints were (i) reported to and (ii) investigated by the Health and Safety Executive in each of the last seven years. [184680]

Jane Kennedy: Incidents and complaints, reported to and investigated by the Health and Safety Executive are as follows:

Report year (April to March)	*Incidents reported*	*Complaints reported*	*Incidents investigated*	*Complaints investigated*
1997–98	n/a	n/a	[1]33,585	
1998–99	164,912	29,610	9,400	22,800
1999–2000	160,514	30,901	10,844	24,707
2000–01	164,287	28,933	15,489	25,285
2001–02	156,058	28,021	13,421	24,434
2002–03	142,418	27,554	11,251	23,473
2003–04	[2]n/a	24,404	[3]5,288	22,528

[1] Total.

[2] Data will be available on 18 November 2004.

[3] In 2003–04 HSE's target was to investigate 95 per cent. of reported incidents that met its published investigation criteria. In previous years the HSE target was to investigate a percentage of reported incidents (different targets for each year). In 2003–04, HSE achieved its targets for percentage of complaints followed up (plan—90 per cent.; outturn—94.8 per cent.) and incidents investigated (plan—95 per cent.; outturn—97.66 per cent.).

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases of information being laid by the Health and Safety Executive in order to support a prosecution there have been in each of the last seven years. [184682]

Jane Kennedy: Over the last seven years the following number of offences have been prosecuted in Great Britain, following investigation by the Health and Safety Executive. Each offence prosecuted represents one information laid or, in Scotland, charge preferred. The information given is publicly available. The 2003–04 figures will be publicly released in the Offences and Penalties Report, due for release in late October 2004.

Year[1]	*Total offences prosecuted*
1996–97	1,490
1997–98	1,627
1998–99	1,759
1999–2000	2,115
2000–01	1,973
2001–02	1,986
2002–03	1,659

[1] Year refers to operational year, which runs from 1 April to 31 March.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the 20 councils with the longest times for processing new housing benefit claims, identifying in each case the average time for processing claims. [185706]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

20 local authorities with the longest processing times for new claims for housing benefit (HB) and council tax benefit (CTB)

Local authority	*Average time for processing new claims (calendar days)* HB	CTB	HB and CTB
Bristol	87	90	88
North Ayrshire	79	97	88
Dundee	88	90	89
Flintshire	89	89	89
York	78	108	91
Croydon	83	105	95
East Devon	95	96	96
Mid Suffolk	92	98	96
South Northamptonshire	100	95	97
Torridge	99	96	97
Chelmsford	95	108	101
Lambeth	90	122	104
Renfrewshire	92	115	104
Portsmouth	103	112	107
Leicester	106	122	114
Manchester	137	89	115
Merthyr Tydfil	—	—	118
Hackney	114	134	123
Liverpool	183	152	167
Swale	182	203	193

Notes:

1. Four local authorities did not supply data for 2003–04.
2. It is not possible to differentiate the housing benefit/council tax benefit data from Merthyr Tydfil.
3. The data are taken from un-audited returns by local authorities to DWP, and are the most recent quarterly data they have returned for 2003–04.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many councils are *(a)* meeting and *(b)* not meeting the Government's target for handling new housing benefit claims within 14 days. [185707]

Mr. Pond: The Department for Work and Pensions does not set a target of 14 days for deciding new claims; the regulations require a claim to be decided within 14 days of the relevant information having been received or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter. The Department launched national Performance Standards in April 2002, which set a standard of 90 per cent. of new housing benefit claims to be decided in 14 days, but these are not mandatory. In the fourth quarter of 2003–04 (the most recent data available) the national average performance was 75 per cent. of new claims decided within 14 days with 23 per cent. of local authorities currently meeting or exceeding the 90 per cent. standard.

In order to improve this performance the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate targets its inspections on those authorities that have the longest processing times. We also provide every local authority chief executive with information as to how they compare against national standards and performance.

Job Centre Plus

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which towns in North Wales have Job Centre Plus offices; and when Job Centre Plus will be rolled out in Rhyl. [186025]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Chris Ruane, dated 22 July 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the rollout of Jobcentre Plus in North Wales. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

It may be helpful if I explain that the introduction of the Jobcentre Plus model across North Wales is being undertaken in a staged process, which should be completed by March 2006. We have already introduced the new service in our North West Wales and Powys District, and there are Jobcentre Plus Offices in Amlwch, Bangor, Caernarfon, Dolgellau, Holyhead, Llangefni, Porthmadog and Pwllheli.

I am aware that the District Manager for Wrexham and North Wales Coast, which covers Rhyl, wrote to you on 5 April, outlining his initial service delivery plans.

There are presently a mixture of Jobcentres and Social Security Offices in Cefn Mawr, Colwyn Bay, Conwy, Denbigh, Flint, Holywell, Llangollen, Llanrwst, Llandudno, Mold, Prestatyn, Rhyl, Shotton and Wrexham. However, plans for the rollout of the new integrated service have not yet been finalised.

The recent announcement that Wrexham Pension Centre will transfer to Jobcentre Plus, along with our decision to centralise benefit processing into larger units to help deliver our demanding efficiency agenda, are all factors that will need to be taken into account before plans can be finalised.

At this stage, I am therefore unable to give a specific date for the introduction of the integrated Jobcentre Plus service in Rhyl. However, as the position becomes clearer, the District Manager for Wrexham and North Wales Coast, will keep you fully informed of developments.

I hope this is helpful.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisers. [185466]

Maria Eagle: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 190W.

New Deal

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many participants have been through *(a)* the New Deal for the over -50s and *(b)* the New Deal for Partners to date; and what percentage moved into jobs in each case. [182071]

Jane Kennedy: To the end of March 2004, there have been a total of 7,820 starts to the New Deal for Partners and a total of 1,870 jobs (24 per cent. of total starts) have been gained through the programme.

Figures on the number of people participating in New Deal 50-plus are not available.

Up to March 2003, job outcomes for New Deal 50-plus were based on the number of people taking up the New Deal 50-plus Employment Credit. Between April 2000, when New Deal 50 Plus started, and March 2003, there were 98,040 employment credit starts. Figures for the number of people finding jobs through New Deal 50-plus but not receiving the employment credit are not available.

In April 2003, the employment credit was replaced by the 50-plus return to work element of the working tax credit. We are currently working with the Inland Revenue to secure robust data on how many people have claimed this. However, between April 2003 and December 2003, 19,970 people returned to work thanks to Jobcentre Plus and the New Deal.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have participated in New Deal 50-plus in each year since it was introduced; how many have found a job as a result; and how many have received a weekly employment credit. [178873]

Jane Kennedy: Figures on the number of people participating in New Deal 50-plus are not available.

Up to March 2003, job outcomes for New Deal 50-plus were based on the number of people taking up the New Deal 50-plus Employment Credit. These figures are in the table.

New Deal 50-plus Employment Credit starts

	Number[1]
April 2000 to December 2000	24,830
January 2001 to December 2001	35,080
January 2002 to December 2002	31,830
January 2003 to March 2003	6,300

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Note:
ND50+ Employment Credit started in April 2000 and was replaced by the 50 plus return to work element of Working Tax Credit in April 2003.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many non-departmental public bodies for which his Department is responsible have been *(a)* established and *(b)* abolished since 1997. [182946]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table

Non-departmental public bodies sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions which have been (a) established and (b) abolished since 1997

Body	*Date established*	*Date abolished*
Occupational Pension Board (OPB)[1]	—	1 April 1997
Central Adjudication Services (CAS)[1]	—	1 November 1999
Independent Tribunal Service (ITS)[2]	—	31 March 2000
Incorporating:		
Medical Appeal Tribunals		
Disability Appeal Tribunals		
Vaccine Damage Appeal Tribunals		
Social Security Appeal Tribunals		
Child Support Appeal Tribunals		
New Deal Task Force (NDTF)[3]	July 1997	October 2001
Advisory Committee for Disabled People in Employment Training (ACDET)[4]	1 April 1998	31 March 2002
Race Education and Employment Forum (REEF)[4]	1 April 1998	1 April 2003
Disability Rights Commission (DRC)[4]	1 April 2000	—
Appeals Service[2]	3 April 2000	—
National Employment Panel (NEP)[3]	October 2001	—
Disability Employment Advisory Committee (DEAC)[5]	1 August 2002	—

[1] This body was originally established by the Department of Social Security, which became the Department for Work and Pensions in June 2001. The new Department was formed by bringing together the Department of Social Security and the Employment Services, which prior to this machinery of government change was part of the Department for Education and Employment (now the Department for Education and Skills).
[2] Originally established by the Department of Social Security, the ITS tribunals were replaced by the Appeals Service in April 2000. The Appeals Service consists of two distinct bodies within a single organisation. The first is a tribunal non-departmental public body with responsibility for the judicial functioning of appeals tribunals. The second is an executive agency responsible for the administration of appeals.
[3] Originally established by the Department for Education and Employment, the New Deal Task Force's name was changed to the National Employment Panel and its remit expanded by the Department for Work and Pensions in 2001.
[4] This body was originally established by the Department for Education and Employment, but responsibility moved to the Department for Work and Pensions when the new Department was formed in 2001.
[5] Established by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Work Incentives (Homeless Households)

Ms Oona King: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 28 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 88W, on work incentives (homeless households), what assessment his Department has made of the impact high rents in temporary accommodation have on the ability of homeless households to access employment opportunities; and if he will make a statement. [182716]

Mr. Pond: Recent research undertaken by the Department with Registered Social Landlords, statutory and voluntary agencies and other stakeholders in local authorities, suggested that high rents in temporary accommodation can act as a disincentive to tenants re-entering employment.

We plan to publish this research in the autumn.

Pensions and Benefits (Direct Payments)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 20 April 2004,

ref 165353, and his letters to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South undated and dated 29 March, refs PQ/03/98099 and PQ/03/97277, (1) if he will explain the differences between the figures given; [168643]

(2) when he will answer the question of 21 April from the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South, ref 168643, about figures provided by his Department. [185217]

Mr. Pond: I regret that discrepancies between the figures arose because of errors in the terminology used. A claimant can have several payment accounts, each for a separate benefit; therefore the total number of accounts in Portsmouth South will exceed the number of claimants. The answers to the earlier questions did not correctly distinguish between account numbers and claimant numbers.

The following information is the full set of correct figures relevant to the three earlier questions. This corrects the information given in written answers on 24 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 197W and column 202W, and on 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 443–44W.

Retirement pension accounts in Portsmouth, South constituency

As at December	Payments direct into bank/ building society accounts	Payable order	Payments through post office
2002	6,375	110	7,775
2003	6,945	90	6,825

Other benefit accounts held by pensioners in Portsmouth, South constituency (excluding war pension)

As at December	Payments into bank/building society accounts	Payable order	Payments through post office
2002	1,490	0	3,275
2003	2,240	0	3,355

Notes:

1. Payable orders are sent to the customer's home address but must be produced for payment at a bank or building society.
2. Included in payment through the post office are customers paid into post office card accounts and customers paid by girocheque. Girocheques are either encashable at a post office or payable into a bank or building society account.
3. The account figures in Table One and Two above exclude war pension and child benefit customers as these accounts are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and Inland Revenue respectively.
4. Some customers who are paid direct into an account can also collect their payments in cash at post offices through the wider range of banking services now available at post offices. There is no data available on the umber of benefit claims collected in this way.
5. The number of pensioners receiving one or more DWP benefits (including war pension) collectable at post offices in Portsmouth south at 28 December 2002 was £9,935.

Pension Credit

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of pension credit payments are being paid into Post Office card accounts. [186257]

Jane Kennedy: At 30 June the number of live pension credit accounts was 2,548,895, of which 198,230 or 7.8 per cent. were paid to a Post Office card account. Of the total, 893,835 were not previously receiving minimum income guarantee. Of these cases, 40,110, or 4.5 per cent. were being paid to a Post Office card account.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people eligible for pension credit have not taken it up in each month since October 2003; and how much money this represents in each case. [184940]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the form requested. The table sets out numbers of pension credit recipients in each month between October 2003 and June 2004, with the average weekly award. We estimate that approximately 3.75 million households, corresponding to around 4.85 million individuals, are likely to be eligible for pension credit in Great Britain in 2004–05. This estimate, rounded to the nearest 50,000 households or individuals, is subject to a wide margin of error and should be used as a broad indication of the likely eligible population only.

To help ensure that people do not lose out, entitlement to pension credit can, where appropriate, be backdated by up to 12 months.

Pension credit recipients, Great Britain, October 2003 to June 2004

	Households	Individuals	Average weekly award (£)
October 2003	1,795,875	2,109,200	47.10
November 2003	2,056,010	2,454,640	46.40
December 2003	2,115,195	2,533,960	44.20
January 2004	2,172,280	2,610,450	43.50
February 2004	2,264,115	2,731,480	42.60
March 2004	2,401,850	2,907,775	41.34
April 2004	2,445,660	2,961,885	41.67
May 2004	2,496,970	3,028,390	42.42
June 2004	2,548,895	3,094,870	41.99

Notes:

1. October 2003 figures are as at 17 October 2003. Figures from November 2003 to June 2004 are mid-monthly and have been rated up to give month end estimates.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
3. Individual recipients include a number of partners under age 60.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many pensioners are estimated to be eligible for the pension credit in Leicester South; [186263]

(2) how many pensioners are claiming the pension credit in Leicester South. [186264]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of people likely to be eligible for pension credit is not available at constituency level. However, we estimate that approximately 250,000 households in the East Midlands region, corresponding to approximately 350,000 individuals (rounded to the nearest 50,000), are likely to be eligible for pension credit in 2004–05. At the end of June, 5,135 pensioner households in Leicester South, comprising 6,415 individuals (rounded to the nearest five), were in receipt of pension credit. The corresponding figures for the East Midlands at the same date were 182,570 households and 224,435 individuals in receipt of pension credit.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Northampton, North have received home visits from the Pension Service to assist them with claiming pension credit. [185785]

Malcolm Wicks: The table shows the number of home visits undertaken by the local service of the Pension Service in the Northampton local service cluster, which includes both Northampton, North and Northampton, South, between April 2003 and June 2004. All visits undertaken since April 2003 have covered pension credit.

Home visits by the Pension Service local service, Northampton cluster, April 2003-June 2004

	Number of visits
2003	
April	120
May	117
June	150
July	171
August	148
September	159
October	206
November	161
December	88
2004	
January	153
February	134
March	336
April	122
May	170
June	153

Pension Credit Application Line

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 833–34W, if he will provide the information on calls to the pension credit application line for each month since January for which figures are available. [185734]

Malcolm Wicks: The available information is shown in the table.

Calls to pension credit application line, January-June 2004

	Calls received by application line	*Calls receiving engaged tone or recorded message*	*Calls answered within 30 seconds*	*Average call duration (minutes: seconds)*
January	495,560	120	429,670	08:12
February	433,790	190	372,930	08:34
March	430,070	230	378,440	08:38
April	346,890	13,560	250,970	09:18
May	234,580	20	212,570	08:48
June	315,200	20	266,040	07:20

Notes:
1. Numbers of calls are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. The number of calls receiving the engaged tone or a recorded message was unusually high in April due to reduced numbers of staff as a result of industrial action. The number of lines feeding into the application line from the network was reduced to avoid people having to wait for a long time for an answer (instead they received a recorded message).
3. The number of calls received is a measure of the total number of calls from customers made to the application line number 0800 99 1234. The number of calls answered within 30 seconds is a measure of all calls answered in application line sites and excludes any calls abandoned by the customer.

Pension Payment Arrangements

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of pensioners in *(a)* England, *(b)* East Sussex and *(c)* Lewes constituency are using pension books to collect their pensions at a post office. [185905]

Mr. Pond: Information available on pensioners (women over 60 and men over 65) as at 15 May 2004 in *(a)* England *(b)* East Sussex and *(c)* Lewes constituency receiving their retirement pension by order books, collectable at a post office, is shown in the table.

	Accounts paid by order book	*Percentage of retirement pension accounts paid by order book*
England	2,936,800	37
East Sussex	32,505	28.40
Lewes	5,210	25.60

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.
2. Figures do not include retirement pension combined with pension credit in a single payment.

Source:
IAD information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been spent to date on the change of pension payment arrangements from book to bank account; and how much of that has been spent on contact with recipients. [185906]

Mr. Pond: We are unable to answer in the format requested.

As at the 31 March 2004 the Department had, through its payment modernisation programme, incurred £210 million towards converting benefit and pensions customers from paper based methods of payment to payment by direct payment. Of this total around £90 million related to the cost of contacting benefit and pension customers. With the remainder being spent on project team costs, IT development, marketing and training of staff.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners who receive their pensions by giro have agreed an alternative means of payment with the Government. [159752]

Mr. Pond: Only a very small number of pensions customers receive their pension by giro, and in the 12 month period ending 24 January 2004 less than 50 changed to another method of payment.

Almost nine out of ten (87 per cent) of benefit customers already have an account suitable for Direct Payment, and this rises to 90 per cent. for pensioners.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment his Department has made of the importance of regular income in helping the elderly budget for their needs. [186253]

Mr. Pond: The Government acknowledge the importance of pension payment arrangements that reflect elderly people's budgeting needs. We therefore offer a range of payment frequencies for benefits. Pensioners can choose to have their state pension paid weekly, four weekly or 13 weekly; pension credit is paid weekly.

The move to Direct Payment involves no changes to customers' existing benefit and pension payment frequencies. Pensioners who receive their pension by weekly order book will continue to receive their pension weekly when they transfer to Direct Payment.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what proportion of pension payments paid into bank accounts since the beginning of the current financial year have not been paid seven days after the previous payment; [186249]

(2) how many bank accounts into which pensions are directly paid have had at least one occasion where the payment has not been paid exactly seven days after the last one; [186251]

(3) what steps he has taken to ensure that pensions paid into bank accounts are done paid every seven days. [186252]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested.

Pensioners can choose to have their state pension paid weekly, four weekly or 13 weekly; pension credit is paid weekly.

Since the beginning of the financial year there have been no occasions when pension payments generally have been paid late into bank accounts. However there will have been individual cases where a change of circumstance has caused a review of the award, which may delay a payment. There may also be instances where banks have rejected payments because of changes to account details or similar circumstances.

The Department ensures that payments due payment on a bank holiday are advanced so that customers can get the money before the holiday. The general rule for direct payment is that payment due on a UK bank holiday (including 2 January in Scotland) is advanced to the last banking day before the holiday.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions into how many bank accounts pensions are directly paid. [186250]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested.

However, information is available to show that, as at 15 May 2004, 6,794,800 pensions accounts were paid by direct payment. Included in his total are 377,130 payments direct into a Post Office card account.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners have migrated from over-the-counter benefit payments to automated credit transfer in each month since May 1997. [177553]

Mr. Pond: The precise information is not available in the format requested. The number of pensioners (women over 60 and men over 65) that have migrated from over the counter benefit payments to direct payments each month since 15 June 2002 is shown in the table.

Month	*Number of accounts*
15 June to 13 July 2002	4,460
13 July to 10 August 2002	16,000
10 August to 7 September 2002	13,240
7 September to 5 October 2002	3,840
5 October to 2 November 2002	19,805
2–30 November 2002	4,560
30 November to28 December 2002	21,445
28 December 2002 to 25 January 2003	3,730
25 January to 22 February 2003	26,065
22 February to 22 March 2003	20,310
22 March to 19 April 2003	6,620
19 April to 17 May 2003	19,715
17 May to 14 June 2003	30,075
14 June to 12 July 2003	7,120
12 July to 9 August 2003	34,130
9 August to 6 September 2003	69,475
6 September to 4 October 2003	10,255
4 October to 1 November 2003	128,745
1–29 November 2003	115,710
29 November to 27 December 2003	20,045
27 December 2003 to 24 January 2004	188,080
24 January to 21 February 2004	182,205
21 February to 20 March 2004	108,665
20 March to 17 April 2004	296,865

Notes:

The following special points should be noted:

1. Figures produced by comparing two snapshots of live accounts in payment on the specified dates where the method of payment variable has changed to direct payment on the second dataset.
2. Figures produced relate to accounts not claimants, a benefit recipient may therefore have more than one account. Figures do not include any benefit payment that is made "in combination", through another benefit system, such as state pension paid through the pension credit system as a combined payment.
3. Over the counter payments includes order books and giros.
4. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
5. Figures refer to pensioner age benefit recipients residing in GB only.
6. Included in these figures is payments made to customers by girocheque. Girocheques are encashable at either a bank/building society account or a post office.
7. Some customers who are paid direct into an account can also collect their payments in cash at post offices through the wider range of banking services now available at the post office. There is no data available on the number of benefit claims collected in this way.

Policy (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185102]

Jane Kennedy: The following table gives details of recorded policy decisions and changes, together with screenings undertaken. No full environmental appraisals have been undertaken.

	2002–03	*2003–04*
Number of new policies and significant changes in policies	21	30
Number of environmental screenings undertaken	4	9

The Department has now incorporated sustainable development into its change processes. This requires

all programmes and projects to undertake a sustainability assessment, including the consideration of environmental impacts, at key stages in development.

Post Office Card Accounts (Pensions)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints he has received from pensions recipients about difficulties in accessing their funds through Post Office card accounts since the accounts were introduced. [185029]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the specific format requested. Feedback and complaints to The Pension Service are recorded under a number of categories, which include delays to or non-receipt of payments but not the method of payment involved.

The Post Office is responsible for dealing with any problems account holders may have in accessing money already held in a Post Office card account.

Press Officers

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on press officers, broken down by grade, in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185533]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the former Department of Social Security, parts of the former Department for Education and Employment and the Employment Service. Information on costs for 1996–97 is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

During 2003–04 the Department spent £1,482,811 on press officer salaries. A breakdown of expenditure by grade cannot be provided, in order to protect individual confidentiality. However, information on the number of press officers employed in each grade is in the table.

Grade	*Number of press officers employed*
Senior Civil Service	1
Grade 7	2
Senior Executive Officer/Senior Information Officer	6
Higher Executive Officer/ Information Officer	25
Executive Officer/Assistant Information Officer	6

Note:
Staffing figures are whole time equivalents.

Public Awareness Campaigns

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the objectives were for each advertising campaign undertaken by his Department since 2001, what criteria were used to judge their effectiveness; and to what extent these criteria were met. [170588]

Maria Eagle: A summary of advertising campaigns that have been conducted by the Department since 2000–01 is in the table.

Advertising campaign	*Objective*	*Evaluation method*	*Campaign result*
Minimum Income Guarantee	To encourage pensioners to take up their entitlement	Measure the awareness of MIG Monitor the number in receipt of MIG	Awareness and take up levels increased
Winter Fuel	To inform those eligible that payment is being made, inc 70+ and 80+ payments, and to encourage those who need to claim to do so	Measure the awareness of the payments Monitor new claims (NB—most payments made automatically)	Awareness levels increased Number of new claims increasing
Pensions Education Campaign	Long term campaign to encourage people to save for their retirement and improve their understanding of the options available	Track the take-up of information guides Monitor the number of visitors to relevant information on website Monitor calls to call centre	Number of guides, visitors and calls increased
Targeting Benefit Fraud	Long term campaign to tackle general attitudes to fraud and deter fraudsters	Monitor awareness and attitudes to fraud	Increase in awareness and progress towards key attitude changes
New Deal for Lone Parents	Raise awareness of the help available to lone parents in preparing for work	Measure awareness among target audience Track volume of calls to helpline	Awareness level and number of calls to helpline increased
New Deal for Disabled People	To raise awareness and generate response to the helpline	Measure awareness amongst the target audience Track number of calls to helpline	Awareness level and number of calls to helpline increased
New Deal 25 Plus	To inform the long term unemployed of help available	Measure awareness among target audience	Awareness level increased
Disability Discrimination Act	To raise awareness of the Act and encourage service providers to ensure that disabled people can access their services	Track awareness among target audience	Awareness levels increased
Pension Credit	To encourage eligible pensioners to claim the new Pension Credit	Measure the awareness of Pension Credit Monitor the number of eligible pensioners in receipt of Pension Credit, to ensure progress towards PSA target of 3 million by 2006.	Awareness and take up levels increased Progress on caseload in line to meet PSA target
State Second Pension	To encourage carers to review their circumstances to ensure that they are building up a Sate Second Pension	Monitor the number of requests for copies of the guide "State Pensions for carers and parents" requested in response to advertising Monitor awareness among target	Number of guides issued and awareness increased

Advertising campaign	Objective	Evaluation method	Campaign result
		audience	
Inherited SERPS	To explain the relative amount of SERPS pensions that people may be able to pass onto their spouses on death	Monitor awareness among target audience	Awareness level increased
Direct Payment	Three year campaign to support the conversion of customers from paper based methods to payment direct into an account	Monitor awareness of Direct Payment Customers' understanding of the new system and key campaign messages	Awareness and understanding increased
Age Positive	To communicate to employers the benefits of an age-diverse workforce	Monitor awareness of the Code of Practise Track awareness of the website	Awareness of Code and website increased
The Pension Service	To raise awareness of the services of the new Pension Service	Track number of visitors to the mobile exhibition unit Track attendance at Pension Service surgeries	Number of visitors and attendance at surgeries increased
Council Tax Benefit	Raise awareness amongst those on low incomes -primarily pensioners	Monitor awareness of among target audience	Awareness level increased
Jobseeker Direct	To promote telephone service to those looking for work, particularly to priority customer groups of lone parents and people aged 50 +	Monitor awareness among target audience Track number of calls received	Awareness level increased
Jobcentre Plus Employer Marketing	To generate vacancies delivering performance improvement.	Measure year-on-year vacancy volumes	Number of vacancies increased
New Deal	To raise awareness of the breadth of help available and encourage key target groups to respond	Monitor awareness among target audience Track the number of responses	Awareness and number of responses increased

Notes:
1. Information relates to advertising campaigns over the value of £250,00 for 2000–01 and over £500,000 for subsequent years.
2. Information on advertising campaigns costing under £250,000 and details of highly localised activity by the Departments customer-facing businesses have generally not been included as a disproportionate cost would be incurred in compiling these figures.
3. Evaluation of all campaigns is a routine procedure. Methods of evaluation vary and reflect the needs of each individual campaign. Detailed information of evaluation is not held centrally nor in a standard format and so can be provided only at disproportionate cost.
4. Copies of the Management summaries for the Targeting Fraud Campaigns are available in the Library.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183849]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the former Department of Social Security, parts of the former Department for Education and Employment and the Employment Service. The available information is in the table.

DWP salary costs for employees working in publicity and public relations

£

	Publicity	Press officers/ public relations	Total
2001–02 (from June 2001)	1,407,738	816,725	2,224,463
2002–03	1,667,295	1,739,935	3,407,230
2003–04	1,569,683	1,482,811	3,052,494

Notes:
1. Information on costs prior to June 2001 is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.
2. The figures refer to staff in the DWP Communications Directorate and exclude staff in marketing roles in the Department's customer facing businesses, or supporting and delivering marketing activity at local level. This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Students (Means-tested Benefits)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many full-time undergraduate students were in receipt of means-tested benefits when they applied for their course in each year since 2000; and how many continued to receive means-tested benefits while on their course. [184879]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

Social Fund Crisis Loan Alignment Payments

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Social Fund crisis loan alignment payments were awarded in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; what the expenditure on alignment payments was in each of those years; and if he will make a statement. [185055]

Mr. Pond: Crisis loan alignment payments are made to people awaiting their first payment of benefit, which is paid in arrears. Crisis loan payments made in these circumstances are intended to cover day-to-day living expenses until the first benefit pay day, following which full payments of benefit can be made. Where a claim has not been decided by the time that the first payment is due, interim payments are available.

Alignment payments can also be made to people moving from benefit into work who need financial help until they receive their first wage.

The information is in the table.

	Number of awards	Expenditure (£ million)
2002–03	510,000	29.8
2003–04	513,000	31.0

Notes:
1. The number of awards listed includes all crisis loans made in whole or in part for alignment purposes.
2. Number of awards is rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the level of the Social Fund funeral expenses payment was in each of the last seven years. [185059]

Mr. Pond: The funeral payment scheme provides people receiving qualifying benefits or tax credits with payments for simple, respectful funerals. Awards cover the reasonable cost of specified items, including necessary burial or cremation charges, plus up to £700 for other non-specified funeral expenses. This was increased from £600 in April 2003.

The information is in the table.

£

	Average funeral payment
1997–98	796
1998–99	836
1999–2000	862
2000–01	885
2001–02	909
2002–03	929
2003–04	1,019

Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its predecessor Department and *(c)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183899]

Maria Eagle: The available information is in the tables. DWP was formed in June 2001 from the former Department of Social Security (DSS) and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). Travel expenditure information is not available for the former DfEE prior to March 2000, therefore expenditure figures up to and including 31/03/2000 are for the former DSS only. All travel complied with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

Travel costs from 1997–98 to 2000–01 for the DSS and its agencies

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01
Benefits Agency	18,968,615	18,692,979	20,803,862	18,382,607
Contributions Agency	2,420,422	2,889,523	—	—
Child Support Agency	2,380,132	2,244,467	3,114,557	3,841,188
War Pensions Agency	275,967	348,711	416,182	445,401
HQ	1,535,194	2,423,911	2,939,166	3,462,278
Independent Statutory Bodies	862,751	828,137	1,890,467	1,876,481
Employment Services	—	—	—	2,613,873
Total	26,443,081	27,427,728	29,164,243	30,621,828

Notes:
1. Travel costs include vehicle rental, UK travel, foreign travel and official vehicle costs.
2. BA costs included benefit offices, pensions, disability and carers directorate and DSS corporate centre.
3. Contributions Agency transferred to Inland Revenue in 1999.

Travel costs from 2001–02 to 2003–04 for DWP

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Benefits Agency	14,311,031	—	—
Employment Services	2,730,854	—	—
JobCentre Plus	—	6,657,293	6,348,361
Pensions Service	—	5,669,528	10,001,472
Child Support Agency	3,026,276	9,307,901	5,769,218
Disability and Carers Directorate	—	1,563,153	1,305,638
War Pensions Agency	385,999	—	—
Independent Statutory Bodies	542,783	—	—
Appeals Service	—	670,736	797,560
Corporate and Shared Services	13,434,816	11,213,697	12,308,030
Total	34,431759	35,082,308	36,530,279

Notes:
1. Travel costs include vehicle rental, UK travel, foreign travel and official vehicle costs.
2. BA costs included benefit offices, pensions, disability and carers directorate and DSS corporate centre.

Tribunal Appeal Centres

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the tribunal appeal centres which are being considered for closure. [185626]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for Christina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Appeals Service. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Christina Townsend to Mr. Harry Barnes, dated 22 July 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to respond to your question regarding appeal tribunal centres being considered for closure.

The Appeals Service is considering a number of proposals about its current organisation. No final decisions on the number of tribunal venues or their location have yet been taken.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Work-related Ill Health

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the incidence rate was of cases of work-related ill health in each of the last seven years. [184677]

Jane Kennedy: No single source of information gives a complete and reliable measure of work-related ill health in Great Britain. The most inclusive and broadly based estimates come from self-reporting surveys in which individuals are asked to report any work-related ill health they have suffered in the last 12 months. In the period requested only one such measure is available, for 2001–02. For this year the estimated incidence rate was 2,200 per 100,000. A more up-to-date estimate, covering 2003–04, will be published later this year.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many members of the public have suffered ill health as a result of work activity in each of the last seven years. [184678]

Jane Kennedy: Comprehensive figures do not exist for the number of cases of ill health suffered as a result of work activity by members of the public, that is, by people other than workers. There are a number of issues that can contribute to ill health in the public caused by work activity. These include Healthcare Acquired Infection (HAI), pesticide-related ill health and Legionellosis. Partial information through the incidence statistics collected by various bodies, including HSE, local authorities and health agencies.

Working Temperature

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans the Health and Safety Executive has to set a maximum working temperature. [186151]

Jane Kennedy: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will not be setting a maximum working temperature, as, due to the diversity of workplaces and work activities, it would be impractical to do so. Temperature is but one of a range of environmental and personal factors that thermal comfort in the workplace is dependant upon. Other factors include ventilation, humidity, radiant temperature, clothes worn, and the type of work involved. However, HSE do have plans to explore ways in which more guidance can be provided on the assessment and control of thermal comfort, and officials are currently considering possible approaches to a proposed dialogue on the matter with social partners.

Workplace Health and Safety

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the new public service agreement target on improving workplace health and safety will include improving the safety of those who drive in the course of their work. [186111]

Jane Kennedy: The public service agreement applies only to people who drive or operate plant and vehicles on worksites.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many *(a)* ordinary written and *(b)* named day questions his Department received in (i) the 2002–03 Session and (ii) this Session. [182718]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of today to his earlier question, 171196.

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether his Department has *(a)* a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and *(b)* a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186083]

Mrs. McGuire: Most of the staff in the Scotland Office and the Office of the Advocate-General are on loan from the Scottish Executive. The normal retirement age for all Scottish Executive staff is 60 years and, in line with this, applications for employment are not normally considered from candidates over 60. This policy is currently under review.

Devolution

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what regular assessments of the balance between devolved and reserved powers are carried out. [185660]

Mrs. McGuire: The Government keeps policy and practice in relation to all aspects of the Scottish devolution settlement under review.

Those matters reserved to the UK Parliament are set out in Schedule 5 to the Scotland Act 1998. Any amendments to Schedule 5, either increasing or reducing the scope of reserved matters, are considered on a case-by-case basis and are subject to scrutiny in both the UK and Scottish Parliaments.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what *(a)* devolved issues and *(b)* other responsibilities have been transferred from the Scottish Executive to the UK Government since 1999; what return of funding each transfer involved; how many staff each transfer involved; and what legal basis was required for each transfer. [185661]

Mrs. McGuire: There have been no devolved issues transferred from the Scottish Executive to Ministers of the Crown since 1 July 1999.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what *(a)* reserved issues and *(b)* other responsibilities have been transferred from the UK Government to the Scottish Executive since its creation; what additional funding each transfer involved; how many staff each transfer involved; and what legal basis was required for each transfer. [185662]

Mrs. McGuire: This is a complex and detailed matter, which will require the preparation of a comprehensive list of legislation that relates to any transfer of functions or legislative competence. I will write to my hon. Friend as soon as this list can be prepared and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Efficiency Savings (Scottish Executive)

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the First Minister since the Comprehensive Spending Review in connection with efficiency savings in the Scottish Executive. [185352]

Mr. Darling: I have regular discussions with the First Minister on a range of subjects.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil

servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisers. [185459]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 190W.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) how many *(a)* ordinary written and *(b)* named day questions his Department received in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary Session, broken down by month; [171196]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* ordinary written questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* questions for written answer on a named day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) the 2002–03 parliamentary Session and (ii) this parliamentary Session, broken down by month. [171197]

Mrs. McGuire: The breakdown of written questions received is as follows:

	Ordinary written	*Named day*
Session 2002–03		
November 2002	16	2
December 2002	9	6
January 2003	50	7
February 2003	19	4
March 2003	34	8
April 2003	28	2
May 2003	34	4
June 2003	59	6
July 2003	36	3
September 2003	8	1
October 2003	9	5
November 2003	8	—
Session 2003–04 (to end June)		
November 2003	—	2
December 2003	12	5
January 2004	17	4
February 2004	19	4
March 2004	19	2
April 2004	23	—
May 2004	26	3
June 2004	8	1

While records on average processing times are not collected, approximately 65 per cent. of the ordinary written questions were answered within five sitting days. Approximately 60 per cent. of the named day questions were answered by the date specified.

Sewel Motions

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland pursuant to his answer of 7 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 709W, on Sewel motions, what Westminster legislation has been enacted in respect of each Sewel motion. [184967]

Mrs. McGuire: Sewel motions passed by the Scottish Parliament have been relevant to the following enactments of the UK Parliament:

Enactment	*Date Sewel motion approved*
Food Standards Act 1999, c.28	23 June 1999
Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, c.8	23 June 1999
Electronic Communications Act 2000, c.7	23 June 1999
Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2000, c.12	23 June 1999
Sea Fishing Grants (Charges) Act 2000, c.18	8 December 1999
Representation of the People Act 2000, c.2	13 January 2000
Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000, c.44	19 January 2000
Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, c.41	9 March 2000 (1) 6 July 2000 (2)
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, c.23	6 April 2000
Learning and Skills Act 2000, c.2 1	18 May 2000
Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, c.34	25 May 2000
Insolvency Act 2000, c.39	1 June 2000
Care Standards Act 2000, c.14	22 June 2000
Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, c.20	6 July 2000
Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000, c.43	5 October 2000
Health and Social Care Act 2001, c.15	17 January 2001
Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002, c.36	17 January 2001
International Criminal Court Act 2001, c.17	18 January 2001
Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001, c.16	7 February 2001
International Development Act 2002, c.1	8 March 2001
Armed Forces Act 2001, c.19	29 March 2001
Adoption and Children Act 2002, c.38	4 April 2001 (1) 24 October 2001(2) 30 January 2002 (3).
Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, c.29	24 October 2001
Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act, c.24	15 November 2001
National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, c.17	22 November 2001
Police Reform Act 2002, c.30	30 January 2002(1) 27 June 2002 (2)
Enterprise Act 2002, c.40	17 April 2002
Private Hire Vehicles (Carriage of Guide Dogs etc.) Act 2002, c.37	19 June 2002
Extradition Act 2003, c.41	21 November 2002
Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003, c.43	28 November 2002
Criminal Justice Act 2003, c.44	5 December 2002(1) 9 October 2003 (2)
Crime (International Co-operation) Act 2003, c.32	5 December 2002
Local Government Act 2003, c.11	6 February 2003
Sexual Offences Act 2003, c.42	20 March 2003
Railways and Transport Safety Act, c.20	20 March 2003
Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, c.43	19 June 2003
Fireworks Act 2003, c.22	26 June 2003
Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003, c.28	11 September 2003

Enactment	Date Sewel motion approved
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, c.5	20 November 2003
Gender Recognition Act 2004, c.1	5 February 2004
Higher Education Act 2004, c.8	12 February 2004
Justice (Northern Ireland) 2004, c.4	18 March 2004

* Approval of Westminster legislation by the Scottish Parliament before it assumed its full powers on 1 July 1999.

The following Sewel motions have been passed by the Scottish Parliament in relation to Bills that have either subsequently not been enacted in the UK Parliament or have not yet completed their parliamentary consideration:

Sewel motion/Bill	Date approved	Status
Outworking	31 January 2001	Private Member's Bill—dropped
Culture and Recreation	8 March 2001	Not proceeded with after second reading in House of Lords
Health Protection Agency	29 January 2004	Bill currently before Parliament
Energy	4 February 2004	Bill currently before Parliament
Asylum and Immigration (Treatment for Claimants etc.)	12 February 2004	Bill currently before Parliament
Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise)	4 March 2004	Bill currently before Parliament
Civil Contingencies	4 March 2004	Bill currently before Parliament
Civil Partnership	3 June 2004	Bill currently before Parliament

Sustainable Development (Government Estate)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what changes there have been in *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon emissions and *(b)* single occupancy car commuting from his Department against the baseline year in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [185605]

Mrs. McGuire: The use of vehicles by the Scotland Office is limited to official Ministerial travel. Vehicles are supplied by the Government Car and Despatch Agency, which has reduced vehicle carbon emissions from its fleet by 0.8 per cent. in the first year following the baseline year in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate.

Vehicles are not used by the Scotland Office on a single occupancy basis.

Water

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether his Department has joined the Watermark project. [185606]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office has not joined the Watermark project. The Office is now a distinct entity within the Department for Constitutional Affairs and its water usage, together with other sustainable development issues, will be reviewed in that context in the coming year.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what changes there have been in water consumption by his Department in each year since 1997. [185607]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

Information on water consumption is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The Scotland Office is now a distinct entity within the Department for Constitutional Affairs and its water usage, together with other sustainable development issues, will be reviewed in that context in the coming year.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the non-office sites within his departmental estate which have been identified as being likely to provide opportunities for significant water savings. [185608]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office does not have any non-office sites within its estate.

PRIME MINISTER

Advisory Committee on Business Appointments

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Prime Minister when he plans to publish the annual report of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments; and if he intends to carry out a review of the business appointment rules. [186447]

The Prime Minister: The Advisory Committee on Business Appointments has submitted its sixth report to me. The report provides an account of the work of the Committee in advising me on business appointment applications from Crown servants on the acceptance of outside appointments after leaving Government. The report covers the period 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2004. Copies of the report have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

I am very grateful to all the Committee members for giving their time so freely to it.

In addition, I have asked Sir Patrick Brown to undertake a review of the Business Appointment rules taking account of the work already done by the Committee and referred to in their report. The rules were last reviewed in 1996. Since then there has been a greater emphasis on interchange with the private and other sectors. The review will have the following terms of reference:

> "To review the Business Appointment rules to ensure that they are compatible with a public service that is keen to encourage greater interchange with the private and other sectors which is essential for effective delivery in today's public service. The review will consider the operation of the system, taking account of practice overseas. It will also consider the current machinery for dealing with applications and the necessary resources".

Butler Report

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his statement of 14 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1435,

on the Butler Report, what action he proposes to take to address the errors for which he has taken responsibility. [186097]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to my statement in the Iraq debate on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 195.

Iraq

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what advice he has received from the intelligence services about the impact of the Iraq war and subsequent occupation on the likely incidence of terrorism in *(a)* the Middle East, *(b)* the UK and *(c)* the rest of the world; [185693]

(2) what advice he has received from the intelligence services about the impact of the Iraq war and subsequent occupation on public opinion on the popularity of the UK in the Middle East. [185694]

The Prime Minister: I regularly receive intelligence assessments that address the situation in Iraq and its wider impact, including on the threat from international terrorism.

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister if he will give details of each of the false statements or omissions in the Iraqi declarations provided pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441 (2002) to which reference was made in the letter sent by his private secretary to the legal secretary of the law officers on 15 March 2003, referred to in paragraph 384 of the report of the Butler Committee on the review of intelligence on weapons of mass destruction. [186186]

The Prime Minister: As set out in the Butler Report, intelligence and information from a wide range of other sources, especially from UNMOVIC, demonstrated that there were false statements and omissions in the declarations submitted by Iraq.

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister when he was informed of the proposal made by the director of the Central Intelligence Agency's weapons, intelligence, non-proliferation and arms control centre that the statements made on Iraq's attempts to secure uranium from Niger in the British Government dossier should be removed, as set out on pages 64–65 of the United States Senate report on intelligence on Iraq. [186218]

The Prime Minister: As set out in paragraph 497 of the Butler Report, the Central Intelligence Agency advised caution about any suggestion that Iraq had succeeded in acquiring uranium from Africa, but agreed that there was evidence that it had been sought.

Iraq (Statement on Mass Graves)

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what the source was for the statement he made on 20 November 2003 that the remains of 400,000 people had been discovered in mass graves in Iraq. [186040]

The Prime Minister: Human rights organisations, forensic groups and the UN have estimated that there are hundreds of thousands of people believed to be buried in mass graves. What is clear is that until a systematic investigation of Iraq's 259 reported mass gravesites is completed we are unlikely to know the complete picture.

Kosovo

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Prime Minister what measures have been taken each year to advance the undertakings he gave during his first visit to Pristina, Kosovo; what further measures he proposes; and if he will make a statement. [185632]

The Prime Minister: The UK remains committed to building a stable, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo, based on UN Security Council Resolution 1244, which set up the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to help establish an autonomous, self-governing Kosovo. Free and democratic elections were held in 2001 which resulted in the formation of a Provisional Kosovo Government (PISG). In November 2003, the UNSC set out key standards that the PISG needed to reach for a process on final status to begin. The UN Secretary General, consulting the Contact Group, will assess progress in a formal review in 2005.

The UK continues to be a leading partner in Kosovo working closely with the UN Mission in Kosovo, the EU and the Contact Group to build a Kosovo based on the rule of law. I welcome the 14 July Joint Declaration by Kosovo Serb and Albanian leaders pledging to work together on reconciliation, return of displaced Serbs and reform of local self-government.

Since the establishment of UNMIK in 1999, the UK has provided over £50 million and over 100 seconded staff. We have contributed over £115 million to programmes to help develop policy, strategy and operational systems in key areas such as public administration, social policy and health care reform.

Ministerial Gifts

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list gifts received by Ministers in 2003–04 valued at more than £140. [186448]

The Prime Minister: I have today published a list of gifts received by Ministers. The list provides details of gifts received by Ministers valued at more than £140 for the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004. Copies of the list have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Watson: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list *(a)* Government expenditure on ministerial overseas visits for the financial years 1996–97 to 2003–04 and *(b)* all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing in excess of £500 between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004, including the cost, destination and purpose of each visit. [186446]

The Prime Minister: Expenditure on ministerial overseas visits for the period requested is estimated as follows.

	Expenditure (£ million)
1996–97	7.9
1997–98[1]	6.4
1998–99	4.9
1999–2000	4.6
2000–01	4.7
2001–02	5.6
2002–03	5.7
2003–04[2]	5.2

[1] 2 May 1997 to 31 March 1998.

[2] The figure for 2003–04 reflects payments made so far for travel undertaken in the period, a few bills have yet to be submitted to Departments for payment.

A list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 has been placed in the Libraries of the House. The list provides details of the date, destination, purpose and costs of individual visits made by Cabinet Ministers.

Special Advisers

Mr. Watts: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list *(a)* the names of special advisers in post and their specific area of expertise if appropriate, *(b)* special advisers' pay ranges for 2004–05, *(c)* the number of special advisers in each pay band by Department and *(d)* the total cost of special advisers for 2003–04. [186445]

The Prime Minister: Listed as follows are the names of special advisers in post at 19 July 2004, the special advisers' pay ranges for 2004–05, the number of special advisers in each pay band by Department and the total cost of special advisers for 2003–04.

All special advisers are appointed under terms and conditions set out in the "Model Contract for Special Advisers" providing advice on the full range of their appointing Minister's departmental responsibilities. Where a special adviser has a specific expertise this is indicated.

Advisers in post

Appointing Minister	Special adviser in post	Expertise
The Prime Minister[1]	Jonathan Powell	Chief of Staff
	Sally Morgan	Government relations
	Policy Directorate	
	Andrew Adonis	Education
	Arnab Banerjee	Economics
	Patrick Diamond	Education and cross-cutting policy issues
	Matthew Elson	Transport
	Julian Le Grand	Health
	Roger Liddle	Europe
	Alasdair McGowan	Devolution, local and regional government
	John McTernan	Social exclusion
	Geoffrey Norris	Industry and business
	Carey Oppenheim	Children and families
	Nicholas Rowley	Environment
	Justin Russell	Home and Legal Affairs
	Matthew Taylor	Acting Head of the Policy Directorate
	Communications	
	David Hill	
	Hilary Coffman	
	Darren Murphy	
	Diary management	
	Katie Kay	
	Events and visits	
	Jo Gibbons	
	Angela Goodchild (p/t)	
	Implementation Group	
	Kate Garvey	
	Sarah Hunter	
	Liz Lloyd	
	Media Monitoring Unit	
	Chris McShane	
	Research and Information Unit	
	Joanna Nadin	
	Catherine Rimmer	
	Strategic Communications Unit	
	David Bradshaw	

Advisers in post

Appointing Minister	*Special adviser in post*	*Expertise*
Deputy Prime Minister and First Secretary of State	Joan Hammell	
	Ian McKenzie	
	Paul Hacket (p/t)	
Chief Whip (Commons)	Sue Jackson	
	Fiona Gordon	
Chief Whip (Lords)	Margaret Ounsley	
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport	Bill Bush	
	Nick Bent	
Secretary of State for Defence	Michael Dugher	
	James Connal	
Secretary of State for Education and Skills	Robert Hill	
	Lisa Tremble	
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Nicci Collins	
	Stephen Hale	
	Hazel Phillips	
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs	Ed Owen	Communications and the EU
	Michael Williams	UN; human rights; Asia, Africa and the Balkans
Secretary of State for Health	Richard Olszewski	
	Steve Bates	
	Paul Corrigan	
Secretary of State for the Home Department	Matt Cavanagh	
	Katharine Raymond	
	Huw Evans	
	Sophie Linden (p/t)	
Leader of the House of Lords, and Lord President of the Council	Matthew Seward[2]	Communications
	Mark Davies	
	Joe Dancey (p/t)	
Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor	Garry Hart	
	Philip Bassett	
Secretary of State for International Development	Alex Evans	Communications
	Beatrice Stern	
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland	Owen Smith	
	Adam Higgett	
Leader of the House of Commons, Lord Privy Seal and Secretary of State for Wales	Greg Power	Parliamentary procedure
	Phil Taylor	Parliamentary procedure
	Andrew Bold	Welsh affairs
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry	Jim Godfrey	Communications
	Roger Sharp	
	Deborah Lincoln	Women and equality
	Emily Thomas (unpaid)	
Secretary of State for Transport and Secretary of State for Scotland	Andrew Maugham	Scottish affairs
	Sam White	
	Iain Gray	
Chancellor of the Exchequer[3,4]	Ian Austin	Communications
	Spencer Livermore	
Chief Secretary	Nicola Murphy	
	Jonathan Ashworth	
Secretary of State for Work and Pensions	Chris Norton	
	Tom Clark	
Minister without Portfolio	Martin O'Donovan	
	Blair McDougall	

[1] Plus Lord Birt who is appointed as the Prime Minister's unpaid strategy adviser
[2] In addition, Matthew Seward also works part-time for the Home Secretary
[3] In addition, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has appointed Ed Miliband (Chairman), Paul Gregg, Shriti Vadera, Michael Jacobs and Stewart Wood to the Council of Economic Advisers on special adviser terms.
[4] Plus Sue Nye appointed as an unpaid adviser

Pay bands for 2004–05

The pay bands and pay ranges for special advisers for 2004–05 are as follows:

	£
Scheme maximum	133,628
Pay band 4	80,178 to 96,213
Pay band 3 and premium	59,867 to 93,005
Pay band 2	47,038 to 61,785
Pay band 1	36,348 to 48,456
Pay band 0	Up to 36,347

Advisers by Pay Band

At 19 July 2004, the number of special advisers in each pay band by Department is as follows:

	Pay band				
Department	*0*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*
No 10[1]	1	5	5	13	2
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	—	—	2	1	—
Chief Whips' Offices (Commons and Lords)	—	1	2	—	—
Constitutional Affairs	—	—	—	—	2
Culture, Media and Sport	—	—	1	1	—
Defence	—	1	1	—	—
Education and Skills	—	—	1	1	—
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	—	2	1	—	—
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	—	—	—	2	—
Health	—	—	2	1	—
Home Office	—	—	4	—	—
International Development	—	2	—	—	—
Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Lords	—	3	—	—	—
Lord Privy Seal; Leader of the House of Commons and Secretary of State for Wales	—	2	1	—	—
Northern Ireland Office	—	1	1	—	—
Trade and Industry[2]	—	1	1	1	—
HM Treasury[3]	—	2	—	2	—
Secretary of State for Scotland and Secretary of State for Transport	—	1	2	—	—
Work and Pensions	—	—	2	—	—
Minister without Portfolio	—	2	—	—	—
Total	1	23	26	22	4

[1] Plus two special advisers who are paid beyond pay band 4 but within the scheme maximum

[2] Plus one adviser who is unpaid

[3] Plus the five members of the Council of Economic Advisers who are employed on special adviser terms (one in band 4, three in band 3 and one in band 1). One of the members of the Council work part time.

Paybill costs

The cost of special advisers in 2003–04 is £5.3 million[1].

[1] This figure includes salary, severance pay and an estimate of pensions costs.

United Healthcare

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Prime Minister on what dates special advisers from his Office have met representatives of United Healthcare since 1 May; which of his special advisers took part in each meeting; and where each meeting was held. [186144]

The Prime Minister: My officials and I have meetings and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings, under Exemptions 2 and 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

TREASURY

CITES (Contravention)

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what instances of international trade in contravention of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) have been *(a)* identified and *(b)* apprehended by UK authorities since January 2001, broken down by (i) species and (ii) CITES category; and if he will make a statement. [185898]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise made 237 seizures of endangered species imported in air or sea freight in 2003.

	Number of seizures	*Number of items seized*	*Weight of items seized (kg)*
Live animals and birds	89	2,905	—
Parts and derivatives of endangered species	79	1,443	—
Ivory	18	96	—
Plants	10	2,018	—
Other CITES listed species	14	302	—
	9	—	32.9
Preparations of oriental medicines that include parts or derivatives of endangered species	6	4,220,807	—
	12	—	467.0

Seizures may be recorded by weight or number of seizures of items such as traditional Chinese medicines may be recorded either according to the individual count of capsules or according to the quantity of containers.

Equivalent breakdowns for 2001 or 2002 would only be available at disproportionate cost. Information on CITES category is not recorded against individual seizures and in some cases the species could not be covered by two or more of the annexes in EU Regulation.

MRSA

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what percentage of deaths were caused by MRSA, or had MRSA as a contributing factor, in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by hospital; and if he will make a statement. [184410]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Andrew Mackinlay dated 22 July 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many and what percentage of deaths were caused by MRS A, or had MRSA as a contributing factor in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by hospital. (184410)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2002. The number of deaths contributed to by MRSA, by hospital, for this year is given in the table attached. This table includes hospitals where there were five or more deaths for which MRSA was recorded as a contributory factor. Where the number of deaths was less than five the number of deaths has not been provided, to minimise the risk of disclosure of confidential information.

I am also placing in the House of Commons library a table showing all the establishments recorded by ONS as general hospitals or multi-function sites during 2002 at which there was:

at least one death from any cause, and

either no deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor, or fewer than five such deaths.

It should be noted that it is not possible to put a firm figure to the number of people who die from MRSA because people are often very sick with a number of other conditions so the contribution of MRSA to the outcome in any particular case is uncertain. The underlying causeof death is most often the disease or injury which led them to be admitted to hospital, rather than the MRSA which may have complicated the course of the illness. Internationally accepted guidance from the World Health Organisation on the completion of death certificates requires only those conditions that contribute directly to death to be recorded.

Number of deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor[1], by hospital[2]

Hospital name	*No. of deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor*	*Percentage of all deaths*
England and Wales	721	0.2
Hospitals with five or more deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor		
Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge	10	0.6
Alexandra Hospital, Redditch	5	0.7
Arrowe Park Hospital, Birkenhead	5	0.3
Ashford Hospital	6	0.9
Birmingham Heartlands Hospital	17	0.9
Bristol Royal Infirmary	6	0.5
Broomfield Hospital, Chelmsford	8	0.6
City Hospital, Winson Green	10	0.7
Conquest Hospital, St. Leonards on Sea	9	0.7
Derriford Hospital, Plymouth	22	1.1
Freeman Hospital, Newcastle	9	0.9
General Hospital, Bishop Auckland	5	0.8
General Hospital, Southampton	7	0.3
General Infirmary, Leeds	11	0.6
George Eliot Hospital, Nuneaton	5	0.4
Hull Royal Infirmary	5	0.3
Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust	9	0.5
King's College Hospital, London	5	0.4
Lister Hospital, Stevenage	5	0.4
Luton and Dunstable Hospital	5	0.4
Maelor Hospital, Wrexham	10	0.8
Medway Maritime Hospital, Gillingham	13	0.8
Morriston Hospital, Swansea	7	0.5
Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton	7	0.5
New Cross Hospital, Wolverhampton	8	0.4
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital	7	0.3
North Middlesex Hospital, Edmonton	5	0.5
Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil	6	0.6
Princess Margaret Hospital, Swindon	5	0.4
Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan	6	0.6
Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth	15	0.7
Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Edgbaston	5	0.6
Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading	5	0.4
Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro	5	0.4
Royal Infirmary, Doncaster	6	0.4
Royal Infirmary, Huddersfield	5	0.5
Royal Preston Hospital	5	0.4
Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton	6	0.4
Southmead Hospital, Bristol	5	0.5
St. Helier Hospital, Carshalton	5	0.4
St. Mary's Hospital, Westminster	9	1.0
St. Thomas's Hospital, London	9	0.8
Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury	5	0.7
Torbay Hospital	5	0.4
University Hospital Aintree	7	0.4
University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff	8	0.4
University Hospital, Nottingham	6	0.3
Warwick Hospital	5	0.5
Whittington Hospital St. Mary's Wing, Islington	6	0.7
Wycombe General Hospital	5	0.6

[1] Identified using the methodology described in Griffiths C, Lamagni TL, Crowcroft NS, Duckworth G and Rooney C (2004) Trends in MRSA in England and Wales: analysis of morbidity and mortality data for 1993–2002. Health Statistics Quarterly 21, 15–22.

[2] Defined as general hospitals or multi-function sites using the ONS classification of establishment types.

Note: Figures are for deaths occurring in 2002.

Pensions Mis-selling (Compensation)

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many individual general pensions mis-selling cases have been settled by compensation in the last year for which figures are available. [185766]

Ruth Kelly: The Financial Services Authority, the Financial Ombudsman Service and the Financial Services Compensation Scheme are independent bodies.

I understand from the Financial Services Authority, the Financial Ombudsman Service and the Financial Services Compensation Scheme that the following pensions cases has been resolved in the last year.

	Number of cases at 31 March 2004
Pensions review cases carried out by the financial industry	23,600
Pensions review cases conducted by the Financial Services Authority in conjunction with the Financial Services Compensation Scheme for those firms that are unable to meet claims against them.	3,335
Pension cases resolved by the Financial Ombudsman Service (including those cases relating to personal pensions, pensions review, free-standing additional voluntary contributions schemes, annuity contracts and all other products with a pensions element.)	6,265

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what checks are carried out to ensure that compensation in cases of pension mis-selling are equivalent to reinstatement of the original pension scheme. [185767]

Ruth Kelly: I understand from the FSA that in the case of pension compensation cases which are part of the formal Pensions Review, recompense is not normally payable in the form of cash but by addition to the individual's pension. The term "redress" is apposite rather than the term "compensation".

Where a loss has been caused by non-compliant advice and reinstatement into the original pension scheme is available at fair cost, then an offer of reinstatement must be made.

Otherwise, the normal method of redress is by topping-up the individual's personal pension. The value of pension and other benefits that would have been available from the original pension scheme, is compared with that from the personal pension after allowing for any relevant differences in the individual's pension contributions. The shortfall in value is added to the personal pension as redress.

As the level of benefits and risks differ between pension arrangements the method of working out the value of benefits needs to allow for this. Under the Pensions Review, which reviewed sales of personal pensions between 29 April 1988 and 30 June 1994, and which is now virtually complete save for relatively few difficult cases, the following method and checks applied:

To ensure that benefits provided by the personal pensions were equivalent in value to those provided by the original pension scheme, the method of valuation was specified in regulatory provisions using actuarial methodology together with assumptions about future investment return, inflation and longevity.

These assumptions were based on independent actuarial advice, confirmed by the actuarial profession and regularly reviewed.

Where other assumptions were needed about the individual's particular situation, either standard amounts were specified in the regulator's provisions or sufficiently important assumptions were required to be disclosed to the individual so that he or she could question them and provide further information if available.

Firms were required to confirm that the redress complied with the regulatory provisions for each case and also to carry out audits of their review process and results.

In addition, firms were subject to supervisory checks by the regulators.

If a consumer was not content with the offer made and was unable to resolve his or her concerns with the firm, he or she had the right to complain to the relevant Ombudsman, the normal time scales for complaints having been waived.

General pensions complaints are dealt with by the Financial Ombudsman Service for solvent firms and by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme for firms that are unable to meet claims against them.

Aggregates Tax

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much aggregates tax has been levied in total in Argyll and Bute constituency in each year since the tax was first levied. [185854]

John Healey: A breakdown of Aggregates Levy receipts is not available by individual parliamentary constituency.

Air Passenger Duty

Tom Cox: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the income has been in each of the last three years from the payment of air passenger duty; and if he will make a statement. [185343]

John Healey: The revenues from air passenger duty are published online in the HMC&E Air Passenger Duty Bulletin at www.uktradeinfo.com. In each of the last three calendar years these were:

	£ million
	Revenue
2001	834
2002	809
2003	778

Balance of Trade

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what has been the level of the UK deficit in the balance of traded goods in each of the last seven years. [186211]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Kenneth Clarke, dated 22 July 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question on the United Kingdom's deficit on trade in goods. (186211)

The following table shows the latest estimates for the UK balance of trade in goods. The figures shown are consistent with the published Balance of Payment "Pink Book". The balance of trade in goods is the value of goods exported less the value of goods imported.

	Balance of trade in goods (£ million)
1997	-12,342
1998	-21,813
1999	-29,051
2000	-32,976
2001	-40,648
2002	-46,675
2003	-47,290

Business Investment

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what has been the percentage change in the level of business investment in the United Kingdom in each of the last seven years. [186209]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Kenneth Clarke, dated 22 July 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the percentage change in the level of business investment in each of the last seven years. (186209)

The information requested is shown in the table below, consistent with the Business Investment First Release published on 1 July. The table uses the Chained volume measure series, which exclude the effects of price changes.

Annual percentage change in business investment (Chained volume measures)—UK, 1997–2003

Period	Business investment (annual percentage change)
1997	+10.1
1998	+18.1
1999	+2.8
2000	+4.6
2001	+1.9
2002	+0.6
2003	-0.9

Child Care Tax Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many childcare tax credit payments have been made in respect of children aged *(a)* under one, two, three and four years, *(b)* five, six, seven and eight years and *(c)* who are eight years old in the latest period for which figures are available. [185701]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows the number of families benefiting from the childcare element of Working Tax Credit at 5 April 2004, with an estimated analysis by the ages of the children for whom eligible childcare costs were incurred:

Ages of children for whom eligible childcare costs incurred, 5 April 2004

Age combination of children for whom eligible childcare costs incurred	Number of families benefiting from the childcare element of Working Tax Credit[1] (Thousand)
All aged under five	170
Aged under five, and five to eight	20
Other with aged under five	10
Aged five to eight only	50
Aged five to eight, and older	20
Aged over eight only	50
Total	320

[1] Those claiming the childcare element, and with Child Tax Credit above the family element. Rounded to the nearest 10,000.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the total expenditure on the childcare tax credit in 2003–04; how many recipients there were of childcare tax credit in that year; what the average payment was; and in respect of how many children payments were made. [185709]

Dawn Primarolo: For the level of child care support provided through the child care element of working tax credit, I refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. Member for Mid Dorset and North Poole (Mrs. Brooke) on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 866W.

The number of families benefiting from this element, and the average help with child care costs, appear in the various issues of "Child and Working Tax Credits. Quarterly Statistics", which can be found on the Inland Revenue website, at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm.

It is estimated that these families incurred eligible child care costs for an average of 1.3 children.

Civil Service Recruitment

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer based on the 2004 Spending Review, how many civil service jobs he estimates will be lost in the area of Coventry, South; from which Departments and agencies; and what assessment he has made of the likely effect on services to the public. [185279]

Mr. Boateng: There will be an overall gross reduction in posts of 84,150 by 2008 and Departments will pursue these reductions in line with business need. It is not yet possible to say where reductions will happen on a geographic or departmental basis as Departments are still developing these plans.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what controls he is proposing to ensure that Civil Service job cuts as a result of his announcements in Budget 2004 and Spending Review 2004 are not replaced by consultants hired by departments but not on departmental payrolls. [186121]

Mr. Boateng: The civil service job cuts are being made because new technology enables us to reduce the number of personnel required to deliver services. The 2004 Spending Review also announced that every department is required to consider and agree with the Office of Government Commerce by December 2004 how to pursue improvements in the value for money of all procurement of external professional services.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his announcement on 12 July, how many Civil Service posts he expects to be *(a)* abolished and *(b)* re-assigned to front line services in each Government Department and agency. [185367]

Mr. Boateng *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* With the detailed plans Departments are publishing for the years to 2008, the Chancellor announced at the Spending Review a gross reduction in civil service posts of 84,150—of which 13,550 posts will be reassigned to frontline services to release resourced from administration to invest in the front line.

The Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales and the Northern Ireland Office have also announced that they are engaged in Spending Review efficiency and evaluation exercises as ambitious as those in England—with reductions also in back office and

related areas; and with the 2.5 per cent. annual efficiency savings applied to the settlement for local government in England, this allows for a reduction of a further 20,000.

Public Servants asked to change jobs will be offered support with retraining and we are ready to work with the work force and their unions to provide that help.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what definition he uses of frontline for the purposes of his announcement on 12 July about reductions in civil service staff; and which posts in each Department and agency fall within that definition. [185369]

Mr. Bonteng *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The 2004 Spending Review announced reductions of 84,150 posts by 2008. Of this, 13,550 posts will be redeployed to key frontline areas in HM Revenue and Customs, the Department for Transport or the Department for Work and Pensions. These redeployments from back office functions will enable increases in key frontline roles, for example personal advisors in Job Centre Plus.

Cotton Oil Imports

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* value and *(b)* volume of cotton oil imports into the UK was in the last year for which records are available, broken down by country of origin. [186055]

John Healey: Provisional estimates for annual imports for 2003 were published by HM Customs and Excise in the Overseas Trade Statistics in February 2004. The final (revised) figures will be available from the HMCE www.uktradeinfo.com website in August 2004 (when final figures for 2003 are published). The value and volume of cotton oil imported into the UK in 2003, broken down by country of origin are:

Imports of cotton seed oil and its fractions, crude and refined general trade: 2003[1]

Country of dispatch/ origin[2]	*Statistical value (£1,000)*	*Netmass (tonnes)*
Imports from EU countries		
France	13.1	2.1
Netherlands	139.6	269.6
Germany	2.7	1.7
Italy	47.7	49.6
Total EU	203.1	322.9
Imports from non-EU countries		
Canada	5.9	2.7
China	8.1	6.3
USA	170.1	80.0
Total non-EU	184.0	89.1
All countries total	387.2	412.0

[1] Provisional figures, may be subject to revision.
[2] Country of origin for non-EU imports; country of dispatch for EU imports (country of origin not available for EU trade).
Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics, HM Customs and Excise

Crown Estate

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Crown Estate spent on *(a)* public relations and *(b)* corporate hospitality in the last financial year. [185970]

Ruth Kelly: The information for financial year 2003–04 is as follows:

(a) 267,452[1]

(b) 9,456.

[1] Public Relations expenditure is defined as the Communication Department's budget less staff costs and production of the Annual Report and Accounts.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost was of producing the Crown Estate's 2004 annual report. [185972]

Ruth Kelly: The Crown Estate annual report and accounts 2004 has only recently been completed and distributed. Final costs have not yet been determined.

Departmental Agency Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total amount paid by his Department to employment agencies for the supply of temporary staff was in financial year 2003–04. [178911]

Ruth Kelly: The total cost incurred by HM Treasury for the supply of temporary staff by employment agencies in the financial year 2003–04 was £1,386,000.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185925]

Ruth Kelly: Total number of road vehicles operated by the Chancellor's Departments and agencies is 4,785.

The number of Personal Injury Accidents in each of the last five years was:

	Number
1999–2000	47
2000–01	44
2001–02	31
2002–03	31
2003–04	32

The Chancellor's Departments and agencies are committed to the delivery of their obligations under Health and Safety legislation with regard to driving on official business.

Economic Growth

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the British economy grew on average per annum *(a)* in total and *(b)* per capita in the period (i) 1993 to 1998 and (ii) 1998 to 2003. [178846]

Ruth Kelly: This information is set out in the following table.

Percentage

	Average GDP growth per annum		*Average GDP growth per capita per annum*	
	Real terms (chained-volumes)	*Nominal terms (current prices)*	*Real terms (chained-volumes)*	*Nominal terms (current prices)*
1997–2003	2.8	5.4	2.4	5.0
1992–97	2.7	5.6	2.4	5.3
1998–2003	2.7	5.2	2.3	4.9
1993–98	3.1	5.9	2.9	5.6

Source:
Treasury Economic Statistics (ONS)

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many cases against his Department, and the agencies for which it is responsible have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181468]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested is as follows:

Cases to ET	*Number of cases*	*Cost awards made against respondents (£000)*	*Cost awards made against applicants (£000)*
Equal Pay	1	-	-
Racial Discrimination	4	5,000	-
Sex Discrimination	2	500	-
Disability Discrimination	5	-	-
Unfair Dismissal	11	-	14,000
Total	23	5,500	14,000

(A) and (B) Settling and contesting claims

£000

	1998	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*Total*
Settlement Cost	3,000	5,000	0	11,293	47,500	15,148	19,800	101,741
Contesting Claims	4,700	117,374	0	23,185	32,386	19,773	7,700	205,118
Total:	7,700	122,374	0	34,478	79,886	34,921	27,500	306,859

Note:
Settlement and contesting costs not available for one case in 2000 and 2001 and 2003

Endowment Mortgages (Compensation)

Mr. Spring: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to compensate people who bought endowment mortgages before the system of regulation covering the sale of these came into existence and who cannot pursue a claim through the normal regulatory channels; and if he will make a statement. [185966]

Ruth Kelly: The Government supports the Financial Services Authority's proposal to conduct further analysis to identify those people who were sold an endowment policy before 29 April 1988 that is forecast to shortfall. The Government also supports the efforts of the FSA and industry to explore the scope for voluntary action to help people in this situation. The Government have no plans to compensate people who bought endowment mortgages before 29 April 1988.

EU Financial Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the *(a)* proportion and *(b)* cost of new financial sector regulation that derives from the EU. [186175]

Ruth Kelly: As stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Mansion House speech of 16 June 2004, three-quarters of financial services regulation is derived from the European Union. There is no estimate available of the total cost in the UK of financial sector regulation derived from the EU.

European Single Market

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the effect on UK consumers of *(a)* competition and the *(b)* free flow of trade as a result of membership of the European single market; and if he will make a statement. [184522]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I have been asked to reply.

The European Commission estimates that in the 10 years after 1992 the internal market created 2.5 million jobs in the EU and increased its GDP by €877 billion. This amounts to an average €5,700 of extra income per household (source: European Commission (2002) "The Internal Market—10 Years without Frontiers"). In addition to increased jobs and prosperity, the Commission report points to benefits to consumers from the increased choice, price competition, and product quality and innovation in the world's largest single market. For example, according to a Commission survey, 80 per cent. of EU citizens believed that the internal market has led to wider choice and 67 per cent. that it had led to improved quality.

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects on the compliance and development costs to *(a)* British exporters and *(b)* British consumers of EU single market rules which allow products approved in one EU country to be sold across the EU. [184523]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I have been asked to reply.

British exporters have benefited from reduced compliance and development costs, resulting from the removal of frontier controls and from rules that allow goods to be traded across the EU rather than complying with 25 different sets of national laws. The 1988 Cecchini Report ("The Cost Of non-Europe") estimated the cost saving to EU business of removal of internal

frontier controls alone in a Union then consisting of 12 members states at €8 billion. In its report, "The Internal Market—10 Years without Frontiers" (European Commission (2002)), the European Commission notes that before the frontiers came down, the tax system alone required 60 million customs clearance documents annually: these are no longer needed. The Commission's report notes how a strong, competitive internal market has helped firms become more productive and efficient and so enhanced their ability to compete in global markets. It sets out benefits to consumers from the greater prosperity, choice, price competition and product innovation that the world's largest internal market brings.

Government Offices (East Midlands)

Mr. Dorrell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many full-time equivalent employees of Customs and Excise in the east midlands there were in each year since 1997. [185494]

John Healey: The figures are based on the number of staff in post at April 2001 each year. The regional distribution of permanent (including fixed term) staff in all Government Departments is published annually by the Cabinet Office in table D of Civil Service Statistics', a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. The number of HMC and E permanent staff based in the east midlands region for 1997–2002 are:

	Number
1997	1,104
1998	884
1999	863
2000	850
2001	770
2002	720

Figure for 2003 and 2004 are currently unavailable, however, the Cabinet Office are expected to publish figures for 2003 shortly.

Mr. Dorrell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what government offices have been identified for closure in the east midlands in the light of the Comprehensive Spending Review. [185497]

Mr. Boateng: There will be an overall gross reduction in posts of 84,150 by 2008 and Departments will pursue these reductions in line with business need. Departments continue to plan the implementation of their efficiency programmes.

Household Savings, Liabilities and Debt

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the level of household savings expressed as a percentage of UK gross domestic product has been in each of the last seven years; [186213]

(2) what the level of *(a)* household liabilities and *(b)* household debt expressed as a percentage of UK gross domestic product has been in each of the last seven years. [186215]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Kenneth Clarke, dated 22 July 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your two recent Parliamentary Questions on the level of household savings; the level of household liabilities and the level of household debt, each expressed as a percentage of UK gross domestic product in each of the last seven years. (186213 and 186215)

The information requested is shown in the table below. Household debt is measured as the total of household outstanding liabilities at the end of the period and hence only the latter is shown in the table.

The household series used for these data are for the combined household and non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) sectors. The accounts for the household and NPISH sectors are currently combined: separate estimates are not available.

Household[1] savings and liabilities as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) UK, 1997–2003

	Household[1] savings as a percentage of GDP	*Household[1] liabilities[2] as a percentage of GDP*
1997	6.8	73.0
1998	4.4	73.3
1999	3.7	75.4
2000	3.9	78.0
2001	5.0	82.4
2002	4.1	89.2
2003	4.2	95.7

[1] Estimates are for the combined household and non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) sectors.
[2] Total outstanding liabilities at the end of each year.

Ministerial Visits

David Davis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list the travel costs incurred by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each Minister within his Department, for each of the last 10 years; [175658]

(2) how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in his Department in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175737]

Ruth Kelly: Since 1999 the Government have published annually a list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published each year since 1995–96 the total annual cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. Information for 2003–04 will be published later today.

In respect of total travel costs for civil servants in the department I refer the r hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the Member for Twickenham (Dr. Cable) on 19 July 2004 (*Official Report*, column 43–6W) which gave the costs for the financial years 1997–98 to 2003–04. The total costs on the same basis for 1996–97 were £951,347. Information for earlier years is no longer held. It is not possible to give a breakdown of total travel costs by individual Ministers.

I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the answer given to the Member for West Chelmsford (Mr. Burns) on 27 February 2003 which stated that no flights by helicopter were made between 2001 and 27 February 2003. Information relating to other years is not held by the department.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

MOD Administration Costs

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reasons the Ministry of Defence does not have an administration costs limit. [181773]

Mr. Boateng: The Ministry of Defence was originally excluded from the administration cost control regime because it could have discouraged inter-changeability between Service and civilian personnel. The Ministry of Defence is not exempt from the administration costs efficiency target announced in the 2004 Budget. This target applies to all departments and MOD will be required to freeze the equivalent of its administration budget over the Spending Review years.

Oil Reserves

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list, for each of the last 10 years, *(a)* the total output and *(b)* the total Exchequer revenue from the UK's oil reserves; and what assessment he has made of (i) output and (ii) revenue in each of the next 10 years. [185249]

Ruth Kelly: Annual information on UK indigenous oil production to 2002 can be found at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/inform/energy_stats/oil/dukes3_1_1.xls and more recent monthly information at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/inform/energy_stats/oil/3_10oilproduction-ettab13.xls

The latest available DTI forecasts of UK oil production, from 2004 to 2009, can be found at http://www.og.dti.gov.uk/information/bb_updates/chapters/Section4_17.htm

And historic Inland Revenue financial year tax receipts jointly from North Sea oil and gas, together with published Budget 2004 projections for 2004–05, can be found at http://www.og.dti.gov.uk/information/bb_updates/appendices/Appendix8.htm

Table C9 on page 261 of Budget 2004 shows longer term projections of North Sea revenues as a percentage of GDP.

Tax Credits

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 10 December 2003, *Official Report*, columns 494–95W, on tax credits, if he will update the tables for each month for which figures are available. [185014]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of manual tax credits payments issued in each month between December 2003 and March 2004 is shown in the table. Manual giro payments are made particularly to deal with an immediate change in circumstances pending automatic payments being adjusted.

	[1]*Number of manual tax credit payments*	[2]*Number of automatic direct payments (million)*
December 2003	14,000	11.5
January 2004	16,000	10.5
February 2004	17,000	10.5
March 2004	22,000	12.5

Notes:
1. These figures cover all manual payments—that is, giro payments issued by local offices, or issued by other Inland Revenue offices but outside the main tax credits automatic payment mechanisms. They are rounded to the nearest 1,000. The previous figures covered only same-day payments issued by local offices.
2. The numbers of automatic direct payments are rounded to the nearest 0.5 million.

Personal Income Tax Allowance

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate *(a)* the gross cost and *(b)* the cost net of savings in social security benefits of raising the personal income tax allowance to £10,000 per annum. [185705]

Dawn Primarolo: The cost of raising the personal income tax allowances to £10,000 per annum in 2004–05 is *(a)* £29.8 billion in gross costs and *(b)* £29.6 billion in costs net of savings of social security benefits. The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change.

The gross costs are based on the Survey of Personal Incomes 2001–02 and are consistent with the Budget 2004. The savings from social security benefits are from the DWP Policy Simulation Model, based upon the Family Resources Survey 2002–03 and consistent with the Budget 2004.

Population Register

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library formal privacy impact assessments relating to the population register which is being compiled by the Registrar General. [185953]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the General Registrar for England and Wales, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Harry Cohen, dated 22 July 2004:

As Registrar General for England and Wales, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning privacy impact assessments relating to the population register. (185953)

Work on the Citizen Information Project is being taken forward by the General Register Office (GRO), part of the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The Project is concerned with establishing the potential of a population register for providing cost savings and improvements to the delivery of public services. It is currently in the project definition stage. A detailed business case has still to be developed and no decision has been taken yet as to whether or not the population register should proceed to implementation.

ONS is considering, its plans for public consultation. We would anticipate that a privacy impact assessment would form part of any formal consultation process. Any consultation document would be placed in the Library of the House of Commons, in line with standard procedure.

Spending Review (Job Reductions)

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the estimated reductions in work force planned in *(a)* local government, *(b)* the Scottish Executive and *(c)* the Welsh Assembly. [184705]

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the basis was for his estimate of 20,000 job reductions in the devolved Administration and in local government in England and Wales announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review; [184753]

(2) whether he *(a)* requested and *(b)* received estimates for the number of job reductions in the devolved Administrations and in local government announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review from (i) the National Assembly for Wales, (ii) the Scottish Executive, (iii) the Northern Ireland Executive and (iv) the Local Government Association. [184754]

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what methodology was used to calculate the reduction by 20,000 of jobs in devolved Governments; [184561]

(2) with which National Assembly for Wales Government members he agreed the civil service jobs reductions in Wales; [184562]

(3) how many Civil Service jobs will be lost in Wales as a result of his announcement in the 2004 Spending Review; [184563]

(4) what consultations there will be with the National Assembly for Wales before the civil service jobs reductions he has announced take place. [184564]

Mr. Boateng *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* The devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales and Northern Ireland Ministers have announced that they are engaged in Spending Review efficiency and evaluation exercises as ambitious as those in England—with reductions also in back office and related areas; and with the 2.5 per cent. annual efficiency savings to which local government in England is committed, this would allow for a reduction of 20,000 posts across local government and the devolved Administrations.

The devolved Administrations will be making their own announcements in the context of their spending plans in the autumn and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and other Government Departments will work in partnership with the Local Government Association to help local government drive forward the efficiency agenda.

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the amounts, by Department, which make up the total overlap of £5.650 million efficiencies across central and local government referred to in Table 2.1 of the 2004 Spending Review Report. [184707]

Mr. Boateng: The local government proposed savings of £6,450 million includes a forecast of £5,650 million of savings including, in procurement, productive time, and public finance and regulation, which are included in the proposed savings for Department for Education and Skills, Department for Transport, Department for Health, Home Office, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. I refer the hon. Member to chapter C of Sir Peter Gershon's report for further details of individual departmental efficiency programmes.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many civil service jobs will be lost in the Guildford constituency as a result of the cuts announced in the July Spending Review; [186045]

(2) which *(a)* Departments and *(b)* agencies will make job cuts in the Guildford constituency as a result of the July Spending Review; [186046]

(3) what services in the Guildford constituency will be affected by the job cuts announced in the July Spending Review. [186047]

Mr. Boateng: There will be an overall gross reduction in posts of 84,150 by 2008 and Departments will pursue these reductions in line with business need. Departments continue to plan the implementation of their efficiency programmes.

Stamp Duty

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what has been the cost to the Exchequer of providing stamp duty relief to residential properties under the value of £150,000 in deprived areas in each month since November 2001; [185711]

(2) how many property transactions have taken place paying stamp duty at 0 per cent. for *(a)* residential properties in deprived areas and *(b)* non-residential properties in deprived areas in the Havant constituency in each month since November 2001; [185712]

(3) what the total number is of property transactions which have taken place at the zero rate of stamp duty in deprived areas since it was introduced; how many have taken place in those areas bearing stamp duty; and how many property transactions bearing stamp duty have taken place in the UK in the same period; [185713]

(4) how many property transactions have taken place paying stamp duty at 0 per cent. for *(a)* residential properties in deprived areas and *(b)* non-residential properties in deprived areas (i) in each month since November 2001 and (ii) in total. [185714]

Ruth Kelly: The cost to the Exchequer of stamp duty relief on residential properties in the qualifying disadvantaged areas is given in the following table for each month since November 2001. The number of residential transactions in qualifying disadvantaged areas which received the relief is also shown in the table together with the number of non residential transactions receiving the relief in these areas. The information has been given for Great Britain as information for Northern Ireland is not readily available on a monthly basis for the whole period.

Information is not reliable enough to be given at the parliamentary constituency level for every month since inception.

Information is only available since inception of the relief for numbers of transactions in disadvantaged areas which would otherwise pay stamp duty but do not do so because of the relief. Counts of transactions in qualifying

disadvantaged areas since inception are not available for transactions below the liability threshold or above the threshold at which the relief ceases to apply.

There were 3.0 million transactions between inception of the relief and June 2004 in the UK whose value was above the appropriate stamp duty threshold and which did not benefit from Disadvantaged Areas Relief.

	Number of residential transactions receiving Disadvantaged Area Relief in Great Britain (thousand)[1]	*Number of non residential transactions receiving Disadvantaged Area Relief in Great Britain (thousand)*[1]	*Cost to the Exchequer of providing Disadvantaged Area Relief in Great Britain (£ million)*[1]
2001			
November	0.7	<0.1	1
December	3.5	<0.1	3
2002			
January	3.0	<0.1	3
February	3.1	<0.1	3
March	4.4	<0.1	4
April	4.2	<0.1	4
May	5.8	<0.1	5
June	5.0	<0.1	5
July	5.7	<0.1	5
August	5.7	<0.1	5
September	5.2	<0.1	5
October	5.5	<0.1	5
November	6.4	<0.1	6
December	5.8	<0.1	5
2003			
January	4.7	<0.1	4
February	5.0	0.1	5
March	5.8	0.2	5
April	6.2	0.4	6
May	7.0	0.6	7
June	7.4	0.7	7
July	7.6	0.6	7
August	7.9	0.6	7
September	6.2	0.6	6
October	5.2	0.6	5
November	4.8	0.6	5
December[2]	2.5	0.1	2
2004			
January[2]	8.0	0.6	7
February[2]	8.2	0.5	7
March[2]	8.5	0.5	7
April[2]	9.8	0.8	9
May[2]	10.3	0.7	9
June[2]	11.7	0.7	10

[1] Counts to the end of November 2003 are based on the date of completion of the transaction. Counts from 1 December 2003 are based on the date the transaction was received at the office set up for processing the transactions.

[2] Because of the change to the new data collection and processing system as a result of the introduction of Stamp Duty Land Tax, care should be taken in interpreting monthly movements since December.

Employment (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people over 65 years have been in work in Tamworth constituency in each year since 1997. [185834]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Brian Jenkins, dated 22 July 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many people over 65 years have been in work in Tamworth constituency in each year since 1997. (185834)

The Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of the number of people aged 65 and over in employment in the Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency in each year since 1997.

Tax Credits (Overpayments and Underpayments)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* total and *(b)* average (i) number and (ii) value of additional payments made in 2003–04 was to ensure that paying back tax credits overpayments did not cause hardship to families. [185064]

Dawn Primarolo: As at 5 April 2004, there were six million families benefiting from tax credits. The Code of Practice sets out the circumstances in which additional payments may be made (for example as a result of their reporting changes in circumstance such as a rise in income). In 2003–04, in line with the code, around 65,000 such payments were made to tax credit recipients whose 2003–04 tax credit award had been reduced. The total value of those additional payments was around £20 million.

Trainee Inspector of Taxes Programme

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the target number of *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time recruits is for the Inland Revenue's Trainee Inspector of Taxes Programme for July 2004. [185930]

Dawn Primarolo: There are currently 234 vacancies for tax inspectors throughout the UK. The vacancies are not advertised in terms of part time or full time. Candidates may apply to work part time if they wish.

Wind Power (Tax Avoidance)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the scope for tax avoidance in the trading of renewable obligations certificates by wind power companies registered in the UK but whose beneficial ownership is offshore. [185738]

John Healey: Tax rules for wind farms are no different to those applying to other kinds of UK registered business. The Government keep all taxes under review and any changes will be announced as part of the normal Budget process.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Sub Judice Resolution

Ms Keeble: To ask the Leader of the House if he will bring forward proposals to amend the House's sub judice Resolution to allow reference to matters before coroners' courts. [185946]

Mr. Hain: I have no plans to do so, though I am willing to consider suggestions for change on this, as on other matters.

CABINET OFFICE

Constable of Lancaster Castle

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office who was consulted on the most recent appointment of the Constable of Lancaster Castle. [186197]

Mr. Alexander: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 6 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 641W.

Access to Government Services

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office when he will next publish a report on the achievements and progress towards targets on accessibility of government services to disabled people. [177220]

Maria Eagle: I have been asked to reply.

Progress against the Public Service Agreement target relating to electronic service delivery by government departments is reported in the UK online annual report and quarterly updates are posted on the e-Government Unit website. The annual report for 2003 stated that two-thirds of all central government services are now available electronically and departments continue to make progress towards getting all services online by 2005. The quarterly update for Quarter 4 2003 shows that departments had e-enabled 71 per cent. of services to citizens and businesses.

Provision of online Government information for disabled people and unpaid carers has been greatly improved with the launch of Directgov in April 2004. The site meets World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) level A standard. Directgov presents information in a clear and structured way covering a range of areas such as rights, employment, independent living and health. The site offers links through to existing services—such as claiming carer's allowance online. As more government services become available, Directgov will expand to include them.

Civil Service Contracts

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what percentage of civil servants are employed on a fixed contract basis. [184576]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The percentage of civil servants employed on a fixed term contract was 1.2 per cent., on 1 October 2003. That figure is based on those departments that supply appointment status data centrally and covers approximately three quarters of all civil servants.

More detailed information on the Civil Service is published annually in Civil Service Statistics, copies of which are available in the Library.

Civil Service Recruitment

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what reduction in *(a)* the Senior Civil Service and *(b)* Senior Civil Service recruitment is planned as part of concentrating civil service resources in the frontline. [185663]

Mr. Alexander: Departments are currently in the process of drawing up detailed plans to implement the Spending Review 2004. It is for individual Departments to determine, as part of their plans, the staffing requirements at senior level that match their business priorities.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many Civil Service Fast Streamers *(a)* are in post and *(b)* will be recruited this year. [185664]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office collects figures from Departments on numbers of Fast Streamers 'In post' as at 1 April each year. The latest figures for which information is available (1 April 2003) showed 1,164 Fast Streamers recorded as being 'In Post' in the Fast Stream entry grade.

The recruitment competitions for Fast Streamers for the current year are yet to finish, to date, 418 candidates have been recommended for appointment and it is anticipated that the final number will be around 450.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what reduction in *(a)* Fast Stream posts and *(b)* Fast Stream recruitment is planned as a part of concentrating civil service resources in the frontline. [185665]

Mr. Alexander: Individual Government Departments are responsible for deciding the number of Fast Stream posts they require, and my Department recruits centrally to meet their current and anticipated business needs. The civil service will continue to need the new skills and attributes that high calibre graduates can bring to it, and we are still working to ensure that we recruit entrants to meet the new challenges.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many road vehicles are operated by the Cabinet Office; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185911]

Mr. Alexander: The Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) provide all road vehicles for the Cabinet Office.

The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car and Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive Mr. Nick Matheson to write to the hon. Member regarding the GCDA fleet. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

European Legislation

Mr. Connarty: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the evidential basis was for the statement in the Cabinet Office Synthesis Report of October 2002, Improving the Way the UK handles European Legislation, page 2, that around 50 per cent. of significant legislation enacted in the UK originates from the European Union. [184992]

Mr. Alexander: The evidential base for this statement was an analysis of Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs), which showed that about half of all measures that imposed non-negligible costs on business, charities and the voluntary sector originated from the European Union.

Government Annual Reports

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the total cost has been of the publication of Government annual reports, in each year since 1997. [185273]

Mr. Boateng *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: Government annual reports were published for the years 1997–98 to 1999–2000. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Prime Minister to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 18 July 2001, *Official Report*, column 206W.

Sir Richard Dearlove

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if the Central Office of Information will issue a photo image of Sir Richard Dearlove upon his retirement from MI6. [184666]

Mr. Straw: I have been asked to reply. No.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Archaeology

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans the Government has to *(a)* extend planning policy guidance to require developers to publish and store archaeological finds and archives and *(b)* give the public access to archaeological finds and archives through outreach programmes; and if she will make a statement. [185770]

Estelle Morris: Planning policy guidance is co-ordinated by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). The ODPM recently published a list of those planning policy guidance notes it would treat as priority, and this did not include PPG 16 (Planning and Archaeology). The review of PPG 16 will therefore take place as and when is necessary in the light of its policy and strategic significance. In the interim, the current PPG will remain in place.

Children's Sport

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what support her Department is providing for children's sporting activities in Northampton; [185789]

(2) what support her Department has provided in 2003–04 for children's sport in the East Midlands. [185790]

Mr. Caborn: The Government are investing more than £1 billion to transform physical education (PE), school sport, and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Education and Skills, to increase the percentage of 5–16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

Spearheading delivery are School Sport Partnerships, which provide for groups of schools to work together to increase sports opportunities for all young people. Each partnership receives formula funding of up to £270,000 per annum. Information regarding School Sport Partnerships going live in the East Midlands and Northampton is as follows:

	East Midlands	*Of which: in Northampton*
April 2003	12	2
September 2003	4	1
September 2004	15	3

All maintained schools in the East Midlands will be in a partnership from September 2006.

The East Midlands region is receiving nearly £40 million through the Big Lottery Fund's New Opportunities in PE and Sport programme, over £5 million of which is going to Northamptonshire. This funding will help improve sports facilities on school sites.

Children and young people in the East Midlands are also benefiting from national initiatives such as the Community Club Development Fund (promoting Club Development with an emphasis on participation by young people), Sporting Playgrounds (improving primary school playgrounds in 27 local education authorities including Nottingham), and Positive Activities for Young People (aimed at 8–19 year olds at risk of social exclusion).

Departmental Expenditure

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been spent by her Department on *(a)* advertising and *(b)* public relations consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [186006]

Estelle Morris: There has been no spend on advertising or public relations consultants in this period.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department spent on press officers, broken down by grade, in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [186015]

Mr. Caborn: Spending by the Department on press officers, broken down by grade, for the latest year available, 2003–04, was as follows:

Grade	*£*
A	66,124
A/TP	56,325
B	315,021

Information requested for earlier years could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department spent on *(a)* head-hunters and recruitment consultants and *(b)* management consultants in 1996–97. [186061]

Mr. Caborn: The departmental expenditure on management consultants in 1996–97 was £65,747.99. An analysis of expenditure on head-hunters and recruitment consultants is not recorded on the Department's accounting system and can be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether *(a)* her Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186090]

Mr. Caborn: In the Department for Culture Media and Sport the minimum retirement age for all staff is 60. The maximum retirement age for permanent staff outside the senior civil service is age 65. Age retirement for the senior civil service is currently age 60 but heads of departments have the flexibility to retain staff beyond age 60 if they judge it to be in the public interest. Applications for employment will be considered up to the maximum retirement age.

In the Royal Parks, the normal retirement age is 60. The Royal Parks do not stipulate a maximum age in their recruitment material and will consider applicants beyond the normal retirement age on an exceptional basis depending on the needs of the organisation.

Departmental Staffing

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people were employed in the Department *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* at the latest date for which information is available, broken down by job title; if she will list the job functions performed by those holding each job title; and for how many people the primary function was (i) human resource or personnel functions, (ii) finance and accounting functions, (iii) information technology functions and (iv) other support, back office or administrative functions (A) in 1997 and (B) at the latest date for which information is available. [183458]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 14 July 2004]*: There were 338 full time equivalent staff in 1997 and 482 FTEs in 2004 in this department. A breakdown by job title and functionality is not available.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185913]

Estelle Morris: DCMS does not operate any road vehicles. The Royal Parks operates a total of 42 road vehicles in managing and policing the eight Royal Parks: 22 cars are available for use by horticultural and office staff for operational purposes; 15 cars and vans, four motor cycles and one horse box are employed on the policing side.

No personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Agency have been reported within the last five years.

The Royal Parks policy on managing work-related road safety is encompassed within its overall Health and Safety policy, as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This commits the Agency to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of its staff, and others affected by its activities; when a risk associated with work related road safety is identified by risk assessment it is dealt with accordingly.

Marine Protection

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact of the creation of marine parks on tourism in England. [186282]

Mr. Caborn: The Department has made no assessment of the impact specifically of marine parks on tourism in England. There are tremendous opportunities for water-based tourism in England. In 2002, the last year that full figures are available, UK residents took 26 million holiday trips to the seaside and 19 million visits to UK wildlife attractions and zoos. The Deep attraction in Hull received 750,000 visitors in its first year, and the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth received around 380,000 visitors in 2002. Marine attractions are promoted in VisitBritain's current "Waterside England" campaign, which promotes water-based attractions and activities.

National Lottery

Andy Burnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been awarded from the National Lottery to *(a)* rugby union and *(b)* rugby league in each year since 1994. [185488]

Estelle Morris: The table shows details of lottery grants awarded in England to support rugby union and rugby league since lottery funding streams began in 1995. The programmes referred to are Sport England's community and world class programmes and Awards for All, the joint lottery distributors programme.

£

	Rugby union lottery awards			Rugby league lottery awards		
	Community	World class	Awards for All	Community	World class	Awards for All
1995–96	4,396,212	0	0	226,201	0	0
1996–97	5,578,878	0	0	701,975	0	0
1997–98	678,228	0	0	185,439	0	0
1998–99	6,145,206	305,387	0	1,159,428	0	0
1999–2000	3,707,869	315,972	253,883	395,528	0	142,690
2000–01	2,360,269	586,029	348,302	1,981,519	731,883	365,111
2001–02	2,566,082	1,080,122	522,587	4,193,472	1,295,464	222,445
2002–03	5,393,585	5,194,636	626,073	683,171	1,500,000	282,319
2003–04	2,191,450	4,167,430	464,351	3,569,038	1,500,000	351,317
Total	33,017,779	11,649,576	2,215,196	13,095,771	5,027,347	1,363,882

Tourism

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport by how much the Government aims to increase participation in accommodation grading schemes by 2006. [186035]

Mr. Caborn: The improvement of the quality of tourism products is one of the five key priority areas agreed between the DCMS and the tourism industry. These are set out in the Tomorrow's Tourism Today document, which was launched by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State at the Tourism Alliance's Plenary Session on 19 July.

After detailed consultation, DCMS and its key partner organisations have agreed to aim to significantly increase the rate of participation in grading schemes in England from the present 43 per cent. of accommodation. Work towards this, and in respect of the other programmes outlined in Tomorrow's Tourism Today, will be guided and monitored by the Tourism Review and Implementation Group, which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State also announced on 19 July. The Group will be informed by the recent Alan Britten report on common accommodation quality standards across Britain, which recommended that at least 75 per cent. of known accommodation stock should be included in the schemes by 2008.

Laura Moffatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to encourage people living in towns to visit the countryside. [185751]

Mr. Caborn: In autumn last year, VisitBritain launched its 'Outdoor England' campaign which encouraged people to visit England's varied countryside. VisitBritain recently launched its 'Waterside England' campaign, which promotes England's coastline as well as its many inland waterways. The countryside will continue to feature strongly in VisitBritain's future campaigns. Further information can be found on the website www.visitengland.com.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Children's Commissioner

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the proposed children's commissioner will have powers which extend to Scotland. [185274]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* Under the Government's proposals, the Children's Commissioner will have powers in relation to non-devolved matters in Scotland and across the UK. We do not intend that the proposed Commissioner should have any role in devolved matters in Scotland. However we do intend that the Commissioner should carry out his or her general functions in relation to non-devolved matters across the UK—promoting awareness of the views and interests of children, and looking into and reporting on the matters which affect and concern them—as well as his or her inquiry functions.

Dentistry

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what reason the recent funding uplift for England's dental schools does not cover the backdating of extra programmed activity. [181644]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have been asked to reply.

Funding for the 2003–04 contractual changes for medical and dental clinical academics was agreed jointly between the Department of Health, the Department for Education and Skills and the Universities and Colleges Employers Association. The universities are now allocating the additional funds by reference to job plans prepared by individual consultants.

Recruitment Consultants

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the Department spent on recruitment consultants in each year since 1996–97. [184359]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* The Department was established in June 2001. Information is available for the financial years of 2002–2003 and 2003–2004. In 2002–2003 the cost of recruitment consultants used to fill Departmental posts was £584,976. In 2003–2004 the cost was £335,321.

Disabled People (Services)

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what arrangements he has in place for monitoring statistics concerning the supply of services by his Department to disabled people; and if he will make a statement. [183255]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 12 July2004]:* The Government is committed to improving the position of disabled people in society and believes that

public bodies should take the lead in promoting equal opportunities. That is why my Department has in place arrangements for monitoring the position, either directly or through delivery partners.

As part of the performance management arrangements on children's social services departments, we collect and monitor information on the number of disabled children receiving services which support them either in their families or to live independently. We also monitor statistics collected via the Department of Health, of the number of parents of disabled children and 16–17 year old disabled young people, who receive direct payments from Local Authorities.

The numbers of pupils with SEN are collected through the Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC). All maintained and non-maintained schools are asked to record pupils with statements of SEN, pupils at School Action and those at School Action Plus, using 11 categories of need.

Connexions Partnerships record the number of young people in their area who have been identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities, and their participation in education, employment and training. Statistics are also maintained on the number of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities in their last year of compulsory education who have received an assessment that meets the requirements of S140 of the Learning and Skills Act.

For Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded post-16 learning, detailed information is collected by the LSC about each learner, the learning they are undertaking and qualifications success.

Information on HE students who are disabled is collected annually from all HE institutions in the UK by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Educational Attainment

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what information he collates on levels of attainment at each of the Key Stages and GCSE/GNVQ by socio-economic class. [185806]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows a time series of estimates from the Youth Cohort Study (YCS) of the proportion attaining five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C or equivalent by year 11 by Socio-Economic Group. Similar information is not available at earlier Key Stages from the YCS. Attainment data up to Key Stage 4 for pupils from English maintained schools is, however, available using Free School Meals as a proxy for Socio-Economic Class for 2002 and 2003. For this data see tables 9–12 and 25–28 of DfES Statistical First Release 04/2004 available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgatewav/DB/SFR/s000448/index.shtml.

Attainment of five or more GCSE grades A-C in Year 11 by parental occupation: 1988–2001 England and Wales, maintained and independent schools*

	1988	1990	1991	1993	1995	1997[1]	1999	2001
Total sample size (number)	14,116	14,511	24,922	18,020	15,899	14,662	13,698	16,707
Socio-economic Group (SEG)[2] (Percentage)								
Managerial/Profession	52	58	60	66	68	69	69	n/a
Other non-manual	42	49	51	58	58	60	60	n/a
Skilled manual	21	27	29	36	36	40	45	n/a
Semi-skilled manual	16	20	23	26	29	32	36	n/a
Unskilled manual	12	15	16	16	24	20	30	n/a
Other/not classified[3]	15	18	18	20	22	24	26	n/a
National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC)[2] (Percentage)								
Higher professional	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	74	80
Lower professional	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	61	65
Intermediate	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	51	52
Lower supervisory	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	36	35
Routine	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	29	32
Other[3]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	24	32

[1] From 1998, includes equivalent GNVQ qualifications achieved in year 11.
[2] Up to 1999 the estimates are based on SEG taking that of the father where this can be specifically coded otherwise the mother's SEG is used. Following a National Statistics review SEG was replaced by NS-SEC. Parental NS-SEC shown here takes into account the occupation and status of both parents.
For further information see SFR 02/2001 available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000230/index.shtml and SFR 04/2003 available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000382/index.shtml
[3] Includes a high percentage of respondents who had neither parent in a full-time job.
Source:
Youth Cohort Study cohorts 4–11, sweep 1.

Emmanuel Foundation

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much state support has been awarded to the Emmanuel Foundation; and what projects of the Foundation *(a)* have received financial backing from the Department and *(b)* the Government are committed to funding. [184963]

Mr. Miliband: No funds are paid to the Emmanuel Schools Foundation direct in the case of the Academies programme. Capital and recurrent funding is paid to the governing body of each school. Capital funding of £21,604,359 has been awarded to King's Academy, £23,645,530 to Trinity Academy and £8,512,945 to Emmanuel College, giving a total of £53,762,834. In addition we pay recurrent funding to each school which is

comparable to funding for other maintained schools. For 2004–05 the amount of recurrent funding for Emmanuel College is £5,472,000 and for King's Academy is £5,032,367. Apart from, as yet, undetermined recurrent costs for Trinity Academy, when it opens in 2005, we have no other funding commitments at this time.

Entrepreneurship Courses

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what further and higher education courses are available which assist young people who plan to start their own businesses. [185199]

Mr. Miliband: There are a considerable number and variety of courses available to students in both higher and further education which aid those with aspirations to start their own business. In fact there are 5,210 courses nationwide currently advertised by the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) which relate to Business.

Government are very committed to ensuring that all students and graduates who aspire to self employment receive the support and advice they need. To demonstrate this we have several new initiatives; for example:

- DfES and Higher Education Academy undertaking work this year to embed entrepreneurship skills into the curriculum
- Science Enterprise Centres (SECs)
- National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurs
- Enterprise Insight

GCSEs

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of students gained *(a)* five or more and *(b)* no GCSEs at A* to C in (i) grammar schools, (ii) foundation schools, (iii) voluntary aided schools, (iv) voluntary controlled schools, (v) community schools, (vi) special schools and (vii) pupil referral units in (A) 2002 and (B) 2003. [185088]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The information requested is as follows:

		Number of 15 year old pupils achieving 5+ A-C*	*Percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving 5+ A*-C*	*Number of 15 year old pupils achieving no GCSEs at A*-C*	*Percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving no GCSEs at A*-C*
2001-02					
	Grammar	20,711	97.5	92	0.4
	Foundation	51,745	58.1	16,945	19.0
	Voluntary Aided	45,953	58.3	14,601	18.5
	Voluntary Controlled	11,209	57.6	3,910	20.1
	Community	165,211	45.9	99,734	27.7
	Special	36	4.0	8,851	93.3
	Pupil referral units	43	1.5	2,485	84.0
2002-03					
	Grammar	21,170	97.5	75	0.3
	Foundation	54,678	59.0	17,413	18.8
	Voluntary Aided	48,665	60.7	14,145	17.6
	Voluntary Controlled	12,101	59.7	4,070	20.1
	Community	174,959	47.6	98,831	26.9
	Special	31	0.3	9,195	93.8
	Pupil referral units	17	0.4	3,682	92.1

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of students gained five or more GCSEs A* to C, including both mathematics and English, in *(a)* grammar schools, *(b)* foundation schools, *(c)* voluntary aided schools, *(d)* voluntary controlled schools, *(e)* community schools, *(f)* special schools and *(g)* pupil referral units in (i) 2002 and (ii) 2003. [185089]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The information requested is as follows:

	Number of 15-year-old pupils achieving 5+ A-C including English and maths*	*Percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving 5+ A*-C including English and maths*
2001/02		
Grammar	20,460	96.3
Foundation	42,613	47.8
Voluntary Aided	37,988	48.2
Voluntary Controlled	9,552	49.1
Community	128,745	35.8
Special	25	0.3
Pupil referral units	35	1.2

	Number of 15-year-old pupils achieving 5+ A-C including English and maths*	*Percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving 5+ A*-C including English and maths*
2002/03		
Grammar	20,851	96.1
Foundation	44,016	47.5
Voluntary Aided	38,748	48.3
Voluntary Controlled	9,958	49.2
Community	131,554	35.8
Special	17	0.2
Pupil referral units	17	0.4

Literacy and Numeracy

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research his Department has commissioned on the numbers of children leaving primary school who have inadequate literacy and numeracy skills. [185201]

Mr. Miliband: The annual data received from the Key Stage 2 results enables the Department to identify the proportion of children who have not reached the expected level for their age. In 2003, 75 per cent. of 11-year-olds achieved a Level 4 in English and 73 per cent. achieved a Level 4 in mathematics. The national pupil database enables a detailed understanding of the progress of these pupils to Key Stage 3 and beyond.

The Primary Strategy supports the drive to raise standards in literacy and numeracy by providing specific programmes to improve the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools so that every child can make the maximum possible progress. Through this we now have the best ever literacy and numeracy results at ages 7 and 11. Our long term aim, set out in the five year Strategy for Children and Learners published on 8 July 2004, is to maintain world class standards and to achieve both excellence and equity for all primary age children by raising standards for those from our most disadvantaged groups.

Selection by Aptitude

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in *(a)* Bromsgrove, *(b)* Wyre Forest, *(c)* Redditch, *(d)* Worcester and *(e)* Worcestershire failed to get into the school of their first choice in each year since 1997; and how many of those subsequently appealed in each of those years. [184711]

Mr. Miliband: Information on the number of pupils admitted to their first choice school is not collected centrally.

Admission appeal data are not available at parliamentary constituency level. A table giving admission appeal information for all local education authority areas has been placed in the House of Commons Libraries. (I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given to my hon. Friend the Member for Bury, North (Mr. Chaytor), on 23 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1430W). Final figures from 1997/98 to 2001/02 have been provided. Further details on the latest 2002/03 (provisional) figures on admission appeals by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000470/index.shtml.

School Admissions

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list, for each of the last five years, the total *(a)* number and *(b)* percentage of non-specialist schools that have declared themselves to have a specialism in which the option to select 10 per cent. of pupils by aptitude has been exercised. [185248]

Mr. Miliband: The Department does not collect this data. Schools do not identify themselves as schools selecting by aptitude in their annual returns to the Department. The admission authority for any school which can identify itself as having a specialism may introduce 10 per cent. selection by aptitude as part of its published admission arrangements. Such arrangements are subject to local consultation, and any objections may be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.

Schools are not required to identify themselves as having selection by aptitude as part of their annual returns to the Department, and so we do not have an exact figure for the number of schools taking advantage of this provision. However, based on research carried out in 2001 by Anne West of the LSE, we estimate that just under 6 per cent. of schools in the specialist schools programme select any pupils on the basis of aptitude for the specialism, and that overall around 2 per cent. of all secondary schools do.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the change in costs to local education authorities and individual admission authorities arising from the administration of 11-plus tests as a result of the implementation of the workforce agreement. [185250]

Mr. Miliband: I refer to the Written Statement I laid before the House on Tuesday 13 July on school funding for 2005–06 (column 55WS refers). The Written Statement to the House sets out how we have considered, with our partner signatories—including the local government employer organisation, the costs of implementation of the National Agreement. It announces what funds will be available to schools to implement the Agreement in 2005–06.

We believe that the minimum guarantee set out will cover the cost pressures associated with workforce reform and implementation of the contractual changes. We will of course continue to monitor implementation on the ground. One of the areas that we have promised to return to with our partners in the autumn will be to look at the support involved in the transfer of exam invigilation work from teachers in secondary schools. We will also look at any issues around administration of the 11-plus examination also at that time.

School Design

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the implications for carbon dioxide emissions of the Building Schools for the Future exemplar designs; what guidance he intends to issue in respect of the use of best practice in energy efficiency; and if he will make a statement. [185252]

Mr. Miliband: All new schools including those built under the Building Schools for the Future initiative must comply with Part L2 "Conservation of Fuel and Power" of the Building Regulations as revised in 2002. Approved Document L2 in support of the Building Regulations quotes Building Bulletin 87 (BB87) "Guidelines for Environmental Design In schools" as the relevant compliance document for schools. The current May 2003 edition is available for download from the DfES website www.teachernet.gov.uk/energy. The maximum annual energy consumption target allowed under BB87 is 5 kg of carbon per square metre of floor area for all new school buildings. BB87 also

gives guidance on energy efficient design of new buildings. For best practice guidance on energy efficiency for both new and existing schools see the DfES energy portal www.teachernet.gov.uk/sdenergy.

Secondary Schools (Pupil Numbers)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the future numbers of pupils of secondary school age in *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 2005, *(c)* 2006 and *(d)* 2007 in (i) Newcastle, (ii) North Tyneside and (iii) Northumberland; and what the figures were for 2003. [185575]

Mr. Miliband: The number of pupils of secondary school age in 2003, including pupils over compulsory school age, and provisional estimates for 2004 are as follows:

At January	*2003*[1]	*2004*[2]
Newcastle	20,317.5	20,143.5
North Tyneside	13,897.5	13,866.5
Northumberland	23,780.5	23,850.0

[1] actual
[2] provisional
Note:
Full-time equivalents, counting each part-time pupil as 0.5

Projections[1] are only available for England as a whole:

At January	*Pupils of secondary age in all schools (000)*
2003[2]	3,656
2004[3]	3,662
2005[4]	3,686
2006[4]	3,684

[1] full-time equivalents, counting each part-time pupil as 0.5
[2] actual
[3] provisional
[4] projected

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department, *(b)* its predecessor Department and *(c)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183896]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The detailed information requested is not held centrally and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

All travel is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Exports to Turkey

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what British goods have been exported to Turkey in each of the last three years. [185337]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The value of exports from the UK to Turkey, as published by HM Customs and Excise, were as follows:

UK Exports of goods to Turkey

£000

SITC	*Description*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
00	Live animals other than animals of division 03	4,621	3,199	1,451
01	Meat and meat preparations	41	5	38
02	Dairy products and birds' eggs	897	1,863	2,435
03	Fish (not marine mammals), crustaceans, molluscs and and invertebrates etc	159	66	167
04	Cereals and cereal preparations	1,574	774	891
05	Vegetables and fruit	1,005	712	782
06	Sugar, sugar preparations and honey	211	148	202
07	Coffee, tea, cocoa, spices and manufactures thereof	1,622	1,758	2,944
08	Feeding stuff for animals (not including unmilled cereals)	2,423	2,370	3,425
09	Miscellaneous edible products and preparations	3,041	631	1,049
11	Beverages	15,524	18,504	17,766
12	Tobacco and tobacco manufactures	6,745	7,592	6,279
21	Hides, skins and furskins, raw	19,554	43,699	55,495
22	Oil seeds and oleaginous fruit	61	0	34
23	Crude rubber (including synthetic and reclaimed)	7,268	8,368	10,208
24	Cork and Wood	123	44	177
25	Pulp and waste paper	21	44	441
26	Textile fibres (and their wastes)	11,671	10,454	8,815
27	Crude fertilisers other than those of division 56, and crude minerals	7,988	6,197	12,325
28	Metalliferous ores and metal scrap	12,596	45,005	93,906
29	Crude animal, vegetable materials nes	352	228	278
32	Coal, coke and briquettes	8	21	0
33	Petroleum, petroleum products and related materials	18,172	12,558	5,606
34	Gas, natural and manufactured	8,580	8,804	17,748
35	Electric current	0	0	0
41	Animal oils and fats	134	160	168
42	Fixed vegetable oils and fats, crude, refined or fractioned	16	22	109
43	Processed animal and veg oils and fats; waxes	1,244	1,525	1,095
51	Organic chemicals	47,562	50,330	72,402
52	Inorganic chemicals	3,503	3,299	3,609
53	Dying, tanning, and colouring materials	19,309	28,649	30,070

UK Exports of goods to Turkey

£000

SITC	Description	2001	2002	2003
54	Medical and pharmaceutical products	145,017	157,061	163,937
55	Essential oils and resinoids and perfume materials	29,925	30,136	28,119
56	Fertilisers (other than those of group 272)	151	226	408
57	Plastics in primary forms	28,769	41,786	52,503
58	Plastics in non-primary forms	11,401	14,200	13,915
59	Chemical materials and products nes	25,883	23,829	29,676
61	Leather, leather manufactures nes and dressed furskins	1,822	792	1,050
62	Rubber manufactures nes	6,289	6,978	9,278
63	Cork and wood manufactures (excluding furniture)	319	457	1,431
64	Paper, paperboard and articles of paper pulp, of paper or of paperboard	16,770	10,188	8,643
65	Textile yarn, fabrics, made-up articles nes and related products	32,928	44,326	45,582
66	Non-metallic mineral manufactures nes	9,639	11,364	10,890
67	Iron and steel	73,103	29,381	44,763
68	Non-ferrous metals	7,217	6,987	17,733
69	Manufactures of metal nes	25,588	21,443	25,159
71	Power generating machinery and equipment	78,959	69,836	102,324
72	Machinery specialised for particular industries	29,821	50,782	80,641
73	Metalworking machinery	8,405	15,895	15,713
74	General industrial machinery and machine parts nes	50,268	58,895	68,200
75	Office machines and ADP machines	51,582	60,077	53,695
76	Telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing equipment	106,415	48,134	51,237
77	Electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances nes	49,882	78,662	87,759
78	Road vehicles (including air-cushion vehicles)	54,496	146,597	240,612
79	Other transport equipment	17,332	14,681	14,337
81	Prefabricated buildings; plumbing, heating and lighting fixtures and fitting	931	1,520	1,920
82	Furniture and parts thereof	5,818	2,982	2,962
83	Travel goods, handbags and similar containers	474	640	551
84	Articles of apparel and clothing accessories	38,083	30,981	31,652
85	Footwear	1,123	726	1,584
87	Professional, scientific and controlling instruments nes	39,585	41,596	43,224
88	Photographic and optical equipment; watches and clocks	12,914	13,173	15,255
89	Miscellaneous manufactured articles nes	35,472	51,682	45,832
9	Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere in the SITC	9,617	35,904	44,132
Total		1,202,022	1,370,944	1,704,635

Note:
nes = not elsewhere specified

Post Office Card Accounts

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to make it easier to open a Post Office Card Account. [184888]

Mr. Timms: The design and management of the Post Office card account is an operational matter for the Post Office. I understand from the company that the application process is as simple as possible within the legal and regulatory requirements for the banking industry. I also understand that the account opening process is no more onerous than that for a bank account with a financial institution. We have not seen any real evidence that the process for opening a Post Office card account is difficult. Already, over 2.8 million card accounts have been opened.

While there has been no problem with the opening of the account, the Government have identified a problem that too many customers were failing to pass on their Post Office card account details to DWP or the Inland Revenue, so making it impossible for those Departments to pay money into the new account. Having identified the problem, solutions are being put in place, including the creation of a pre-populated bank account details form (with the account number, sort code and mandate for the spending Department to credit the account) which will be given to customers at their local post office when they collect their card. By signing the forms there and then customers can start receiving benefits into their card account much quicker.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many applications for Post Office card accounts have been completed and returned, but not yet processed and approved; [186255]

(2) how many applications for Post Office card accounts have been rejected owing to errors on the application form. [186256]

Mr. Timms: The operation and management of the Post Office card account is a matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Biomass Energy Industry

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what specific fuel will be used by the biomass energy industry to produce electricity or heat for domestic consumption. [185843]

Mr. Timms: The biomass industry will use a range of fuels for production of energy—including all of those eligible for the Renewables Obligation such as straw, willow, miscanthus and forestry residues.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the expected percentage of renewable energy to be derived from wood biomass is in *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2015 and *(c)* 2020. [185844]

Mr. Timms: The Government have set a target that 10 per cent. of electricity supply in the UK will come from renewables by 2010 and an aspiration to double this by 2020. The Government does not set targets for contributions from individual renewable resources.

However the Renewables Innovation Review indicated a practical potential for biomass of some six per cent. of electricity supply by 2020 based on a range of assumptions

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her assessment of the *(a)* resource implications and *(b)* environmental impacts of the movement of biomass over to fuel large power stations is. [185846]

Mr. Timms: Assessments of biomass resource have been published in the course of the Renewables Innovation Review and the Statutory Consultation on Amendments to the Renewables Obligation Order.

The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution made an assessment of the carbon dioxide associated with biomass production and transport in their recent report on Biomass as a Renewable Energy Source. Total life cycle emissions from biomass remain low compared to fossil-fuel fired power plant.

Individual projects will make their own assessments of environmental impact as part of their application for planning consent.

Brazil

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of imports into the UK were from Brazil in 2003–04. [184183]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: In 2003 Brazil accounted for 0.62 per cent. of the UK's total imports of goods. In the first five months of 2004, Brazil accounted for 0.63 per cent.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the UK policy is on the Brazilian production of generic AIDS drugs to prevent the spread of AIDS; and what assessment has been made of their use in Africa. [184187]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK Government are committed to increasing access to medicines—through affordable pricing, sustainable financing, reliable health and supply systems and the rational selection and use of drugs—in the developing world. Our policy paper, "Increasing access to essential medicines in the developing world: UK Government policy and plans", was published on 30 June and copies are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Brazil is one of a number of developing countries whose generic drug manufacturing capacity is sufficient to allow manufacture of their own HIV/AIDS drugs. Brazil has close links with a number of countries in Africa. The UK Government have made no specific assessment of the use of Brazilian AIDS drugs in Africa.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the level of trade in the industrial sector between Brazil and the UK. [184189]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: In 2003, UK exports to Brazil and UK imports from Brazil of manufactured goods (defined as Divisions 5 to 8 of the Standard International Trade Classification) were worth £784 million and £669 million respectively. The two most important sectors by value for UK exports were medicinal and pharmaceutical products and power generating machinery and equipment. For Brazilian exports to the UK, the two most important sectors were power generating equipment and machinery and cork and wood manufactures (excluding furniture).

Business Failures

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many business failures there have been in each year since 1997. [185511]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table shows the number of company and individual insolvencies in each year from 1997 to 2003. While company insolvencies are all known to be business failures, individual insolvencies also include consumer insolvencies. For bankruptcies, a breakdown into "self-employed" (small businesses) and "other individuals" is available, although a similar breakdown is not available for individual voluntary arrangements (IVA's). For this reason it is not possible to separate all business failures from the total individual insolvencies.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Company Insolvencies	12,610	13,203	14,280	14,317	14,972	16,305	14,184
Individual Insolvencies	24,441	24,549	28,806	29,528	29,775	30,587	36,328
Bankruptcies—Total	19,892	19,647	21,611	21,550	23,477	24,292	28,021
Of which:							
Self-employed	11,269	10,420	10,723	9,952	9,839	8,854	9,139
Individual Voluntary Arrangements	4,549	4,902	7,195	7,978	6,298	6,295	8,307
Total known business Insolvencies	23,579	23,623	25,003	24,269	24,811	25,159	23,323

Business Regulation

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department has made an assessment of the cost to small businesses of changes to employment legislation introduced since 1997. [185543]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI estimates the potential impact on small businesses of changes to employment legislation in its Regulatory Impact Assessments. Summing these estimated costs to all businesses of employment legislation introduced since 1997, produces a figure of £5.1 to £5.6 billion a year of policy costs (such as the cost to employers of paying the national minimum wage), but just £32 to £39 million per year of on-going 'implementation' costs (the administrative or 'red-tape' costs). Small firms might account for £1.5 to £1.6 billion of the policy costs and £9 to £11 million of implementation costs. At the same time, it should be remembered that there are very significant benefits to small firms associated with these changes to employment legislation.

The DTI has also commissioned research into what the effects on small firms of changes to employment legislation have been. The impact of employment legislation on small firms: a case study analysis, by Paul Edwards, Monder Ram and John Black, 2003 for the DTI, found that "the impact on firms appears generally to remain relatively small."

Car Batteries

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of end-of-life car batteries were recycled in each of the last two years. [185742]

Mr. Timms: No precise data for the recycling of end of life automotive batteries are currently collected. However, discussions with the battery manufacturing and distributing sector, and the lead recycling industry, suggest that in 2002 the UK recycled 94 per cent. of spent automotive batteries and that this figure rose to 99 per cent. in 2003. In each year, an estimated 7.5 million automotive batteries entered the waste stream.

Chronic Diseases (Compensation Claims)

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many compensation claims received for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and vibration white finger damages are waiting to be processed; and what the average time taken to process a claim is. [183247]

Nigel Griffiths: There are around 428,000 respiratory disease claims waiting to be settled. 380,000 were submitted in the last six months alone. The time taken to process a claim is dependent on the time it takes the claimants' representatives and the Department's contractors to provide all the required information for the full Medical Assessment Process (MAP) to take place. The average is two years for a live claim and one year for a deceased claim from registration to MAP.

There are some 79,000 Vibration White Finger (VWF) claims waiting to be settled. The average time taken from registration of claim to settlement is around 2.5 years and is dependant on the factors mentioned above.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many chest disease coal-related compensation claims remain outstanding; how many have been settled in the last 12 months; and when the Government expects to settle all chest disease coal-related compensation claims. [185765]

Nigel Griffiths: There are over 428,000 claims still to settle. 280,000 came in during the last six months before the cut off date. In the last 12 months some 54,000 claims have been settled.

With regard to the timetable for settling outstanding claims, I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in the House of Lords on 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, column WA49.

Company Insolvencies

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what estimate her Department has made of the number of company insolvencies in 2003; [185452]

(2) what estimates her Department has made of the number of company insolvencies in 2003. [185544]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There were 14,184 company insolvencies in 2003. These comprised of 5,234 creditors voluntary liquidations and 8,950 company compulsory liquidations.

Defence Equipment (Exports)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects to extend the UK regulations on the licensing of exports of defence equipment to the UK dependent territories; and if she will estimate the value of those exports in the last year for which figures are available. [185172]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The Government are working with the Overseas Territories to implement the Export Control Act by the end of the year. In the absence of centrally kept records, an estimate of the exports of defence equipment from the Overseas Territories would be meaningless, and liable to be misconstrued as an official figure. However, the Government believe the level of such exports to be very small, since the Overseas Territories neither manufacture defence equipment on a large scale, nor have large stocks of such equipment.

DIY Accidents

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate her Department has made of the prevalence of accidents relating to DIY; and what measures her Department is taking to reduce the number of such accidents. [185982]

Mr. Sutcliffe: DTI no longer provides a service on accident statistics.

During 2002, the final year for which statistics were collected, the UK national estimate for the number of home accident victims where the patient's activity at the time was DIY/maintenance was 218,510 (24th HASS report, page 124); and a further 15,785 whilst at leisure outside the home and its surrounds (24th HASS report, page 133).

The 24th HASS report can be ordered or downloaded from www.dti.gov.uk/homesafetynetwork/gh_stats.htm.

More detail can be obtained by contacting the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents: www.rospa.com tel. 0870 777 2171.

As regards policy, the General Product Safety Regulations require products to be safe in normal or reasonably foreseeable use and that consumers are provided with the relevant information to enable them to assess the risks inherent in a product and where these are not obvious for warnings to be provided.

Employment Benefits

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect on part-time workers in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* each region of measures agreed at EU level to ensure pro rata rights to (i) paid leave, (ii) pensions, (iii) access to training and (iv) other company benefits. [185324]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Second Work-Life Balance Study—Employees' Survey, carried out during January and February 2003, asked employees if their employer provided part-time workers with *(a)* the same hourly rate of pay as full-time workers; *(b)* the same entitlements to annual leave and maternity/parental leave on a pro rata basis as full-time workers; and *(c)* the same entitlement to contractual sick pay as full-time workers. A significant minority answered 'no', as shown in the following table.

Table: Percentages of employees who answer 'no' when asked about provisions for part-time staff, by UK region

Does your employer provide part-time workers with the following?	*NE*	*Yorks and Humb*	*E Mids*	*Eastern*	*Gtr London*	*SE*
The same hourly rate of pay as full-time workers	18	9	11	12	15	11
The same entitlements to annual leave and maternity/paternity leave on a pro rata basis as full-time workers	9	3	4	8	11	7
The same entitlement to contractual sick pay as full-time workers	12	6	8	12	13	8

Does your employer provide part-time workers with the following?	*SW*	*W Mids*	*NW*	*Wales*	*Scotland*	*UK*
The same hourly rate of pay as full-time workers	9	13	12	14	15	12
The same entitlements to annual leave and maternity/paternity leave on a pro rata basis as full-time workers	6	10	10	17	9	8
The same entitlement to contractual sick pay as full-time workers	10	11	14	18	12	11

Note:
Base = 1823. Other response categories not reported here were 'yes' and 'don't know'.

According to the Second Work-Life Balance Study—Employers' Survey, carried out between December 2002 and April 2003, less than 1 per cent. of part-time employees were ineligible for maternity/paternity, parental or special paid leave entitlements available to full-time employees. Employers reported that none of their part-time staff were ineligible for employer-provided childcare facilities or help where they were available. Employers reported that between 0.1 and 1.9 per cent. of their part-time staff were ineligible for various flexible working practices, depending on which particular practice was being considered. Because the number of corresponding cases is very small, it is not possible to provide a regional breakdown. It is recognised that it is likely that employers will under report any ineligibility for part time staff.

The DTI has not collected any statistics on pensions, access to training or other company benefits (other than access to flexible working practices and child care).

Employment Tribunals

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in what proportion of employment tribunal judgments in the last five years the debt owed by the employer was not wholly recovered. [185450]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Employment Tribunals Service does not hold information on the number of employment tribunal judgments where the debt owed by the employer was not wholly recovered.

Environmental Business Growth Action Programme

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding *(a)* is budgeted to be spent, *(b)* has been spent and *(c)* is forecast to be spent by regional development agencies in 2004–05 on the Environmental Business Growth Action Programme in (i) England and (ii) the west Midlands. [184138]

Jacqui Smith: The Environmental Business Growth Action Plan operates in the west Midlands only. The expenditure by Advantage West Midlands on this plan is as follows:

	£
Expenditure already made in 2004–05	22,000
Expenditure budgeted for the balance of 2004–05	424,798
Expenditure forecast for the balance of 2004–05	[1]915,994

[1] This figure is subject to approval of a project currently being considered by AWM.

The Plan is also in receipt of funding from European and other UK sources, both public and private sector.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the role of regional development agencies is in the management of the Environmental Business Growth Action Programme, with particular reference to Advantage West Midlands. [184145]

Jacqui Smith: The Environmental Business Growth Action Plan is a west Midlands' region only initiative led by the Environmental Agency. The initiative is supported by funding from Advantage West Midlands which also participates in the Management Board of the Action Plan together with other regional partner organisations.

Exports/Imports

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the export and import figures to and from *(a)* European Union states and *(b)* non-European Union states for the last year for which figures are available. [184258]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: According to figures published by the Office for National Statistics the information is as follows:

UK trade in goods and services with European Union (EU15) and Non-European countries—2003

£ million

	European Union	Non-European Union
UK exports	139,739	137,800
UK imports	168,544	141,668

Source:
National Statistics, Balance of Payments, First Release

Furniture Regulations

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* actual and *(b)* withdrawn prosecutions there have been of businesses failing the furniture regulations since 1993. [185853]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 are enforced by local trading standards departments. This Department collates statistics on prosecutions under the regulations every five years and publishes them in a statutory report on consumer safety. For the period 1 April 1993 to 31 March 1998 the report records 404 prosecutions of which 398 resulted in convictions. Between 1 April 1998 and 31 March 2003, there were 101 prosecutions resulting in 98 convictions. These statistics are obtained from enforcement authorities under Section 70 of the Weights and Measures Act 1985. Data for the period from 1 April 2003 is not yet available.

Mercosur

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's policy is on the expansion of Mercosur. [184190]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Mercosur, the Common Market of the South, was created by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay in March 1991. In 1996 association agreements were signed with Bolivia and Chile establishing free trade areas with these countries; Mexico and Venezuela have recently expressed interest in joining the group. Expansion of Mercosur would be a decision for the full members. The UK favours the process of deeper regional integration since we believe this creates greater possibilities for economic growth and poverty reduction.

Minimum Wage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will require all employers to print the national minimum wage at any given point in time on all wage slips; and if she will make a statement. [185512]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We have no plans to require all employers to print the national minimum wage on wage slips.

However, every output worker, including homeworkers, paid under the piece rate system introduced by the National Minimum Wage Regulations 1999 (Amendment) Regulations 2004 from October 2004 must be given a written notice making it clear what the fair piece rate is, how it was set by the employer, and give the national minimum wage helpline number, which the worker may contact if they have a query or wish to make a complaint.

Civil Nuclear Security

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the reasons were for the revocation of security clearance by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security of an individual in the past two years; and what consultations have taken place with the Cabinet Office over the decision of the Security Vetting Appeals Panel. [184399]

Mr. Timms: I am not able to comment on individual cases.

Post Offices

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many main post offices in county towns have been franchised by the Post Office *(a)* before and *(b)* since 1997. [185649]

Mr. Timms: These are operational matters for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices have closed in Dumfries and Galloway region since 1997. [186303]

Mr. Timms: I am advised by Post Office Ltd. that data on post office closures by constituency is not available in the form requested, as the company does not require this data for operational purposes. However it has produced quarterly statistics on post office closures by Government region/country since March 2000 and the net closure figures for Scotland are:

	Number
Year to end March 2001	63
Year to end March 2002	26
Year to end March 2003	20
Year to end March 2004	77

Regional Development Agencies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to what public service agreements and targets set by central Government regional development agencies are subject. [184982]

Jacqui Smith: The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have been set a framework of challenging targets which they must demonstrate their contribution to. Under the three-tier target framework, tier 1 targets restate their statutory purposes. Tier 2 are regional outcomes of interest to the funding Departments. Tier 3 are targets for direct outputs, achieved through RDA programme spend. These are listed as follows.

Tier 3 outputs:

(i) Employment Opportunities:

Support the creation or safeguarding of x net jobs;

(ii) Brownfield Land:

Reclaim or remediate x hectares of previously developed land and buildings;

(iii) Education and Skills:

Support the creation of learning opportunities for x individuals;

(iv) Business Performance:

Support the creation and or attraction of x new businesses;

(v) Investment benefiting deprived areas:

Leverage through RDA funding and activity x pounds private sector investment benefiting residents of the most deprived wards

Each RDA has the same core targets, though the numbers differ region by region, and activities aimed at meeting them and addressing regional needs are described in the Regional Economic Strategy developed with regional stakeholders.

As set out in the Devolved Decision Making Review (March 2004), the DTI, working in partnership with other Government Departments, is coordinating the implementation of a new approach to tasking the RDAs in time to come into effect from April 2005.

The new framework will help the RDAs and Departments to work on regional priorities in a way that also serves national interests more effectively. It will provide clearer direction by simplifying targets and making them more relevant to what the Agencies are trying to do.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the distinction is between regulatory impact assessments where *(a)* the benefits justify the costs and *(b)* the benefits outweigh the costs. [183217]

Mr. Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

The Cabinet Office guidance "Better Policy Making: A Guide to Regulatory Impact Assessment" requires the responsible Minister to certify that he or she is satisfied that the benefits of the proposed measure justify its costs. The Minister will consider the full range of benefits arising from the measure, including social, environmental and economic.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the capital grants demonstration projects for renewable energy technologies that are not yet economic with support from the renewable obligation alone. [185397]

Mr. Timms: The Department has supported with capital grants the following number of demonstrations of renewable energy technologies not yet economic with support from the Renewables Obligation alone. This includes funding for Capital Grants which has been allocated from the Big Lottery Fund.

The total number of projects in each sector that the Department is aware of is:

Photovoltaic—653, under the major demonstration programme.

Biomass—21, under the Bioenergy Capital Grants Scheme

Offshore wind—12, under the Offshore Wind Capital Grants Scheme

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what guidelines she has issued on the percentage of energy which should come from renewable sources in relation to the proposed development at Clyst Vale in Devon. [185764]

Mr. Timms: Our overall target is that by 2010, 10 per cent. of the UK's electricity should come from renewable sources. ODPM are currently reviewing their national guidelines which help set out planning guidance for local authorities on renewable energy development. Responses to their consultation and the new planning guidance, PPS 22, are being analysed and final publication of PPS 22 is due in the summer.

At a regional level the Southwest Government Office have planning guidance in the shape of RPG 10—produced in 2001 and informed by PPS 22's predecessor. This sets an indicative target of 11–15 per cent. of electricity from renewables by 2010—just under 600MW of capacity. The regional office then worked with individual counties to agree indicative targets at the county level and incorporate them into individual renewable energy strategies; for example, Devon has a 151 MW indicative target. These were based upon detailed resource and character assessments of the landscape but the indicative targets are not split by technology. RPG 10 is due to be updated by the Regional Spatial Strategy in 2005—which will be informed by PPS 22. No guidelines have been issued in respect of renewable energy provision for any individual development.

Renewable Obligations Certificate

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to what extent the renewable obligations certificate can be traded with wind power generating companies registered in the UK but whose beneficial ownership lies in offshore tax havens. [185739]

Mr. Timms: Renewables obligation certificates or ROCs are issued in relation to eligible renewables output from generating stations in the United Kingdom. ROCs can be traded within Great Britain and in future this will be extended to include Northern Ireland. The renewables obligation is placed upon licensed electricity suppliers supplying customers in Great Britain.

irrespective of where those suppliers may be based, and ROCs can be expected to be of value to such companies, to those selling renewables electricity to them and to traders in ROCs.

Renewables Obligations Order

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects the Renewables Obligation Order review's findings will be published; what the parameters of the review are; and from whom it will take evidence. [185841]

Mr. Timms: We plan to publish our proposals on the scope and terms of reference of the review later this summer. We aim to complete the review itself by the end of 2005—this will include a statutory consultation on any proposed changes to the Obligation.

The Utilities Act requires us to consult a wide range of statutory consultees before any changes are made to the Order. Such consultees include the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority, The Gas and Electricity Consumer Council, electricity suppliers to whom the Order would apply and generators of electricity from renewable sources. Gauging the opinion of this range of consultees will enable us to seek views from a wide base.

Small Businesses

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support has been offered to small businesses in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* south Tyneside, *(c)* Tyne and Wear and *(d)* England in each year since 1997. [184517]

Nigel Griffiths: A number of steps have been introduced to help small businesses including an increase of capital allowances to 50 per cent. and raising VAT registration threshold to 58 per cent., all of which helps small businesses in south Tyneside.

The Employer Training Pilot, run in Tyne and Wear for the last 15 months, is being made available to businesses throughout the north east. This helps businesses to improve workforce skills by providing training tailored to their needs. The main source of publicly funded business support is Business Link Tyne and Wear (BLTW).

Core funding of £2.2459 million provided to Business Link Tyne and Wear (BLTW), laid the foundation on which they are planning to source additional funding projected at £14.5 million for the benefit of businesses in Tyne and Wear, for the year 2004–5. Such funding and the creation of partnership working allowed the following to be delivered within Tyne and Wear.

Around £7.5 million was made available to SMEs based in the sub-region in 2003–04 as part of projects managed by BLTW.

Businesses benefited from a range of Workforce Development services to help SMEs achieve the Investors in People Standard (IiP) and develop their workforce.

Financial subsidies up to 45 per cent. towards consultancy can be accessed by businesses of any age or size issue. Around £4 million is available for this purpose.

SMEs benefit from up to 45 per cent. funding towards the cost of exhibition space, and design, build and dressing of stands. BLTW have held three 'Meet the Buyer' events over the last two years as a means for local SMEs to meet buyers from both within and beyond the region, offering them the opportunity to become integral cogs in supply chains. BLTW also recently hosted an 'Access to Finance' event, where SMEs met flinders. This was attended by 30 funders and over 100 SMEs.

Unsecured loans of up to £15,000 are available to SMEs in the NE that have difficulty accessing finance elsewhere. The SMEs must work with a mentor and repay the loan within five years.

A Business Link adviser is currently based at TEDCO's premises in Jarrow providing advice and support to south Tyneside businesses. Business adviser will soon be based in south Tyneside metropolitan borough council premises, and in south Tyneside College two days a week.

In addition a Tyne and Wear Small Business Fund, through ONE NE's Single Programme Funding, of a 50 per cent. Capital Equipment Grant of between £500 and £2,500 available to pre-start and new businesses—up to 12 months old.

Supplementing the support available from BLTW, south Tyneside metropolitan borough council and south Tyneside Enterprise Agency, TEDCO run a number of their own initiatives to support SMEs in the south Tyneside borough. These initiatives are outlined as follows:

South Tyneside metropolitan borough council:

Tyne and Wear Small Business Grant;

50 per cent. of eligible costs up to £5,000;

New businesses up to 36 months old;

Supports projects from a wide range of sectors with a capital spend of at least £2,000.

Major Business Grant Fund:

£20,000-£100,000;

New and established businesses in most sectors;

Encourages major investments into the borough which support the attraction, creation, retention and rescue of significant jobs and businesses.

Youth Employment Grant:

Up to £3,000 on 30 per cent. basis over first year;

Established businesses in all sectors;

30 per cent. of the first years basic wage costs in a new, full-time, permanent post, for a person of south Tyneside, under 25 years of age.

TEDCO:

Business Start-up

Access is available to the Tyne and Wear Business Start-up service, for individuals to access advice and support on all aspects of starting and running a business. The trend for business start-up is an upward one, in 2001, 50 start-ups were recorded for south Tyneside rising to 83 for 2003.

There is close partnership working with South Tyneside Credit Union, STRIDE and the citizen's advice bureau on anti-poverty and projects focused on

wealth creation and retention. Total funding for these activities in Jarrow since 1997 has been in the region of £311,000.

Business Development.

Business Development support activities include Outreach counselling, E-commerce, Marketing Support, Business Planning, Cluster Development, Workforce Development, graduate and undergraduate placement programmes and support with grant applications for expansion and growth. Total funding for the counselling and consultancy aspects of this work has been in the region of £230,000.

Grant Funding:

Grants for local businesses have been accessed through south Tyneside to promote growth, competitiveness, support expansion and inward investment. There have been two sources of this funding, a Major Grants Fund, and the south Tyneside Development Fund. It is not possible to ascertain an exact split of funds, but in broad terms, since 1997 Jarrow businesses have received £200,000 from the Major Grants Fund and £100,000 per annum from the Development Fund.

Other Sources of Funding.

Further financial support has also been available through The Department for Work and Pensions, e.g. InBiz and also through DTI Regional Selective Assistance although it has not been possible to establish how much.

Solar Photovoltaics

Syd Rapson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her Department's estimate is of the total amount of grid-connect solar photovoltaics which will be installed in the UK in 2004. [185791]

Mr. Timms: The Department does not have an estimate of grid-connected PV installed in the UK in 2004.

The cumulative installed grid-connected PV in the UK was 5.189 MWe at the end of 2003, of this 1.623 MWe was installed in 2003.

Stream 2 Funding

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total value is of large-scale grant applications for funding received in stream 2 of the Government's solar PV Major Demonstration Programme since its launch; and what the total value is of applications approved. [186110]

Mr. Timms: Under Stream 2 of the PV Major Demonstration Programme, 240 grant applications have been received with a total grant value of £32,552,100. Of these, 137 applications have been approved and offered grants with a total value of £16,612,695.

Technological Innovation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reason applicants for the Grant for Research and Development have been asked to confirm in writing that they are withdrawing their bids; and what assessment she has of the impact this will have on encouraging small businesses to carry out research and development that leads to technologically innovative products and processes. [185513]

Nigel Griffiths: I am advised that applicants for the Grant for Research and Development have not been asked to withdraw their applications. However, if any choose to do so they should inform the office dealing with their application.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* recruitment and *(b)* total cumulative salary costs of the Chief Executive of UK Trade and Investment are. [185253]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The information is as follows.

(a) The recruitment costs associated with the last recruitment exercise for the Chief Executive of UK Trade and Investment totalled approximately £74,000. This is in line with the costs associated with other open competitions held for the recruitment of Permanent Secretaries.

(b) The Chief Executive's current salary falls within the salary range £120,000 to £124,999.

UK/EU Trade

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the number of businesses in each region of the UK which trade with the EU; what percentage of *(a)* small businesses, *(b)* medium sized businesses and *(c)* large companies this represents in each region; and what the value of such trade in each region was for each business sector in the last year for which figures are available. [184524]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The latest available information on UK trade in goods, by UK regions, was published by HM Customs and Excise on 17 June 2004. The Press Release (NAT 27/04) and accompanying tables of statistics are available from the Customs' website: www.uktradeinfo.com which may be accessed from the Libraries of the House.

Customs do not collect information on numbers of employees so it is not possible to distinguish between small, medium sized and large businesses.

Wool Industry

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the current *(a)* state and *(b)* competitiveness of the British wool industry. [184050]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

Sales of new season's British wool have begun well, with strong demand and prices firm compared to those achieved at the end of last season's selling in June. But the volatility of the world market and the influence of currency fluctuations and world events may lead to some slowing of the market.

The Government/Industry Forum on the Non-Food uses of Crops has considered ways to improve the competitiveness of the wool industry and included three recommendations in its second Annual Report. The

Government will respond to those recommendations soon. A copy of this report and the recommendations made can be found at: http://148.252.1.12/gifnfc/index.asp.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the annual cost to small businesses of the Working Time Directive. [185474]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department of Trade and Industry estimates in its Regulatory Impact Assessments that the total annual cost to business of the Working Time Regulations is £2.7 billion, of which up to £800 million might apply to small firms. There are also benefits to firms through improved health and safety and a more committed workforce, which may have led to productivity gains.

The Department of Trade and Industry has commissioned research into the impact of the Working Time Regulations. One such report was "Implementation of the Working Time Regulations: follow-up study", Fiona Neathey, July 2003. The report finds that: "In most cases the WTR were not seen as a major business issue. However, the interviews produced some evidence of working time reduction arising from the Regulations and examples were given of operational benefits including more efficient ways of working and the positive impact on worker flexibility and efficiency of reduced working hours. Where a negative impact was cited it was most commonly in relation to increased labour costs, however only one company identified substantial costs which were directly associated with the WTR." (page 9).

Workplace Discrimination

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list current UK legislation on discrimination in the workplace which resulted from *(a)* agreements reached at an EU level and *(b)* judgments of the European Court; what estimates she has made of the number of cases brought in each region of the UK under each piece of legislation in each of the last five years; how many cases were successful in each case; and what the total value of awards made in each of the last five years was for each region. [185323]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The current UK (excluding Northern Ireland) legislation on discrimination in the workplace which resulted from agreements at an EU level is as follows:

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations 2003

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Pensions) Regulations 2003

Sexual orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) (Amendment) Regulations 2003

Religion or belief

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) (Amendment) Regulations 2003

The Independent Schools (Employment of Teachers in Schools with a Religious Character) Regulations 2003

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980

Tribunals

The Employment Tribunals (Interest on Awards in Discrimination Cases) Regulations 1996

Race

The Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003

Gender

The primary gender legislation which has been affected by European Court legislation is the Equal Pay Act 1970, as amended and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended. However, a full legislative list has been provided in the following table.

Number of cases

The Employment Tribunals Service is not able to provide a regional breakdown of the number of cases brought before the tribunal and of those that were successful. Given the short length of time that the Employment Equality Regulations have been in force, the number of cases reaching an Employment Tribunal is currently very small.

Disability

The Disability regulations come into force on 1 October 2004 and as yet there are no cases to report. The following table shows the number of cases that were brought before the tribunal on the grounds of disability in the last five years.

Sexual orientation

Only one case so far has been decided upon in the Employment Tribunal under the Employment Equality Sexual Orientation Regulations. The discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation was not upheld by the tribunal.

In the period December 2003 to June 2004 there have been 83 Employment Tribunal applications registered by the Employment Tribunals Service relating to sexual orientation.

Religion or belief

To date, no cases have been decided upon in the Employment Tribunal under the Employment Equality Religion or Belief Regulations.

In the period December 2003 to June 2004 there have been 44 applications registered by the Employment Tribunals Service relating to religion or belief.

Race

The Race Regulations have now been in force for a year and there are no cases to report that have come before the Employment Tribunal. The table shows the number of cases that were brought before the tribunal on the grounds of racial discrimination in the last five years.

Sex

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 has been amended by European Court legislation. The table shows the number of cases that were brought before the tribunal on the grounds of sex discrimination in the last five years.

Equal pay

The Equal Pay Act 1970 has been amended by European Court legislation. The table below shows the number of cases that were brought before the tribunal on the grounds of discrimination arising from equal pay issues in the last five years.

The Employment Tribunals Service is unable to provide information on the total value of awards made in the last five years on a regional basis.

	Applications registered	*Number of cases disposed of at hearing*	*Number successful at hearing*
Equal pay—main jurisdiction cases			
1999–2000	2,391	110	9
2000–01	6,586	55	11
2001–02	5,314	185	149
2002–03	3,077	92	47
2003–04	3,217	77	51
Disability—main jurisdiction cases			
1999–2000	1,743	292	67
2000–01	2,100	457	105
2001–02	2,624	345	77
2002–03	2,716	408	90
2003–04	2,764	396	99
Sex—main jurisdiction cases			
1999–2000	4,926	866	233
2000–01	17,200	967	322
2001–02	10,092	838	239
2002–03	8,128	904	289
2003–04	14,284	711	265
Race—main jurisdiction cases			
1999–2000	3,246	632	170
2000–01	3,429	975	204
2001–02	3,183	722	112
2002–03	3,039	655	104
2003–04	2,830	687	115

Source:
Employment Tribunals Service

DEFENCE

Accommodation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent upgrading and building accommodation for the junior ranks of the *(a)* Army, *(b)* Royal Navy and *(c)* Royal Air Force, in each of the last three years; how much is provided in the forward programme; and if he will make a statement. [146166]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has embarked on a programme to upgrade the Services' single living accommodation. However, because the costings include whole blocks, or others areas such as non-commissioned officer accommodation or ancillary areas, it is not possible to separate out expenditure for Junior Ranks, although much of the programme involves the upgrade of this type of accommodation.

The following table shows past and planned expenditure on single living accommodation. This is the best information which can be provided without disproportionate cost and effort. It should be noted that the forecast spend in years 2004–05 and 2005–06, may be subject to change as in-year planning issues arise, and the figures represent an indicative allocation of funds.

£ million

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
RN	4	2	22	21	31
Army	41	51	19	67	64
Single Living Accommodation Modernisation (SLAM)	14	19	4	27	13
Other	7	13	72	86	92
Totals	66	85	162	316	277

The entry on 'OTHER' expenditure relates to projects delivered by the Defence Estates agency, on tri-Service projects including within the Defence Logistics Organisation, Permanent Joint Headquarters, and in Northern Ireland.

Expenditure on SLAM (the project to modernise single living accommodation for the Services) assumes some 17 per cent. to RN, 54 per cent. to Army and 26 per cent. to RAF (3 per cent. other) but these figures are indicative as the work is likely to be tackled on a 'worst first' rather than Service basis.

Cadet Forces

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provisions have been made for cadet recruitment and training by his Department. [184158]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 15 July 2004]*: The provision made for recruitment and training for the Cadet Forces can be shown by the latest budget/expenditure for all of the Cadet Forces (including CCF), which were as follows:

Recruitment and Training for Cadet Forces—2003–04

	£ million
£million	
Cadets affiliated to the Royal Air Force	21
Cadets affiliated to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines	10
Cadets affiliated to the Army	60

The Army is responsible for providing many items for use by all Cadet Forces, such as Medical Modules for use on adventure training and Cadet camps.

Civilian Deaths (Amargh)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has examined in relation to civilian deaths allegedly caused by British forces in the city of Amargh between 8 and 10 May. [179057]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 June 2004]*: Ministers were briefed on operations that occurred in al-Amarah on 8–9 May 2004, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence referred to them in his statement on 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 21.

Combat/Operational Clothing

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what criteria were used in awarding the contract for combat and operational clothing DC4BESL/1002. [184361]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 July 2004]*: Under European Union Public Procurement Regulations we may only consider factors directly relevant to the nature of the items or services to be supplied in order to apply the principles of Most Economically Advantageous Tender.

The published award criteria were Technical Compliance, Cost of Acquisition, Soft Issues (to determine partnering capability), and Delivery. This is in accordance with the Public Procurement Regulations.

Mr. Lindsay Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what experience of supplying battledresses the winner of the contract for combat and operational clothing DC4BESL/1002 has. [184362]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 July 2004]*: The selected contractor has not previously supplied Combat Soldier (CS) 95, the main combat ensemble worn by the United Kingdom Armed Forces, however, they have supplied RN Improved Action Working Dress, Anti-Flash Clothing and elements of the Armoured Fighting Vehicle ensemble over a number of years, some of which are more complex and technically difficult to manufacture than CS 95 items. This contract was let to a prime contractor who is required to supply a range of nearly 200 products, including combat clothing, barrack/workwear and sportswear and the specific combat clothing element comprises only 20 different products.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many officials from his Department visited China before awarding the contract for combat and operational clothing DC4BESL/1002. [184349]

Mr. Ingram: No officials have visited China in respect of this contract. It is not normal MOD practice to visit sub-contractors in advance of an award unless a significant risk has been identified during the assessment phase and this was not the case with this contract.

Correspondence

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he intends to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Manchester, Central dated 6 May regarding Mr. QH, reference 02245/2004. [185487]

Mr. Ingram: I wrote to the hon. Member on 19 July.

Defence Research and Development

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* defence technology centres, *(b)* defence and aerospace research partnerships and *(c)* towers of excellence have been set up; which universities are involved in each case; and what activities have taken place in each case. [182015]

Mr. Ingram: I am placing the requested information in the Library of the House.

Departmental Accountancy Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who the Finance Director of the Department is; what accountancy qualifications the Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on *(a)* the resource accounts and *(b)* other accounts of the Department in the last five years. [183428]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence's Finance and Planning Director is Trevor Woolley. Mr. Woolley was appointed following a Whitehall wide competition and took up post on 13 October 2003. He has substantial financial management experience in MOD at senior level across a range of posts within Head Office and in managing the finances of one of our largest budget areas. Although Mr. Woolley does not himself have an accountancy qualification, his staff includes a senior team of experienced accountants and other professional specialists.

The MOD's first Departmental Resource Accounts were published in 2000 and were disclaimed by the National Audit Office. Significant progress has been made since then and, although the accounts have been qualified in each year, those for 2002–03 received just one qualification.

Trading Fund organisations and non-departmental public bodies associated with the MOD also publish accounts, but these fall outside the departmental accounting boundary and the organisations' Chief Executives and Finance Directors are separately accountable for them.

Departmental Publications (Storage)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183868]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence's main storage depot for publications is in Llangennech in South Wales. This site currently holds copies of over 170,000 different forms and publications. However, many other publications are issued by, and stored at, unit level and information about these is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Iraq

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether at any point children have been detained in the Coalition-run detention centres in Umm Qasr; and if he will make a statement. [182929]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 8 July 2004]*: During decisive operations to 1 May 2003 and subsequently, UK forces have detained individuals who have been a

threat to them and a number believed to be criminals. Some of these people were detained in the facility at Umm Qasr and some were discovered to be under 18 years of age. Those internees and detainees still held by UK forces in the Umm Qasr facility were transferred to the UK Divisional Temporary Detention Facility at Shaibah on or about 15 December 2003.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1235W, on Iraq, whether hooding was a contributory factor in any harm suffered by individuals in the incident mentioned. [185973]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1235W, on Iraq, on what basis military commanders concluded that hooding detainees could be harmful. [185974]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1235W, on Iraq, whether military commanders concluded following the incident concerned that the potentially harmful effects of hooding could be fatal. [185975]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Lloyd Inquiry

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has given his Department's employees permission to give evidence to the inquiry into Gulf war illness being held under the chairmanship of Lord Lloyd of Berwick. [184822]

Mr. Caplin: I wrote to Lord Lloyd of Berwick on 12 July 2004 and explained that it would not be appropriate for Ministers, officials or serving military personnel to attend his investigation. However, in the interests of openness, I intend to provide Lord Lloyd with a pack of all appropriate documents by the end of July.

Major Ian Hill

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 15 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 822W, on Major Ian Hill, if he is now in a position to give his assessment of the findings of the Cheshire Coroner regarding the death of Major Ian Hill. [185161]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: The Ministry of Defence has completed its assessment of the findings of the Cheshire Coroner in the inquest of Edward Ian Hill and has noted the observations, comments and findings.

Nimrod

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Nimrod MR4A aircraft are required to provide the same operational capability as the current Nimrod fleet. [186067]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Nuclear Submarines

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to use *(a)* private finance initiative and *(b)* public private partnership mechanisms to decommission nuclear submarines. [184663]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans to use either the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) or Public Private Partnership (PPP) to defuel and decommission nuclear powered submarines when they leave operational service. Since 1990 this work has been contracted out to Devonport Management Limited in Plymouth. As part of this process, the submarine's reactor is defuelled at the earliest practicable opportunity and the fuel—High Level Waste (HLW)—is removed for long term storage at British Nuclear Fuels plc at Sellafield.

We are undertaking Project ISOLUS, to determine storage arrangements for the Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) from the decommissioned submarines, pending a decision on a national waste management solution, and are currently considering industry outline proposals. PFI, partnering and prime contracting are the procurement options being considered. PFI will only be pursued if it can be demonstrated that it offers the most effective procurement strategy.

Prisons (Iraq)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female prison officers are employed in the running of British military and civilian prisons in Iraq; how many have been prison officers employed in prisons in the UK; and if he will make a statement; [177244]

(2) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women prison officers employed in British-run military/civilian prisons in Iraq have been removed from their role as prison officers because of concern as to their suitability to be a prison officer; and if he will make a statement. [184119]

Mr. Ingram: There are no British military or civilian prisons in Iraq, and no prison officers are employed. As at 21 July 2004, around 65 personnel are based at the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility (DTDF) at Shaibah. This is the only British detention facility in Iraq. All custody officers are currently male, although one female custody officer was employed previously. None is known to have been removed from duty.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisers. [185465]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Boateng) on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 190W.

Staffordshire Regiment

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the Staffordshire Regiment. [185603]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Claiming Asylum Leaflet (Welsh Version)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he made of the demand for a version of the Community Legal Services leaflet Claiming Asylum to be printed in Welsh, before the leaflet was printed. [185938]

Mr. Lammy: Section 5(1)*(a)* of the Welsh Language Act 1993 provides that English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales. In accordance with these obligations, the Legal Services Commission has produced the 'Claiming Asylum' leaflet in Welsh and all the Community Legal Service (CLS) Direct leaflets will be available in Welsh by autumn 2004.

Community Legal Service

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) which legal suppliers have over-billed for services provided on behalf of the Community Legal Service in each year since 1997; and what the total cost was of over-billing in each year; [185647]

(2) how many of those legal suppliers that over-billed for services provided on behalf of the Community Legal Service had their contracts terminated in each year since 1997; and on what date each termination took place. [185648]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission (LSC) monitors whether costs claimed by suppliers are reasonable, either by individual bill submitted (for civil representation) or by auditing a sample of files (for controlled work under an LSC contract). At some stage, virtually all suppliers in receipt of public funding will have had their bills reduced, either by the LSC or by the court through its assessment process.

The LSC does not record costs in a way which enables them to identify the total cost for over-toiling in each year. Neither does it distinguish between those firms that have stopped doing work because the LSC has actively terminated contracts, and those firms that have withdrawn voluntarily. The LSC may terminate contracts for a range of reasons including over-toiling.

The LSC carries out cost compliance audits on all firms who are contracted with them to measure whether the suppliers are claiming correctly on their files. This is an objective audit where LSC compares what is claimed by the suppliers against what is actually evidenced in those files. Where a supplier is confirmed as 'category 3'—the lowest rating under the LSC's cost assessment audit—the Commission recovers the amounts claimed from the supplier. In 2003–04, the LSC recovered in excess of £7 million from 711 suppliers as a result of these audits.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what issues will be covered by the recorded message relating to education on the new Community Legal Service Direct advice line. [185260]

Mr. Leslie: Issues covered by recorded messages on the Community Legal Service (CLS) Direct advice line relating to education are as follows: parents rights relating to school exclusion, advice for parents unable to obtain a place for their child at their preferred school, rights and responsibilities of a parent whose child is truanting and advice for students facing difficulties with their university.

The Legal Services Commission plans to introduce further messages as other commonly experienced education-related problems are determined. Further topics are covered in leaflet number 20 of the CLS Direct Leaflet Series, entitled "Education: Parents' and Children's Rights at School." The leaflet is widely available in hard copy and also through the CLS Direct website.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* visitors to the Community Legal Services website and *(b)* callers to the Community Legal Services direct telephone line were received each day in the last month for which figures are available; and how many (i) website visits and (ii) calls he expects in the next year. [185261]

Mr. Lammy: The website of the Community Legal Service (CLS) was known as 'JustAsk!' prior to 14 July 2004, and 'CLS Direct' from this date. Figures for daily visits to the website, in June, are detailed in table 1.

The Community Legal Service Direct telephone line was launched on 14 July 2004 (although the line had been operational from 2 July 2004). Figures for calls to CLS Direct, in July, are detailed in table 2.

The increased publicity generated by the launch of CLS Direct is expected to increase significantly visits to the website and phone calls made. No precise estimates of total calls, or website visits, next year can yet be made.

Table 1: Legal Services Commission breakdown of visitors to the 'Just Ask!' website

	Visits	
Date	*Number*	*Percentage of monthly total*
June 2004		
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	2,271	5.14
4	2,404	5.44
5	1,492	3.38
6	1,429	3.24
7	2,907	6.58
8	2,836	6.42
9	3,073	6.96

Table 1: Legal Services Commission breakdown of visitors to the 'Just Ask!' website

Date	Visits	
	Number	Percentage of monthly total
10	2,839	6.43
11	100	0.23
12	1,346	3.05
13	1,449	3.28
14	66	0.15
15	2	0.00
16	5	0.01
17	9	0.02
18	9	0.02
19	0	0.00
20	0	0.00
21	3	0.01
22	2,613	5.92
23	2,866	6.49
24	2,728	6.18
25	2,501	5.66
26	1,558	3.53
27	926	2.10
28	2,774	6.28
29	3,010	6.82
30	2,940	6.66
Total	44,156	100.00

Note:
The server was down for periods of time while essential work was being carried out in preparation for the launch of CIS Direct. A substantial number of visitors to the website are likely not to have been captured during this time. Average monthly website visits number around 60,000. Figures for July will be available in August 2004.

Table 2: Calls to Community Legal Service Direct

Date	Number of calls
July 2004	
2	140
3	1
5	218
6	169
7	144
8	117
9	136
10	2
11	1
12	204
13	167
14	158
15	175
16	222
17	6
18	1
19	178
20	212
21	218

Departmental Publicity

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent by his Department on *(a)* advertising and *(b)* public relations consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the last year for which figures are available. [185824]

Mr. Lammy: In 2003–04 the Department for Constitutional Affairs did not spend anything on advertising and public relations consultants. Figures for 1996–97 are not available since my Department only came into existence on 12 June 2003.

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186084]

Mr. Lammy: In the Department for Constitutional Affairs including its agencies, (i) at present all staff at Span 3 (formerly AO) and below have a normal retirement age of 65. Staff at Spans 4 and 5 (formerly EO) normally retire at age 62. Staff may stay on under the "short service concession" rule, that is if they have not completed 20 years reckonable service. The normal retirement age for all other staff is 60, although even then all staff may stay on beyond 60 if there are sound business reasons. The DCA board has recently agreed that the normal retirement age should be increased to 65 for all staff with effect from 1 April 2005, subject to consultation with the departmental trade unions. (ii) There is no set maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered. Business managers compare the cost and time of training a new entrant against the length of service available.

Ineffective Trials

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much has been spent on ineffective trials in *(a)* magistrates courts and *(b)* Crown courts in each year since 1997; and for what main reasons trials prove to be ineffective. [185374]

Mr. Leslie *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* It is not possible to provide information in the form requested. The costs of an ineffective trial separately accrue to a number of agencies (the CPS, the police, the court, defence solicitors).

However, the Crown court over the last year has cut the Ineffective Trial Performance from 23.5 per cent. to 17.3 per cent. and the magistrates court Ineffective Trial Performance has reduced from 29.5 per cent. to 26.9 per cent.

There are 15 different categories recorded for a case being ineffective in the Crown court and 13 in the magistrates court.

The most used categories have remained the same since 1997, although the order and number fluctuates. The reasons below were taken from the most recent data set (rolling quarter ending May 2004) and have been listed in numerical order (highest first).

Crown

Prosecution witness fails to attend

Defendant failed to attend—Bench Warrant Issued

Defendant not ready for trial—Further preparation needed

Prosecution not ready for trial

Defendant ill—trial stood out (did not proceed)

Floater/backer not reached (the trial fails to go ahead on the day, a substitute trial may be available replace it)

Magistrates

Prosecution witness absent

Defendant absent—Did not attend

Other

Lack of court/magistrate availability

Defence not ready

Prosecution witness absent (police officer)

Judicial Appointments Commission

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the qualifications for serving on the Judicial Appointments Commission will be. [185883]

Mr. Leslie: Schedule 12 of the Constitutional Reform Bill provides that the Commission will consist of a lay chairman, five further lay members, five judicial members, two professional members (a barrister and a solicitor), a tribunal member and a lay justice.

Of the Commissioners appointed as judicial members, one must be a Lord Justice of Appeal; one a High Court judge; one either a Lord Justice of Appeal or a High Court judge; one a circuit judge and one a district judge.

Of the others: the professional members must be a practising barrister and a practising solicitor; the lay members must never have held a listed judicial office or been a practising lawyer; the tribunal member must be the holder of an office listed in Part 3 of Schedule 14 of the Bill; and the lay justice must be a justice of the peace.

None of the members may be a member of either the House of Lords or the House of Commons, or a civil servant.

Legal Services Commission

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what money is owed to the Legal Services Commission; and what the reasons are for the Commission not having collected this debt. [185046]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission (LSC) had debts due to it at the end of the financial year 2003–04 of £262 million. Much of this debt (around 72 per cent.) is secured by the registration of a statutory charge against property and is not, generally, immediately collectable. The LSC allows the funded client to postpone the operation of the charge, subject to certain conditions, and the debt is not repayable until the property is sold or upon the death of the client.

Cases relating to the statutory charge have since 1988 attached interest. The rate of interest is linked to the Bank of England base rate and currently stands at 5 per cent. simple interest. £50 million of the gross debt due to the Commission relates to interest.

Other debts due to the LSC are normally immediately repayable and are pursued by a dedicated debt recovery team. In 2003–04, the LSC successfully recovered £28 million worth of debt. Some of these debts may be owed by funded clients (e.g. unpaid contributions towards funding legal aid) and are difficult to recover given the limited financial circumstances of the clients.

November 9th Society

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will raise with the Electoral Commission the plans of the November 9th Society to use the election freepost to distribute its material; and if he will make a statement. [186292]

Mr. Leslie: Any candidate at a parliamentary election, and any individual candidate or registered political party at a European parliamentary election has a statutory right to send election material to electors in the constituency or region in which they are standing. Any material must relate solely to that election and must also comply with the general law (for instance, the Malicious Communications Act, the Public Order Acts and Postal Services Act).

I understand that an organisation calling itself the November 9th Society has applied to the Electoral Commission for registration as a political party and that this is under consideration.

Partnership Initiative Budget

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list the current projects that receives funding from the Partnership Initiative Budget. [185645]

Mr. Lammy: Since its implementation in 2001, there have been two rounds of the Partnership Initiative Budget (PIB), each with a different focus, funding a total of 143 projects. Currently there are 136 projects receiving funding, 66 from round one and 70 from round two. A list of current projects with references to their lead organisation and region has been placed in the libraries of both Houses.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what factors are taken into consideration when deciding how funding is allocated to projects from the Partnership Initiative Fund. [185646]

Mr. Lammy: The Partnership Initiative Budget aims to provide flexible funding within the Community Legal Service Partnership (CLSP) framework to support initiatives which will have a direct impact on individuals' access to advice and information in priority categories of law, as identified locally.

In order to receive funding project bids had to meet certain criteria. They had to: further a local/regional strategy for provision of legal advice services; be either local (involving a single CLSP, or part thereof) or regional (involving more than one CLSP); relate to priority need identified in a specific CLSP needs assessment or strategic plan; relate to priority areas identified by either (i) all CLSPs covered or (ii) if covering a Legal Services Commission (LSC region, the relevant Regional Legal Services Committee; encourage partnership working particularly between previously distinct advice providers or organisations; link with other public initiatives or add value to existing schemes or provision; either hold the LSC Quality Mark (QM) or be capable of gaining the QM within a year of the project being awarded funding; have a minimum of 25 per cent. match funding (cash and in kind—excluding

unpaid staff time); ensure that a significant number of those who will ultimately benefit from a project should be financially eligible; provide value for money; be for a maximum of three years worth of funding; normally be for running costs; have an exit strategy; and demonstrate a commitment to Equal Opportunities.

Postal Ballots

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people have been registered for a permanent postal vote in each constituency in the UK in each of the last three years. [185644]

Mr. Leslie: This information is not collected centrally. Individual Electoral Registration Officers may keep historical records of the number of postal voters in their registration area, though separate records are not kept of long-term postal voters and those for one election only. It is possible to apply for a postal vote at any time, and figures are not maintained on a yearly basis. Available statistics show that at the 2001 general election, 1,758,055 postal votes were issued in total (3.9 per cent. of the electorate) compared to 937,205 (2.1 per cent. of the electorate) at the 1997 general election.

Press Officers

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much his Department spent on press officers, broken down by grade, in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available. [185823]

Mr. Lammy: I shall reply to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Public Records

Lynne Jones: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many files that have passed the normal 30-year closure period laid down by the Public Record Act 1958 have not been published. [184358]

Mr. Leslie: 121,923 files more than 30-years-old have been identified by the National Archives as being either closed or retained by Departments. 97,446 of these files are closed, the majority of them in order to protect personally sensitive information.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183844]

Mr. Lammy: Since 12 June 2003, when the Department for Constitutional Affairs came into existence, until end March 2004 salary costs to my Department for employing public relations (all press officers) and publicity staff was £736,626.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Asia and Europe Meeting

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response he has made to the decision by the EU to cancel forthcoming Asia and Europe Meeting (ASEM) meetings due to the proposed participation of the Burmese regime. [185550]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary agreed with EU colleagues that the two ASEM meetings which were due to be held in July and in September would have to be postponed, as the EU could not participate without the 10 new EU member states, who are not yet members of ASEM.

The 10 new EU member states have applied to join ASEM at the Hanoi Summit in October, along with Cambodia, Laos and Burma. The Foreign Secretary and EU colleagues recently endorsed the appointment of Mr. Hans van den Broek as Special Envoy of the Presidency, to consult ASEM partners on an acceptable and feasible solution to handling Burma in the context of ASEM enlargement.

Burma

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received concerning the ongoing State Peace and Development (SPDC) offensives in Karen and Karenni states in recent weeks; and if he will now make urgent representations to the SPDC regime in Burma concerning those offensives. [185571]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We welcome the oral ceasefire agreement between the SPDC and the Karen National Union (KNU) and hope that this will lead to a lasting peace settlement. But we remain concerned that offensives continue.

We regularly raise our concerns on human rights in Burma with the Burmese regime including the suffering of ethnic groups such as the Karen and Karenni, most recently when I met the Burmese ambassador on 1 June.

Human rights violations have been highlighted by successive highly critical UK and EU co-sponsored UN Resolutions, most recently at the UN Commission on Human Rights on 21 April. This referred to the violations of human rights suffered in particular by persons belonging to ethnic minorities, women and children, especially in non-ceasefire areas and the situation of the large number of internally displaced persons as well as the flow of refugees to neighbouring countries. It emphasised the obligations of Burma under international law to pursue through dialogue and peaceful means the immediate suspension and permanent end of conflict with all ethnic groups in the country and to conclude a ceasefire agreement with the KNU.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will strengthen sanctions against the Burmese regime. [185597]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Our policy remains as set out in the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock) on 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1357W.

Cameroon

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement about the arrest of BBC staff by the Cameroon authorities. [185668]

Mr. Mullin: Two BBC journalists were arrested in the Bakassi peninsula earlier this month. One was South African, the other Cameroonian. At the request of the BBC, the British High Commission in Yaounde made enquiries of the Cameroonian authorities on 12 July. The Cameroonian authorities had given the journalists permission to travel in Cameroon, but it was unclear whether their permits included the Bakassi peninsula. Partly as a result of our intervention, both journalists were released on 16 July.

Chagos Islands

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 24 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1528W, whether persons detained by the US armed forces arriving in the Chagos islands require entry permits. [185658]

Mr. Rammell: The United States authorities have repeatedly assured us that no detainees have at any time passed in transit through Diego Garcia or its territorial waters, or have disembarked there. The Government are satisfied that these assurances are correct. The issue of entry permits for detainees arriving in the Chagos islands does not therefore arise.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what changes there have been in the commitment by the UK Government to the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo in *(a)* monetary terms, *(b)* assistance in kind and *(c)* manpower under UN Security Council Resolution 1493 compared to UN Security Council Resolution 1279; what changes have taken place since 28 July 2003; and if he will make a statement. [185680]

Mr. Rammell: UK assistance to the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) has increased since UN Security Council Resolution 1279 of November 1999, as exigencies have dictated. Figures for 1999 are not readily available, but available figures from 2001 to UN Security Council Resolution 1493 of July 2003 show that UK commitment to MONUC has:

In monetary terms, increased from £10.7 million in 2001–02 to £18.5 million in 2002–03. In the period after Resolution 1493, i.e. in 2003–04, the UK's monetary contribution amounted to £33.8 million. It is expected to total approximately 28.7 million in 2004–05. These figures are for the UK's assessed contribution to MONUC through the UN only.

In addition to the UK's assessed contribution to MONUC through the UN, the UK also gives additional and voluntary assistance to MONUC's peacekeeping activities. In 2001–02, the UK contributed £588,000 in additional assistance to MONUC, and £669,000 in 2002–03. In the period after Resolution 1493, i.e. in 2003–04, the UK contributed £1.8 million (including £1.1 million to an EU peace support operation). The UK will likely contribute an additional £1 million to the peacekeeping effort in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2004–05.

In terms of manpower, the UK had six officers in MONUC from 2000 to 2003, now reduced to five. The UK currently has five troops serving with MONUC. The UK also contributed a Royal Engineer squadron and two aircraft to the EU peace support operation to DRC (an interim measure lasting from June-September 2003). Also as part of the EU operation, the UK deployed staff to assist in the operation's headquarters in Paris and Entebbe. In total, the UK contributed 120 staff to the operation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many personnel are authorised to be deployed with the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo under UN Security Council Resolution 1493; how many are deployed; and if he will make a statement. [185681]

Mr. Rammell: UN Security Council Resolution 1493 (2003), of 28 July 2003, authorised an increase of the military strength of the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) to 10,800 personnel. As of 31 May 2004 (the most up-to-date figures available), MONUC's military strength stood at 10,715 uniformed personnel.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals *(a)* he, *(b)* members of his Department and *(c)* other members and representatives of the UK Government have made for a UN Security Council Resolution (i) to extend and (ii) to modify the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo; when he expects such a resolution to be passed; and if he will make a statement. [185682]

Mr. Mullin: We are in regular discussion with the Secretariat of the United Nations about the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC). We await the UN Secretary-General's report and recommendations for the future of MONUC, due on 15 August. We will consider these carefully. We expect a Security Council resolution on MONUC to be passed before the end of September.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has *(a)* sought and *(b)* had with (i) his EU member state counterparts, (ii) EU officials, (iii) his US counterpart, (iv) his African Union member state counterparts, (v) UN officials, (vi) other Foreign Ministers and (vii) members of non-governmental organisations concerning the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo; what suggestions for change of the mandate were put forward during these meetings; and if he will make a statement. [185684]

Mr. Mullin: I discussed ways to improve the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo's (MONUC) effectiveness with African leaders and other members of the international community at the African Union Summit on 6 July and also during my visits to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda in June. UK officials have also discussed this with EU

partners, US and UN officials. We have received recommendations from NGOs on modifying MONUC's mandate. Possible options include increased troop numbers and a clarification of MONUC's mandate under Chapter VII. We await the Secretary-General's report and recommendations for the future of MONUC, due on 15 August. We will consider these carefully.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs who the five main contributors to the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo are in terms of *(a)* military observers, *(b)* military contingent, *(c)* monetary contribution and *(d)* contribution in kind; and if he will make a statement. [185685]

Mr. Rammell: The five main contributors of Military Observers to the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), as of 31 May 2004 are:

Country	*Numbers contributed*
India	33
Kenya and Nigeria	[1]28
Romania, Russia, Tunisia, Uruguay and Mali	[1]27
Pakistan	26
Malawi	24

[1] Per country.

The five main contributors to the MONUC military contingent, as of 31 May 2004 are:

Country	*Numbers contributed*
Uruguay	1,800
Bangladesh	1,309
South Africa	1,269
Nepal	1,226
Pakistan	1,066

The five main monetary contributors to MONUC, based on the UN's scale of assessment for July 2004 are:

Country	*Percentage of costs contributed*
USA	26.7
Japan	19.5
Germany	8.6
UK	7.4
France	7.3

The information as to amounts of contribution in kind is not readily available. But the main five contributors of civilian police to MONUC, as of 31 May 2004 are:

Country	*Numbers contributed*
Niger	19
Turkey	13
Benin	12
Cote d'Ivoire, France and Serbia and Montenegro	[1]11
Burkina Faso and Mali	[1]10

[1] Per country.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made concerning the impact of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo on the security situation for civilians in *(a)* the Democratic Republic of Congo and *(b)* the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo; and if he will make a statement. [185686]

Mr. Rammell: The United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) has contributed significantly to an improved security situation throughout the country, including in the east, where it has increased its presence. But there is still work needed to further improve humanitarian agencies' access to vulnerable populations and to help secure the safe return of internally displaced persons (IDPs). MONUC is also working with international donors to establish a functioning police and judicial system.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the impact of and *(b)* which parties are participating in resource exploitation and smuggling to support the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo; and if he will make a statement. [185692]

Mr. Mullin: Resource exploitation has been a significant contributing factor to conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The UN Expert Panel reports on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in the DRC, published in 2002 and 2003, provided information linking exploitation and conflict, and named several countries and companies alleged to be involved.

The UK supports initiatives to combat illegal resource extraction such as the Kimberley process and supports international efforts to help the Transitional National Government in the DRC rebuild its capacity to manage its natural resources in an efficient and transparent manner.

EU/US Summit

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what matters in respect of joint work on the clean up and disposition of surplus military nuclear materials in the former Soviet Union countries were discussed at the EU-US summit in Ireland on 26 June. [185516]

Mr. Rammell: These matters were not discussed at the EU-US Summit in Ireland.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185129]

Mr. Rammell: As the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) Green Minister, during the financial year 2003–04 I participated fully in the cabinet committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G)) and in the Sustainable Development Task Force which first met in May 2003.

I have encouraged implementation in the FCO of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate, including agreeing waste, procurement, and renewable energy and energy

efficiency targets. In August 2003 I inaugurated our contract with 'Greenworks', responsible for re-using and re-cycling the FCO's surplus furniture. The media were invited to attend the event to publicise the inauguration and the wider sustainability agenda. I agreed the FCO contribution to the Government response to the Environmental Audit Committee report 'Greening Government 2003', providing information on our progress towards integrating sustainable development into our policy-making, and the performance of our UK estate.

I also agreed the FCO contribution to the Government response to the House of Commons Audit Committee (EAC) October 2003 report 'World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002—from Rhetoric to Reality' on our progress towards meeting the commitments made at WSSD.

I am actively involved in the review of the 1999 UK Sustainable Development Strategy 'A better quality of life' and took part in the launch of the consultation on the new strategy earlier this year. The FCO is working with Defra, DFID and DTI to ensure that international issues are integrated into the new UK Sustainable Development Strategy.

I have also been working closely on the drafting of the FCO Sustainable Development Strategy, which we aim to launch later this year.

International Atomic Energy Agency

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he asked the International Atomic Energy Agency to share with the United Kingdom the primary source documentation it holds on Iraq's interest in procuring uranium from Niger. [184385]

Mr. Rammell: No. Copies of the documentation were made available to the UK at the time that they were passed to the International Atomic Energy Agency in February 2003.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what instructions and guidance have been given to members of the armed forces and other United Kingdom personnel and contractors in Iraq as to the obligations imposed by *(a)* the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and *(b)* the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and if he will make a statement. [183941]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: The UK armed forces are fully aware of their obligations under international law. They are given thorough mandatory training, which includes specific guidance on handling prisoners of war. All personnel must attend refresher training every year. Other UK personnel going to Iraq who are likely to be involved in activities that require an understanding of these international obligations are also given appropriate guidance.

UK staff seconded from HM Prison Service are deployed to Iraq solely to act as monitors and mentors within civil prisons run by the Iraqi Correctional Service, where all prisoners are held on remand or following conviction of criminal charges in civil courts. All HM Prison Service staff receive in-depth training on their roles and responsibilities and act at all times in accordance with international statutes and conventions.

There are no contractors employed by the UK in Iraq who have duties in detention facilities or who are involved in activities that may require an understanding of these international obligations.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps have been taken since the occupation of Iraq to ensure that *(a)* members of the armed forces and other United Kingdom personnel and persons employed by contractors there comply with international human rights and humanitarian law, *(b)* there are effective safeguards and sanctions against abuse by contractors and *(c)* there are effective remedies for any victims of such abuse. [183942]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to him today (UIN 183941).

UK armed forces personnel are subject to UK law as they would be in the UK. As in the UK or in other operational theatres, the responsibility for enforcing the law lies with the Royal Military Police. Anyone found to have broken the law is dealt with appropriately, but of course it is important to establish the facts first. This is what we are now doing with regard to allegations against UK military personnel in Iraq.

The Coalition Provisional Authority put in place a number of regulations that apply to foreign contractors in Iraq. These regulations are set out in CPA Order 17 and CPA Memorandum 17, which can be found on the CPA website at www.cpa-iraq.org.

Any claims arising from actions attributable to UK military personnel will be considered against UK national law.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the security contractors his Department uses for operations in Iraq about them *(a)* being subject to Iraqi law and *(b)* being recipients of immunities subsequent to the transfer of sovereignty; and if he will make a statement. [184712]

Mr. Rammell: The only security contractors that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office uses in Iraq are those involved in protecting the premises and staff of our missions there. The staff provided by those contractors are accredited to our embassy in Baghdad and our embassy offices in Basra and Kirkuk and thus benefit from diplomatic status and immunities.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether the signals intelligence from GCHQ concerning a visit by an Iraqi official to Niger, referred to in Paragraph 89 of Cm 5972, relates to the UK Government claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa; [185176]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 19 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1085W, and 30 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 581W, on Iraq, whether the source upon which it based its claim in the September 2002 dossier, that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa, is the same information that it understands was discussed with the International Atomic Energy Authority before 7 March 2003; [185220]

(3) pursuant to the answer of 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1638–39W, on Iraq, between what dates the September 2002 source upon which the Government based its claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa indicated that the attempted procurement took place; [185221]

(4) pursuant to the answer of 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1639W, on Iraq, whether the documentary evidence reported in June 2002, referred to in Paragraph 89 of the Intelligence and Security Committee Report, Cm 5972, upon which the Government did not rely to back up its claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa, was found to be *(a)* forged and *(b)* the same as any of the documents described as forged by the International Atomic Energy Agency on 7 March 2003; [185222]

(5) pursuant to the answer of 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1639W, on Iraq, whether the Government have established the origin and history of the documents referred to as still under consideration in Paragraph 4 of the Further Supplementary Memorandum from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Iraqi Attempts to Procure Uranium, of July 2003, Written Evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee, Ninth Report, HC 813-II; [185223]

(6) pursuant to the answer of 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 774W and 6 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1733W, on Iraq, what form the second intelligence source reported in September 2002 took; [185226]

(7) pursuant to the answer of 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1733–34W, on Iraq, whether his reference to the intelligence that the Government understand was discussed with the International Atomic Energy Authority is to the second source referred to in paragraph 93 of the Intelligence and Security Committee's report, Iraq Weapons of Mass Destruction. [185227]

Mr. Straw: I have nothing further to add. However, my hon. Friend will be aware that Lord Butler's Inquiry reviewed the intelligence relating to this matter in detail and concluded at paragraph 503 that:

"From our examination of the intelligence and other material on Iraqi attempts to buy uranium from Africa, we have concluded that:

a. It is accepted by all parties that Iraqi officials visited Niger in 1999.

b. The British Government had intelligence from several different sources indicating that this visit was for the purpose of acquiring uranium. Since uranium constitutes almost three-quarters of Niger's exports, the intelligence was credible.

c. The evidence was not conclusive that Iraq actually purchased, as opposed to having sought, uranium and the British Government did not claim this.

d. The forged documents were not available to the British Government at the time its assessment was made, and so the fact of the forgery does not undermine it."

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the source was of the intelligence received by the United Kingdom in 2002 in respect of alleged attempts by Iraq to purchase uranium from Niger to which reference is made at paragraph 495 of the Butler Committee report on intelligence on weapons of mass destruction. [185189]

Mr. Straw: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Selly Oak (Lynne Jones) today in response to series of questions on the issue of this intelligence (UINs 185176, 185220, 185221, 185222, 185223, 185226, 185227).

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department was the source of the statement at paragraph 501 of the Butler Committee Report on intelligence on weapons of mass destruction in respect of the date on which the British Government first learned of the United States' and other states' receipt of documents alleging Iraqi attempts to secure uranium from Niger. [185190]

Mr. Rammell: The Butler Review carried out its work independently of the Government. It would not be appropriate therefore for the Government to comment on who gave what evidence to the Review. However, the hon. Member may wish to consult the report of the Intelligence and Security Committee on Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction—Intelligence and Assessments, paras 87–93 which also deals with this issue.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which members of the security services briefed the Leader of the Opposition prior to the vote in the House on 18 March regarding the invasion of Iraq. [185224]

Mr. Straw: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave to the right hon. Member for Chingford and Wood Green (Mr. Duncan Smith) in the House on 9 July 2003, *Official Report*, column 1151.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 8 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 846W, on Iraq, whether Iraq's oil production was metered during Coalition Provision Authority rule; and how much oil was produced by Iraq during the Coalition's tenure. [185499]

Mr. Rammell: When the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) took office there were no functioning meters in the Iraqi oil system. The CPA oil team had been pressing for meters to be installed as a matter of urgency, but as of 28 June—when the CPA dissolved—the issue remained outstanding. However oil exports, either by pipeline to Ceyhan in Turkey or by tanker through the Arabian Gulf, were metered as they passed into the receiving tanks.

Oil production during the CPA's tenure for each month from June 2003 to April 2004 is shown in table 1. Weekly data from May to the beginning of July 2004 is shown in table 2.

Table 1: Iraq—average daily crude oil production

	Barrels per day (million)
2003	
June	0.453
July	0.573
August	1.053
September	1.403
October	1.753
November	1.853
December	1.952
2004	
January	2.103
February	2.003
March	2.203
April	2.303

Table 2: Iraq—average daily crude oil production

	Barrels per day (million)
2004	
30 April to 6 May	2.4
7–13 May	1.9
14–20 May	1.8
21–27 May	2.25
28 May to 3 June	2.4
4–10 June	2.3
11–17 June	2.1
18–24 June	1.15
25 June to 1 July	1.3

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether members of his departmental staff were informed in July 2003 that the Secret Intelligence Service in that month had withdrawn reporting from a source who claimed that the production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable. [185786]

Mr. Straw: We have nothing further to add to the remarks that were made in last Tuesday's debate on Iraq.

Kashmir

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to *(a)* the Indian Government and *(b)* the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir concerning the decision to expel Mr. Jim Borst from Kashmir. [184989]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We believe Father Jim Borst is a Dutch citizen. It would be therefore for the Dutch authorities to act. We have alerted the Netherlands embassy in New Delhi, which is looking into his case.

Kenya

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library evidence provided by Her Majesty's High Commissioner in Kenya to the Kenyan Government in support of his speech to Kenyan businessmen; and which company it was whose name was omitted from published versions of his remarks. [185477]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: We are responding to requests for information from the competent Kenyan authorities. They have asked us not to divulge details in order to avoid prejudicing ongoing anti-corruption investigations.

No company names were omitted from the published version of the High Commissioner's speech.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement about the current state of relations with Kenya. [185667]

Mr. Mullin: The UK currently enjoys excellent bilateral relations with Kenya.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Department's assessment of the level of corruption within the Kenyan Government is. [185839]

Mr. Mullin: In its 2003 report, Transparency International judged Kenya to be the eleventh most corrupt country globally. There are certainly frequent allegations of unsatisfactory tendering and contracting procedures in which senior members of the Kenyan Government are allegedly involved. We have been pressing strongly for these to be fully investigated and firm action taken against any individual shown to have been involved in any corrupt practice. The British Government are co-operating fully with investigations.

Maldives

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has received concerning the first sitting on 19 July of the special Majlis in the Republic of Maldives; and if he will make a statement. [185800]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We welcome the start of the Special Majlis and the opportunity this provides for the people of the Maldives and their elected representatives to consider constitutional reform. We welcome the proposals made in President Gayoom's speech of 9 June and his commitment to a free and transparent debate. The opening session was temporarily suspended after disagreement on the voting procedure for a speaker. We look to all concerned to resolve this matter as soon as possible to allow the session to begin. We will continue to follow events in the Maldives closely.

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the situation in the Maldives. [185827]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We welcomed President Gayoom's speech of 9 June, which proposed wide ranging constitutional reforms to develop and strengthen democracy in the Maldives, including the right to establish political parties, the full separation of powers, establishing the office of Prime Minister and limiting the terms of President. We welcome President Gayoom's commitment to free and open debate, and look to the Maldivian authorities to ensure this. The Special Majlis on constitutional reform will be key. We will continue to follow events in the Maldives closely.

Middle East

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions his Department has had with other Middle East partners and states concerning stability in the region. [185278]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer of 21 July 2004]*: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has in the last three months spoken to the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, the Palestinian Authority and Israel, as well as EU counterparts and the US Secretary of State.

My noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean has recently visited Syria (8–9 June) and Israel (28–30 June). Regional issues were discussed during both of these visits.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning the crushing to death of Ibrahim Mahmoud Khalafallah during the demolition of homes in Gaza. [185443]

Mr. Rammell: The demolition of homes is a form of collective punishment and harms innocent civilians. It fuels anger among Palestinians and makes a peaceful settlement more difficult to achieve. We continue to raise our concerns with the Government of Israel about such actions. We recognise Israel's right to defend itself against terrorism, but it must act within the parameters of international law.

We have not made specific representations to the Government of Israel concerning the death of Ibrahim Mahmoud Khalafallah.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning the targeting of British hon. Members and Peers by soldiers of the Israeli Defence Force in June; and if he will make a statement. [185446]

Mr. Rammell: We have raised our concerns with the Israeli Government and the Israeli ambassador about the shots that were reportedly fired at a group of British Parliamentarians during their visit to Rafah on 18 June. We have asked the Israelis for an explanation.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to his colleagues in the Quartet concerning Israel's retention of settlements in the West Bank following the withdrawal from Gaza. [185447]

Mr. Rammell: The UK is represented in the Quartet (UN, US, EU, Russia) through the EU. We, EU partners and other Quartet members have made clear that Prime Minister Sharon's plan to withdraw from Gaza and part of the West Bank would provide a rare moment of opportunity in the search for peace in the Middle East. At the same time they have said that all final settlement issues, including borders, are to be decided through negotiations between the parties. The UK fully supports this position.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning freedom of movement of Palestinians in and out of the Gaza Strip after the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. [185448]

Mr. Rammell: As the Quartet (UN, US, Russia, EU) set out on 4 May, securing freedom of movement for the Palestinian population will be an important element in ensuring that withdrawals bring about an improved quality of life for the Palestinian people. The World Bank report of 24 June also cited improved freedom of movement as essential to development of the Palestinian economy.

We have discussed withdrawal and its implications with the parties and will continue to do so. My noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean discussed withdrawal with several Israeli Ministers during her visit to the region on 28 to 30 June, and made clear the importance of maximum freedom of movement for Palestinians following Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Israeli Government concerning the route of the security barrier. [185492]

Mr. Rammell: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said in the House on 13 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1240–41, he and my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean have discussed the issue of the barrier with Israeli Ministers on many occasions. We have consistently made it clear to the Israeli Government that the barrier built on occupied territory is illegal. Most recently the Foreign Secretary discussed the issue of the barrier and the ICJ ruling with Israeli Foreign Minister Shalom on 15 July.

Parliamentary Questions

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to reply substantively to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Tiverton and Honiton, ref 182518. [185976]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. MacShane) replied substantively on 14 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1187W.

Policies (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185101]

Mr. Rammell: In considering new policy proposals we take into account all relevant factors including the environmental impact where appropriate.

Business cases, design studies and specifications for major estate developments and contracts include an assessment of environmental impact and measures to achieve good environmental performance.

The information requested on the total number of new policy proposals and significant changes in policy proposals for the years in question is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Rwanda

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Rwandan Government concerning the parliamentary commission in Rwanda requesting the dissolution of four civil society human rights organisations. [185442]

Mr. Mullin: We are concerned by the content and methodology of the Parliamentary Commission's report on Genocidal Ideology. We have registered our concerns with the Rwandan Government. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn) raised this with the Rwandan ambassador on 5 July. Our Ambassador to Rwanda also discussed this report with the Minister for Good Governance on 16 July. We will continue to encourage Rwanda to open up space for the operation of civil society.

Seal Culls

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to *(a)* his Canadian counterpart and *(b)* the Canadian Government in respect of the use of independent monitoring of seal culls. [185669]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I spoke to the Canadian High Commissioner in April about the seal cull in Canada. I encouraged the Canadian Government in an adjournment debate on seal hunting to ensure that their monitoring regulations are implemented in practice and do not just lie on the statute book—*Official Report*, columns 219WH to 222WH. On both occasions, I also made clear this Government's view that we do not accept the need for any seal cull, but if one does take place it should be sustainable and based on a precautionary principle. The Canadian Government monitors the operation of their seal culling regulations.

Sudan

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government is taking to resolve the situation in Darfur. [183334]

Mr. Mullin: We are urging the Government of Sudan to honour the commitments it has given to rein in the Janjaweed, remove the obstacles to humanitarian access, and facilitate deployment of the African Union-led Ceasefire Commission (AU CFC). We are urging the UN Security Council to keep the situation under review, and consider further steps if there is no significant progress soon.

The priority is to improve the security situation and to respond to the humanitarian crisis. Since September 2003, we have provisionally allocated £62.5 million to the humanitarian response, including £2 million we have contributed to the AU CFC. This makes the UK the second largest bilateral donor in Darfur.

We continue to urge all sides to meet soon to discuss a political solution.

Sustainable Energy

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the US Department of State on sustainable energy consumption. [185361]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had any recent discussions with the US Department of State on Sustainable Energy.

Ministerial colleagues have had extensive discussions on sustainable energy with a range of US contacts including Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Paula Dobriansky. There are a host of on-going discussions with the US on sustainable energy. For example the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), through its Embassy in Washington, works closely with contacts in the US and Whitehall Departments on various US-led international technology partnerships. One example is the International Partnership for a Hydrogen Economy. We are also working to engage with the US on sustainable energy through the Commission on Sustainable development (CSD).

The FCO has also, in co-operation with other government departments, secured US sign-up to the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP). I launched the REEEP in London in October 2003 with my right hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Trade and Industry (Patricia Hewitt) and Environment (Margaret Beckett) and had a bilateral discussion with US Department of Energy Assistant Secretary David Garman. In April this year Paula Dobriansky (Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs) formally signed the US government up as a partner of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership and agreed to contribute $50,000 a year to help fund the REEEP's International Secretariat in Vienna. Larisa Dobriansky (US Department of Energy) is also a representative on the REEEP Governing Board.

Turkey

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the issue of violence against women in Turkey was raised in the UK/Turkey Human Rights Dialogue meeting on 15 July; and if he will make a statement. [185987]

Mr. MacShane: The issue of violence against women in Turkey was raised at the fourth UK/Turkey Human Rights Dialogue on 15 July. The UK side welcomed the recent progress made by Turkey on women's rights, including on revisions made to the draft Turkish Penal Code, and the constitutional amendment asserting gender equality signed by the President in May. We encouraged them to take further steps to improve the situation of women in Turkey including through the provision of shelters, further training of the judiciary in adopting sentences commensurate with the gravity of the offence, and training of the police and gendarme in how to respond immediately and effectively to violence against women. The Turkish delegation undertook to consider the points raised.

Turkmenistan

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of freedom of religion in Turkmenistan; and what representations he has made to the Government of Turkmenistan in respect of *(a)* freedom of Christian worship, *(b)* raids on houses and premises used by Christians and *(c)* the imprisonment of Christians for religious activities. [185659]

Mr. Rammell: We remain seriously concerned by reports of religious intolerance and human rights abuses against Christian and other religions in Turkmenistan. Religious freedom is guaranteed under the Turkmen constitution, but the requirement for religious groups to register remains a major obstacle. Religious activity in Turkmenistan remains tightly controlled and even registered religions are at best tolerated by the state.

The UK actively supports the promotion of human rights including freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief. We remain in close touch with representatives of religious groups and NGOs in Turkmenistan to promote freedom of religion. We are aware of a number of prominent human rights cases, including allegations of religious persecution and imprisonment. We are also aware of raids on premises used by Christians, in particular, prior to autumn 2003, although none have so far been reported to our embassy in 2004. We condemn all instances where religious groups are persecuted because of their faith or belief, wherever they happen and whatever the religion of the individual or group concerned. Our ambassador in Turkmenistan together with EU and US colleagues, regularly raises specific cases of religious persecution with the Turkmen Government, and takes every opportunity to urge the pursuit of laws and practices that foster tolerance and mutual respect.

The recent decision by the Turkmen Government to decriminalise unregistered religious activity is a positive development and we welcome the registration of two religious minorities: the Baha'is and the Seventh Day Adventists.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely and push for further progress on this issue.

UN Relief and Works Agency

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning the incident involving Peter Hansen, Director General of the UN Relief and Works Agency, when he was delivering food supplies to Beit Hanoun. [185440]

Mr. Rammell: We are concerned at the continuing levels of violence in the Occupied Territories and the resulting humanitarian impact. We have urged the Israeli Government to ensure aid agencies are able to provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian population. We have made clear our concern at actions which constitute excessive use of force and result in the injury and death of civilians. We have made no specific representations about the incident involving Peter Hansen.

US Senate Intelligence Committee Report

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to evaluate the content and conclusions of the United States Senate Intelligence Committee report on the US Intelligence Community's Prewar Intelligence Assessments on Iraq, published on 9 July, in so far as they are relevant to the United Kingdom policies on intelligence. [184384]

Mr. Straw: This is a matter for the US authorities.

Vietnam

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Vietnam concerning the arrests of *(a)* Nguyen Hieu Nghia, Nguyen Thanh Nhan, Pham Ngoc Thach and Nguyen Van Phuong on 2 March in Ho Chi Minh City, *(b)* Le Thi Hong Lien on 3 July in Ho Chi Minh City, *(c)* Ly Chin Sang, Ly Sin Quang, Vang Chin Sang and Vang My Ly in late 2003 and now in prison and *(d)* Father Nguyen Van Ly in 2001 and serving a five year sentence; and what representations he has made concerning (i) the treatment of Nguyen Thanh Nhan and Pham Ngoc Thach when they were detained in police stations and (ii) the conditions in prison for Christians. [185065]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: With EU partners, we participate in a regular EU-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue with Vietnam. The last meeting, attended by our ambassador in Hanoi, was held on 22 June. Freedom of religion and the plight of unlicensed Christian groups were among the issues raised by the EU. We also raised our concerns regarding fair trials and prison conditions in Vietnam.

The EU maintains a list of prisoners/detainees of concern in Vietnam, which currently includes Father Nguyen Van Ly.

We are currently investigating, with EU partners, events surrounding the reported arrest of Rev. Nguyen Hong Quang and some of his followers in Ho Chi Minh City earlier this year including Nguyen Hieu Nghia, Nguyen Thanh Nhan, Pham Ngoc Thach and Nguyen Van Phuong.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance the Government offer to UK citizens living in Zimbabwe who wish to return to the UK. [184113]

Mr. Mullin: We offer UK nationals living in Zimbabwe the same assistance as we would to UK nationals living in any other country. If requested, we can contact relatives or friends in the UK to ask for financial or other assistance. We may also be able to help with travel documents. We can provide information on such things as state benefits, health and education services, citizenship and employment, and inform returning UK nationals about the options available to them on return to the UK.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Additional Households

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many additional households he estimates will be created in the South East region including London and the South, South West and Eastern regions between *(a)* 2001 to 2011 and *(b)* 2021 to 2031 as a result of (i) the reduction in the average number of people per household, (ii) the excess of births over deaths among those residents in 2001, (iii) net immigration from the rest of the UK including subsequent births less deaths and (iv) net immigration from outside the UK including subsequent births less deaths; [185814]

(2) how many additional households he estimates were created in the South East region including London and the South, South West and Eastern regions in each of the last two decades as a result of *(a)* the reduction in the average number of people per household, *(b)* excess of births over deaths among the initially resident population, *(c)* net immigration from other parts of the UK including subsequent births less deaths and *(d)* net immigration from outside the UK including subsequent births less deaths; [185815]

(3) how many additional households he estimates were created in the UK in each of the last two decades as a result of *(a)* the reduction in the average number of people per household, *(b)* the excess of births over deaths and *(c)* the excess of immigration over emigration including subsequent births less deaths; [185816]

(4) what change in the number of households created in the UK between *(a)* 2001 to 2011 and *(b)* 2021 to 2031 he estimates will result in (i) changes in the average number of people per household, (ii) the difference between births and deaths from the population resident in 2001 and (iii) the difference between immigration over emigration including subsequent births less deaths. [185817]

Keith Hill: The information is not available at present. We will write our reply when we are able to produce the required statistics.

Postal Ballots

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Government intends to publish a consultation on the roll-out of all postal ballots this year. [186122]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government intend to make a decision on this matter once it has the benefit of the Electoral Commission's evaluation of the all-postal pilots held in June 2004 in the north-east, north-west, east midlands, and Yorkshire and the Humber regions under the European Parliamentary and Local Elections (Pilots) Act 2004.

Accessibility Planning Projects

Sir Sydney Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made since January 2004 with accessibility planning pilot projects and the development of accessibility indicators; and what plans he has to produce further guidance on how to incorporate community infrastructure projects, including schools, hospitals and open space, into masterplans and other spatial plans for the Thames Gateway. [185820]

Keith Hill: The Department for Transport completed the eight accessibility planning pilots in April 2004. Six core accessibility indicators have been agreed, which include access to education and health care (two indicators each) and access to jobs and major retail centres. Each English Local Transport Authority outside London will report against these indicators as part of their next Local Transport Plan. The indicators and the findings of the pilots will also inform the development of planning policy guidance. In addition the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is developing an accessibility indicator for local planning authorities, as part of their annual monitor reporting requirements under section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The Government will shortly be publishing policy guidance in respect to Regional Spatial Strategies (Planning Policy Statement 11) and Local Development Frameworks (Planning Policy Statement 12) which will apply in Thames Gateway as elsewhere. In particular, the latter will set out guidance in respect to masterplans and other forms of area action plan, explaining how local planning authorities should adopt a spatial approach to development which incorporates the need for community infrastructure including schools and hospitals.

In the Thames Gateway the Government will also be issuing guidance to local delivery vehicles that are currently being established in priority development areas. This guidance will focus on the development of sustainable communities in line with the principles set out in "Sustainable Communities : building for the future", including the need to work with relevant local service providers to plan for the delivery of schools, healthcare provision and good quality public spaces alongside housing growth.

Brent Council Properties

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many previously non-Brent tenants moved into Brent Council properties in each year since 1997; and how many of these were families with children. [186297]

Keith Hill: Information on the number of Local Authority dwellings let through mobility arrangements since 1997–98 in Brent is tabled.

Lettings under mobility arrangements include the Housing Organisation Mobility Exchange Service (HOMES) and other similar schemes. The majority of households transferring under these schemes will come from outside the local authority boundary, but may include Registered Social Landlord tenants moving to Local Authority dwellings within Brent. Information on the number of families with children cannot be distinguished in the data.

Both mutual exchanges, and lettings made directly from the housing waiting list may also include households from outside the Brent area, but these households and those that are families with children cannot be distinguished.

LA dwellings let through mobility arrangements in Brent

1997–98	19
1998–99	16
1999–00	10
2000–01	20
2001–02	3
2002–03	11

Source:
ODPM's Housing Investment Programme Return

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authority-owned properties in Brent do not meet the Government's decent homes standard; and what the estimated cost is of bringing them up to this standard. [186298]

Keith Hill: In their Business Plan Statistical Appendix Brent reported that 5,211 local authority-owned properties did not meet the Government's decent homes standard at April 2003. Based on an assessment of their costs presented at the time of their bid their Arms Length Management Organisations have been allocated £33.8 million to date to bring properties up to decent homes.

Departmental Advertising

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much money was spent on advertising and promotional literature for his Department's initiatives, broken down by year since 1997. [183809]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002.

In the financial year 2002–03 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister spent £3,347,000 on advertising, the majority on the Fire Safety campaign, and approximately £700,000 on promotional literature.

In the financial year 2003–04 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister spent £3,411,000 on advertising, the majority on the Fire Safety campaign, and approximately £650,000 on promotional literature.

Figures for the Department's agencies and non-departmental bodies are not held centrally and could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Mobile Phones

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* capital and *(b)* running cost of mobile phones to his Department was in each year since 2001. [185775]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002. Mobile phone costs are funded from budgets held within divisions, and they cannot be disaggregated from other communications costs.

Departmental Publicity Staff

Dr. Cable: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183857]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was created following the machinery of government changes on 29 May 2002.

The salary costs for employees working in the Office's Directorate of Communication were £2.627 million in 2002–03 and £2.751 million in 2003–04.

Departmental Spending (Utilities)

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies of the Department have spent on (i) electricity use and (ii) water and sewerage services for each year since 1997. [182899]

Phil Hope: Since the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created in May 2002, the costs of electricity and water and sewerage services for the Office and its agencies is tabled as follows:

£

	(a) ODPM (including Government Offices)	*(b) Agencies*	*Total cost*
Electricity 2002–03	606,809	562,590	1,169,399
Electricity 2003–04	740,191	782,454	1,522,645
Water and sewerage 2002–03	110,570	106,883	217,453
Water and sewerage 2003–04	74,923	120,758	195,681

The figures for 2003–04 are indicative as they have yet to be independently verified by the Building Research Establishment. The agreed figures will be included in the forthcoming Sustainable Development in Government Report 2003–04 to be published by Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government Offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185918]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its agencies operate six road vehicles. The Government offices for the regions operate a further 57 vehicles.

There have been no personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, its agencies or the Government offices since the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created in May 2002.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, its agencies and the Government offices provide training in road safety to all staff who operate road vehicles. In addition guidance and advice, based on current best practice, is made available and disseminated in printed and electronic form to all staff.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for Government offices they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

English Partnerships

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change there has been in English Partnerships' allowance for remediation costs in its 2004–05 budget, to meet anticipated additional costs arising from the implementation of the next phase of the Landfill Directive. [184947]

Keith Hill: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 321W.

Government Office for London

Ms Buck: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the percentage change in the Government Office for London's *(a)* running costs and *(b)* projected expenditure has been in each year since 1999 to 2000. [185325]

Phil Hope: Government Office for London (GOL) Running Cost (admin) expenditure and percentage change is as follows:

	£ million	Percentage change
1999–2000	16.0	n/a
2000–01	13.2	-17.5
2001–02	13.2	0.0
2002–03	14.1	6.8
2003–04	16.7	18.4
2004–05	18.1	8.4

Note:
The expenditure figure for 2004–05 reflects the anticipated end-year outturn.

Ms Buck: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list programmes managed by the Government Office for London in 2004–05, indicating in each case *(a)* the total funding and *(b)* the anticipated end date of the programme. [185327]

Phil Hope: The following table shows the Programmes managed by Government Office for London in 2004–05. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is still waiting confirmation of some of the Home Office allocations (allocation field '—'). The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has only been informed of one end date (for New and Renewable Sources of Energy, which will end in September 2004). It is anticipated that the others will continue in 2004–05 and we will be notified closer to the new financial year (2005–06) as to whether or not the Programmes will cease.

2004–05

Sponsor department	Programme budgets	Allocation (£)
ODPM	Community Chest	5,313,331
ODPM	Community Empowerment Fund	2,654,485
ODPM	Community Learning Chest	1,287,209
ODPM	Public Order and Community Cohesion	92,077
ODPM	Disabled Facilities Grant	15,282,000
ODPM	Estate Action	2,600,000
ODPM	Greater London Authority General Grant	36,328,000
ODPM	Housing Action Trusts	30,500,000
ODPM	Single Regional Housing Pot	1,078,000,000
ODPM	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	105,145,902
ODPM	Neighbourhood Renewal—Skills and Knowledge	124,000
ODPM	New Deal for Communities	62,165,548
ODPM	Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders	2,426,943
ODPM	Street Wardens	1,586,951
ODPM	Street Crime Wardens	4,403,993
ODPM	European Regional Development Fund (Objective 2)	20,240,909
DfT	Greater London Authority Transport Grant	2,225,111,000
DEFRA	Sustainable Development Publicity Budget	40,000
DEFRA	Sustainable Farming and Food	10,000
DFES	Community Champions	533,915
DFES	Pathfinder Young Community Champions	40,000
DFES	Connexions Partnership Grant Funding	70,655,842
DFES	Positive Activities For Young People	7,371,088
DFES	Transforming Youth Work (Development Funding)	1,340,874
DFES	Special Educational Needs/Disability Act	736,828
DFES	Millennium Volunteers	1,494,353
DFES	Vocational and Work Related Learning	100,000
DFES	Connexions Key Workers	5,040,000
DFES	Training and Development of Connexions Key Workers	270,312
DFES	Regional Networking	25,000
DFES	PAYP—GO Secondees	50,000
DTI	London Development Agency Grants	327,149,000
DTI	New and Renewable Sources of Energy	142,434
DWP	European Structural Fund (ESF) Objective 2	4,310,000
DWP	European Structural Fund (ESF) Objective 3	54,721,164
Home Office	Antisocial Behaviour Fund	—
Home Office	Basic Command Unit Fund	9,995,862
Home Office	Building Safer Communities Fund	11,880,385
Home Office	Communication Funding	—
Home Office	Gun Crime	—
Home Office	Home Office Directors' Allocation Fund	1,243,300
Home Office	Neighbourhood Renewal Capacity Building Fund	250,000
Home Office	Drugs Team Strategic Grant	—
Home Office	Recovered Assets Fund	—

2004-05

Sponsor department	Programme budgets	Allocation (£)
Home Office	Capacity Building and Infrastructure Early Spend	650,000
Home Office	Time Limited Development Fund	802,706
Home Office	Connecting Communities	1,363,343
Home Office	Regional Networks	87,000
Home Office	Vehicle Crime	—
Home Office	Domestic Violence	300,000
Total		4,093,865,754

Homeless Persons

Tom Cox: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless people are estimated to be living in the Greater London area; and if he will make a statement. [185350]

Phil Hope: Information collected about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is in respect of households, rather than persons. Estimates of the number of households accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, by London boroughs during 2003–04, and the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation in London as at the end of March 2004, is tabled as follows.

Homeless households in London: 2003–04

	Date	Number
Households accepted as homeless[1]	2003–04	31,530
Households in temporary accommodation[2]	31 March 2004	59,170

[1] Households eligible under homelessness legislation and found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category.
[2] Households in temporary accommodation arranged by London boroughs pending inquiries, or after being accepted, under homelessness legislation.
Source:
ODPM P1E homelessness returns (quarterly)

Housing Improvement

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the latest figure is for the average cost per unit of *(a)* improving a local authority-owned home to the Government's Decent Homes Standard and *(b)* the equivalent cost for a former local authority home that has been transferred into alternative management and/or ownership through (i) the private finance initiative, (ii) an arm's length management organisation and (iii) large scale voluntary transfer. [184107]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold comparative information for the cost of making homes decent under the different forms of management. As the data were derived from different sources and in some cases covers more than the cost of making homes decent as they include costs to prevent deterioration as well as costs associated with work which falls outside the decent homes standard. Costs also depend on the condition of the homes owned.

(a) £6,100 is the average need to spend per dwelling to make homes decent reported by local authorities.

(b) (i) £1,370 is the average unit cost per year for 30 years for properties in a PFI scheme. PFI is used by local authorities to tackle a small number of their most challenging stock and as such unit costs are higher than the national average.

(ii) £6,889 per dwelling is the average bid for by ALMOs on rounds 1 to 4 to make homes decent.

(iii) £8,200 per dwelling for improvements is the average amount levered in from the private sector under LSVT.

Housing Investment

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding made available in each year since their inception for *(a)* the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for the London Borough of Islington and *(b)* the EC1 New Deal for Communities; and what projected funding is in future years for each. [184726]

Phil Hope: The information is as follows:

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund resources

	£
2001–02	3,136,000
2002–03	4,703,000
2003–04	6,270,000
2004–05	8,052,735
2005–06	10,726,788

EC1 New Deal for Communities partnership

	£
Phase 1	
1999–2000	10,000
Phase 2	
2000–01	400,000
Phase 3—Delivery	
2001–02	910,000
2002–03	2,280,000
2003–04	6,289,800
2004–05	5,795,500
2005–06 to 2009–10	36,624,700

Mr. Mole: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on Government investment in housing in the next financial year. [185386]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister currently plans to provide £5.4 billion for capital investment to housing, including the growth areas, in 2005–06. This includes an estimated £1.4 billion for the Major Repairs Allowance for undertaking on-going capital works to council housing and £4 billion for investment programmes set out in the Sustainable Communities Plan. The bulk of the latter funding is provided through the Regional Housing pots to the Housing Corporation's main investment programme and to local authorities, following recommendations made by the Regional Housing Boards. Other large programmes include resources for local authorities which have set up Arms Length Management

Organisations, Market Renewal Pathfinders and Thames Gateway and other growth areas. The day to day costs of maintaining and managing social housing, which are largely met from rents, are not included in the figures, nor are the non capital housing programmes.

Housing Quality Forum

Sir Sydney Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out the work programme of the Housing Quality Forum; and if he will make a statement on the role of the Forum in delivering the policies set out in the Sustainable Communities Plan. [185818]

Keith Hill: The Housing Quality Forum, which is a partnership between ourselves the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation, exists to facilitate a continuing debate about approaches to creating sustainable communities in the Housing Growth Areas, to champion new solutions to improving design quality and to build consensus among the private and public sector partners charged with delivery. The Forum meets twice a year and is attended by representatives from local authorities, housing associations, housing developers, regional agencies and local delivery vehicles.

The first meeting, attended by 120 delegates, was held in March 2004, and the second in October 2004 will address issues relating to the delivery of good quality design, disseminate emerging best practice advice and present exemplary development projects in the Housing Growth Areas. More broadly, the focus will be on wider strategies for making successful places, with themes such as public open space strategies and social and cultural infrastructure that form key elements of successful and sustainable communities.

Housing Stock/Supply

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been spent by each London borough in each year since 1997 on *(a)* refurbishment, *(b)* redecoration and *(c)* renewal of its directly-owned housing stock; and what the average spending per property in each authority was each year, excluding the amount spent on central Government schemes including the New Deal. [186296]

Keith Hill: Information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost on the amount spent on refurbishment, redecoration and renewal of local authority owned dwellings, nor can the average spent per local authority dwellings be calculated.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding increases in housing supply; and if he will make a statement. [183471]

Keith Hill: On 17 March 2004, Kate Barker reported on the review of housing supply that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer and my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister had asked her to carry out. HM Treasury and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published a joint response on the same day, accepting her central recommendation that there should be a step change in housing supply, and committing to detailed consideration of her recommendations by working together over the next 12 to 18 months.

On 13 July, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister confirmed the outcome of the Spending Review settlement for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister which will support investment made in previous Spending Reviews to deliver the Sustainable Communities Plan. Over the five years to 2008, the Office of the Deputy Prime will spend £38 billion to tackle housing shortages in the South and low housing demand areas in the North and Midlands. This commitment includes a 50 per cent. increase in new social house building each year, providing homes for people who most need them.

Key Workers (Housing)

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which groups of key workers can benefit from the Key Worker Living scheme in each *(a)* of the scheme zones and *(b)* English region. [184140]

Keith Hill: The Key Worker Living (KWL) scheme is operating in the London, South East and East regions of England. The following public sector groups are eligible to apply for assistance across all three regions: nurses and other NHS clinical staff; teachers in schools and further education colleges; probation officers; social workers; occupational therapists; educational psychologists; and speech and language therapists. Certain prison staff are eligible to apply across all three regions as are retained fire-fighters and whole-time junior fire officers within participating fire and rescue services and police officers, together with some civilian staff, in participating police forces. In London, local authority planners are also eligible to apply.

The greater London region is broken down into five areas for which three zone agents are working together as a partnership. South East England is covered by a zone agent consortium. Eastern region is broken down into four areas.

In addition to KWL, there is a key worker scheme particular to the South West region which was established by the South West Housing Body. Under the South West initiative, the definition of key workers is derived from a local assessment of need aimed at ensuring communities remain sustainable and that essential public services are maintained.

Lost/Stolen Departmental Property

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the items that his Department has reported lost or stolen to the police from his Department's buildings and property since 2001. [185782]

Phil Hope: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Night Shelters

Tom Cox: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many night shelter beds there are in the Greater London area. [185349]

Phil Hope: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister knows that there are around 2,750 quick access bedspaces in London hostels together with a further 13,300 bed spaces in longer stay hostels for homeless people. Some 100 people are accommodated each night in rolling shelters designed to help rough sleepers move quickly away from the streets. Other night shelters are managed predominantly by faith based organisations particularly during the Winter.

Objective 2 Funds

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether Government North East had failed to spend any allocations of European support under Objective 2 as at 31 December 2003; whether any fine was imposed; and what the profile of spending was for the 2004 calendar year. [185589]

Mr. Raynsford: The Objective 2 spending targets for 2003 were met therefore no funds were lost. The ERDF element of Objective 2 is set to achieve its 2004 spend target of £153.42 million. While progress against the ESF spend target of £33.9 million has been slow, measures have been implemented to accelerate spending in the remainder of the year.

Parks and Green Spaces (Safety/Security)

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what policy measures have been introduced by his Department to protect and enhance the safety and security of the users of municipal parks and urban green spaces; [185792]

(2) what guidance his Department has issued to local authorities and other agencies responsible for the maintenance and management of municipal parks and urban green spaces regarding the promotion of the safety and security of park and green space users. [185793]

Keith Hill: The policies of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for protecting and enhancing the quality of parks and green spaces are set out in Living Places—Cleaner, Safer, Greener (2002) and Sustainable Communities—building for the future (2003). Working closely with local authorities and other agencies to creating safe and secure spaces that people will want to use is a key objective of our policies, which include, for example:

publication of 'Safer Places—the planning system and crime prevention', which shows how positive planning can contribute to crime prevention and to the creation of safer places;

creation of CABE Space to assist local authorities and promote good practice on planning, designing, management and maintenance of urban green space; and

publication of Living places—Caring for Quality, which advises managers of best practice in creating and maintaining safe spaces.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working closely with the Home Office through its Together—tackling anti-social behaviour action plan to prevent and reduce crime and disorder in public spaces.

Private Rented Sector

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what his Department is doing to stimulate investment in the private rented sector to boost affordable housing options; and if he will make a statement; [186108]

(2) what discussions his Department is having with the investment and regulatory housing sector in relation to delivering affordable privately rented accommodation; and if he will make a statement; [186128]

(3) if he will make a statement on his Department's work on the *(a)* planning and *(b)* production of affordable rental housing. [186129]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister set out a radical reform programme in our "Sustainable Communities Plan", which was published on 5 February 2003, to increase the provision of affordable housing, including through increased investment, improvements to the planning system and the establishment of four growth areas to provide an additional 200,000 homes. As a result of the Spending Review announced last week, the Government will more than double spending on new affordable housing since 1997 up to £2.25 billion. This funding will provide an extra 10,000 social rented homes a year by 2008—a 50 per cent. increase—to help tackle homelessness.

The private rented sector also has an important role to play in providing affordable accommodation for those who cannot afford to buy their own homes, the growingnumber of students and single person households. The sector offers a flexible form of tenure to young professionals. It contributes to greater labour market mobility, the efficient functioning of the housing market and to the success of the wider economy.

The Government believe that there is scope for the private rented sector to make a bigger contribution to meeting individuals' housing needs. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is seeking to encourage this including through consultation on the promotion of investment in commercial property and the private rented sector by removing the tax disadvantages currently faced by institutions. In addition, the Housing Bill seeks to raise quality, especially of management, in some of the worst parts of the private rented sector, where the most vulnerable members of society frequently bear the brunt of some of the poorest conditions and services.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Ministers proposed update to Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 3 (PPG3) titled "Influencing the size, type and affordability of housing", due to be published in October 2004, includes the requirement that local planning authorities should address the housing requirements of the whole community by ensuring a better match between a community's housing needs and supply. It requires that all local planning authorities must have policies on affordable housing to help deliver affordable housing where it is needed. Local authorities are increasingly looking to the private rented sector as a means of meeting housing need.

Rate Relief (Small Businesses)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 21 June 2004, *Official Report*,

column 1236W, on the rate relief scheme, if he will place in the Library a list of hon. and right hon. Members who have written to his Office regarding the Government's new rate relief scheme for small businesses. [182504]

Phil Hope: A list of those hon. and right hon. Members who, according to our records, have written to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister between 18 September 2003 and 18 June 2004 regarding the Government's rate relief scheme for small businesses, has been tabled as follows.

Contacted by MPs—small business rate relief scheme

No	Name	Letters
1	The right hon. James Arbuthnot Esq. MP	1
2	Ms Candy Atherton MP	2
3	Richard Bacon Esq. MP	1
4	Sir Paul Beresford Esq. MP	1
5	Dr. Roger Berry Esq. MP	1
6	The right hon. Mrs. Virginia Bottomley MP	1
7	Graham Brady Esq. MP	1
8	Mrs. Angela Browning MP	1
9	Paul Burstow Esq. MP	1
10	Mrs. Anne Campbell MP	2
11	Mrs. Helen Clark MP	2
12	Mrs. Ann Clwyd MP	1
13	Timothy Collins Esq. CBE MP	1
14	Ross Cranston Esq. QC MP	1
15	Quentin Davies Esq. MP	1
16	The right hon. John Denham Esq. MP	1
17	David Drew Esq. MP	1
18	Jonathan Djanogly Esq. MP	1
19	Paul Farrelly Esq. MP	1
20	Adrian Flook Esq. MP	1
21	Edward Garnier Esq. QC MP	1
22	Andrew George Esq. MP	1
23	Dr. Ian Gibson Esq. MP	1
24	Paul Goodman Esq. MP	1
25	John Hayes Esq. MP	1
26	Mrs. Sylvia Heal MP	1
27	Oliver Heald Esq. MP	1
28	David Heath Esq. CBE MP	2
29	Ivan Henderson Esq. MP	1
30	Mark Hoban Esq. MP	1
31	John Horam Esq. MP	1
32	The right hon. Michael Howard Esq. QC MP	2
33	Brian Iddon Esq. MP	1
34	Ms Glenda Jackson CBE MP	1
35	Boris Johnson Esq. MP	1
36	Robert Key Esq. MP	1
37	Norman Lamb Esq. MP	1
38	Dr. Julian Lewis Esq. MP	1
39	Martin Linton Esq. MP	1
40	Peter Luff Esq. MP	1
41	The right hon. David Maclean Esq. MP	1
42	Malcolm Moss Esq. MP	1
43	Mark Oaten Esq. MP	1
44	Stephen O'Brien Esq. MP	1
45	George Osborne Esq. MP	1
46	Terry Rooney Esq. MP	1
47	Stephen Royce-Rogers Esq. MP	1
48	Ms Christine Russell MP	1

Contacted by MPs—small business rate relief scheme

No	Name	Letters
49	Robert Russell Esq. MP	2
50	The right hon. Chris Smith Esq. MP	1
51	The right hon. Sir John Stanley Esq. MP	1
52	David Taylor Esq. MP	1
53	Ian Taylor Esq. MBE MP	1
54	The right hon. Michael Trend Esq. CBE MP	1
55	Sir Nicholas R Winterton Esq. MP	1
56	Ms Rosie Winterton MP	1
57	Anthony D Wright Esq. MP	1
58	The right hon. Sir George Young Esq. Bt MP	1

Note:
This list only represents those members of Parliament indicated in the ODPMs records between September 2003 and June 2004.

Regional Chambers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether regional chambers are required to produce performance indicators for central Government; [184978]

(2) to what public service agreements and targets set by central Government regional chambers are subject; [184979]

(3) what offices outside the United Kingdom are maintained by regional chambers; and what the cost of maintaining each one was in the last financial year for which figures are available. [184983]

Mr. Raynsford: Regional chambers are voluntary, independent bodies that have certain designated functions for which they receive Government grant support. They also receive funding from other sources, including the local authorities within their regions. As part of the condition for Government grant the chambers must produce an annual business plan. These set out their objectives and proposed outcomes relating to their responsibilities for scrutiny of the Regional Development Agencies, as the Regional Planning Body, advocacy of their region and the development of their strategic regional role. The business plans are submitted to the Government before funding agreements are issued to chambers for the relevant financial year.

The chambers claim grant on a periodic basis and each claim must be accompanied by a report detailing the activities undertaken and outcomes achieved through the receipt of Government grant in the preceding period. They are not required to report against common performance indicators. Nor do they report performance against any public service agreements or targets.

Each chamber makes a contribution with regional partners, including the regional development agency and regional local government association, towards an office outside the United Kingdom. Details of the cost incurred by each chamber are:

Chamber	Location of Office or Representation	Cost of Maintenance (£)	Explanation of Cost	Source of Funding
East	Brussels	321,740.00	Contribution to maintenance of office	Non-ODPM funding
East Midlands	Brussels	5,000.00	Contribution to maintenance of joint office	ODPM funding
North East	Brussels	94,700.00	Contribution to maintenance of joint office	Non-ODPM funding
North West	Brussels	20,000.00	Contribution to maintenance of joint office	Non-ODPM funding
South East	Brussels	37,050.00	Contribution to maintenance of joint office	Non-ODPM funding
South West	Brussels	12,316.35	Contribution to maintenance of joint office	ODPM funding

Chamber	Location of Office or Representation	Cost of Maintenance (£)	Explanation of Cost	Source of Funding
West Midlands	Brussels	6,051.00	Contribution to maintenance of joint office	ODPM funding
Yorkshire and the Humber	Brussels	250,000.00	Contribution to maintenance of joint office	Non-ODPM funding

[1] 2004-05.

Rent Arrears (London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the current level of rent arrears is in each London local authority; and if he will make a statement. [185346]

Phil Hope: Estimated total arrears of council rents at 31 March 2004, as reported by each local authority in London, were as follows:

£000

Local authority	Rent arrears owed by: Current tenants	Former tenants	Total arrears
Barking and Dagenham	2,232	465	2,697
Barnet	956	1,020	1,975
Brent	2,201	1,559	3,761
Camden	3,583	2,049	5,632
City of London	112	75	187
Croydon	1,927	1,991	3,918
Ealing	3,681	3,953	7,634
Enfield	2,187	980	3,167
Greenwich	7,980	9,700	17,679
Hackney	13,747	8,109	21,856
Hammersmith and Fulham	3,393	523	3,916
Haringey	5,000	2,049	7,049
Harrow	712	666	1,377
Havering	883	780	1,662
Hillingdon	1,806	688	2,494
Hounslow	1,613	1,028	2,641
Islington	9,847	7,602	17,449
Kensington and Chelsea	1,467	1,020	2,486
Kingston upon Thames	1,244	670	1,914
Lambeth	12,551	3,719	16,270
Lewisham	4,746	2,865	7,611
Merton	673	315	988
Newham	3,858	3,680	7,538
Redbridge	712	455	1,168
Southwark	14,343	3,067	17,410
Sutton	1,207	810	2,017
Tower Hamlets	2,306	2,209	4,515
Waltham Forest	3,789	826	4,615
Wandsworth	4,052	1,333	5,385
Westminster	3,031	1,657	4,688
Total	115,838	65,862	181,700

Note:

Some of the totals do not appear to be the sum of the parts. This is because of rounding.

Source:

Unaudited figures from the "First Advance Claim Form 2004–5", which forms part of the "Entitlement to Housing Subsidies and Grants" survey that is administered by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

A 2003 Audit Commission report on local authority housing rental income found that the performance of rent arrears services had been judged by housing inspectors to be weak relative to other housing services. Based on these findings a number of recommendations have been put forward for improving the prevention and management of arrears:

1. Local authorities should have clear, effective rent arrears strategies in place to prevent, manage and recover arrears.

2. Where tenants are in financial difficulties or are vulnerable, authorities should consider a range of methods for preventing and dealing with arrears, before considering legal action to recover debts. These include access to information and support; debt counselling; liaison with housing benefits sections; and debt management plans to enable tenants to sustain their tenancies and repay their arrears.

Tenant Representation

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the Audit Commission's report, 'Improving Services Through Resident Involvement', if he will recommend a change of policy on *(a)* tenants' membership of boards of arms length management organisations and large scale voluntary transfer associations and *(b)* stock transfer; and if he will make a statement. [184882]

Mr. Raynsford: The Audit Commission's Report on 'Improving Services through Resident Involvement' provides clear evidence of the benefit that resident involvement can have on improving housing services. In the light of the recommendation made the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will consider whether any changes are necessary to advice on and support for resident board membership in housing transfer registered social landlords and arms length management organisations.

Thames Gateway

Sir Sydney Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the *(a)* adequacy of and *(b)* consistency with the policy objectives set out in the Sustainable Communities Plan standard of architectural design in new housing developments in the Thames Gateway. [185821]

Keith Hill: New housing development in the Thames Gateway will be expected to comply with existing planning policies, as is the case for development elsewhere in the country. Planning Policy Guidance Note 1 (PPG1) on 'General Policy and Principles' requires that "good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and should be encouraged everywhere". This policy is supported by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's good practice guidance 'By Design' and 'Better Places to Live'. Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3) on 'Housing' places a considerable emphasis on securing well-designed residential developments of the highest standard.

High quality design is crucial to the delivery of sustainable communities. Projects that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is funding in the Thames Gateway have been selected against thematic objectives, one of which is "to implement a consistent policy of quality design". We have also increased funding for the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), who launched the Growth Areas Housing Quality Forum in March 2004 to

disseminate best practice on housing design. Major developments in the Thames Gateway, such as the Greenwich Millennium village, have already used urban design codes to provide certainty to developers and the community as to what constitutes acceptable design quality. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is in the process of identifying other potential sites in the Gateway to pilot further urban coding schemes.

Travel Costs

David Davis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the travel costs incurred by (*a*) his Department and its predecessors and (*b*) each Minister within his Department, for each of the last 10 years. [175656]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed on 29 May 2002.

(*a*) The travel and subsistence costs incurred by the Office of the Deputy Prime Ministers (ODPM) employees in each financial year are as follows:

	£000
2002-03	4,313,010.44
2003-04	4,928,250.91

(*b*) UK travel costs (air and rail fares) incurred by the ODPM Ministers since June 2002 to 31 March 2004 are as follows:

	£000
Deputy Prime Minister:	5,079.60
Nick Raynsford:	4,860.90
Lord Rooker:	2,276.10
Chris Leslie:	2,537.90
Phil Hope:	3,458.80
Barbara Roche:	3,842.60
Keith Hill:	1,078.80
Tony McNulty:	5,775.00
Yvette Cooper:	1,947.20

Information for earlier years in respect of both (*a*) and (*b*) could only be obtained at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held.

In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government has published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government has also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These reports information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for earlier years could only be obtained at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course

Urban Capacity Studies

Sir Sydney Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities in the Thames Gateway have completed an urban capacity study; when the most recent one in each local authority area was completed; and which of these studies were undertaken according to the best practice guidance set out in "Tapping the Potential", December 2000. [185819]

Keith Hill: Urban capacity studies for local authorities in the London part of the Thames Gateway have been undertaken as part of larger London-wide capacity work. The latest London-wide urban housing capacity study was undertaken by the London Planning Advisory Committee in 1997 and published by the GLA in 1999. The approach taken by the London Planning Advisory Committee in their study informed the methodology for urban capacity studies set out in the Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Tapping the Potential document".

All four local authorities in the Kent part of the Thames Gateway are signed up to Kent County Council's protocol for producing urban capacity studies, which is in line with the methodology set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3. Gravesham Borough Council published their urban capacity study in 2000, Dartford Borough Council in 2002 and Swale Borough Council in 2003. Medway Council expect to complete their urban capacity study later this year.

Each of the urban capacity studies carried out by local authorities in the Essex part of the Thames Gateway were undertaken in line with Planning Policy Guidance Note 3. Rochford Borough Council completed their urban capacity study in 2001, and plan to review this in the latter half of next year. Urban capacity studies for Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Thurrock Council were completed in 2003. Both Basildon and Castlepoint completed urban capacity studies in 2004.

Urban District Councils

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the current status of an urban district council in England is; and when this status changed. [186227]

Mr. Raynsford: Urban district councils were abolished during the reorganisation of local government in 1974. The Local Government Act 1972 divided England into local authority areas called counties and districts. The areas of the former urban district councils became part of the new district council areas.

WALES

Consultant Episodes

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many finished consultant episodes there were in the NHS in Wales in each year since 1999, broken down by the local authority in which the patient resided. [184889]

Mr. Touhig: The information is in the following table:

Finished consultant episodes (inpatients and daycases)[1]

Unitary authority	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Isle of Anglesey	17,405	17,196	17,552	17,230	17,954
Gwynedd	30,645	30,577	30,123	29,172	30,083
Conwy	32,484	32,764	34,353	31,582	32,819

Finished consultant episodes (inpatients and daycases)[1]

Unitary authority	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Denbighshire	25,984	26,252	28,641	27,087	27,963
Flintshire	34,011	35,231	36,321	35,134	35,475
Wrexham	29,775	31,832	32,757	31,591	30,914
Powys	27,428	28,479	28,223	26,609	26,026
Ceredigion	15,398	16,428	15,926	15,408	15,400
Pembrokeshire	29,269	30,454	31,908	28,803	28,640
Carmarthenshire	44,282	44,687	44,764	40,015	42,973
Swansea	56,049	57,792	56,306	55,372	59,141
Neath Port Talbot	37,270	37,624	36,678	35,619	40,043
Bridgend	35,593	35,776	35,908	35,486	34,677
Vale of Glamorgan	27,453	28,135	26,664	25,564	28,333
Cardiff	64,680	67,327	62,679	60,031	65,994
Rhondda Cynon Taf	68,227	67,473	69,351	63,251	64,126
Merthyr Tydfil	18,344	18,046	17,012	15,258	16,610
Caerphilly	38,065	41,193	41,198	40,898	41,825
Blaenau Gwent	19,724	20,085	18,769	17,938	17,845
Torfaen	20,355	22,051	22,056	23,292	22,110
Monmouthshire	18,210	19,457	19,106	18,712	18,736
Newport	30,326	30,927	31,142	32,355	30,992
Wales	720,977	739,786	737,437	706,407	728,679

[1] Welsh resident treated in England and Wales. Updates are sometimes received a considerable time after the period to which data refers and this can result in revisions to previously published figures.

Source:
Patient Episode Database for Wales

Hospital Waiting Lists

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with his colleagues in the Welsh Assembly on hospital waiting lists in Wales. [184033]

Mr. Touhig: I regularly meet the National Assembly Health Minister to discuss matters of health and social care in Wales: our most recent meeting was on 16 June.

The Assembly announced on 30 June that the 2nd Offer Scheme is to be extended to reduce the maximum waiting time for inpatient and day-case surgery in Wales to 12 months. This will mean that by 31 March 2005, there will be no one in Wales waiting over 12 months for surgery who has not been offered the opportunity of having their treatment.

Milford Haven

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) what assessment he has made of the availability of equipment and personnel from the emergency services in the event of a major disaster at the proposed liquefied natural gas handling facility at Milford Haven; and if he will make a statement; [179861]

(2) what provision he has made for the development of an emergency disaster plan for the proposed liquefied natural gas handling facility at Milford Haven; and if he will make a statement. [179862]

Mr. Jamieson: I have been asked to reply.

If the proposed liquefied natural gas handling facility goes ahead at Milford Haven, the development of an emergency disaster plan will be required.

My Department will be involved in assessing the Emergency Disaster Plan once it has been agreed by the relevant parties, and it will need to be included in the site's Port Facility Security Plan, as stipulated by the International Maritime Organisation's International Ship and Port Security Code.

NHS Performance Criteria

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales on what main criteria he judges the performance of the NHS in Wales. [183392]

Mr. Touhig: The performance of NHS Wales is evaluated as part of the Performance Improvement Framework for NHS Wales.

The "balanced scorecard" is a key component of the framework, giving all perspectives of performance equal weighting. Unlike previous systems which focused on finance and operations, this approach also includes assessment of how the NHS continuously improves and how effectively the needs of all stakeholders are met. Scorecards are produced on a quarterly basis and inform organisational performance reviews.

In addition, key annual targets for NHS Wales are monitored on a monthly basis and where performance causes concern action is taken by regional offices.

HOME DEPARTMENT

"Reducing Crime—Changing Lives"

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what responses he has received to "Reducing Crime—Changing Lives"; and how many supported the principal proposals. [182309]

Paul Goggins: We have received a total 264 responses to the initial consultation on the National Offender Management Service.

52 of these responses requested specific information or further copies of the consultation document. Of the responses that provided an opinion, over half offered general support for the new service.

Airguns

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what estimate he has made of

the number of airguns which should have been licensed by 30 April but for which no application has been received; [179584]

(2) what discretion is available to the police to grant a licence to an individual who possessed an airgun prior to 30 April and subsequently makes an application; and in what circumstances that discretion may be exercised; [179585]

(3) how many late applications the police have received for air gun licences; and in how many cases *(a)* a licence has been granted and *(b)* the gun has been confiscated by the police and destroyed. [179586]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 21 June 2004]*: We estimate that between 50,000 and 70,000 self-contained gas cartridge guns have been sold in the UK. Not all will still be in circulation but because they were not previously subject to control it is not possible to say how many might have been destroyed or otherwise disposed of before the new laws came into effect. I understand from the Association of Chief Police Officers that as at 30 April a total 5,791 guns had been entered on certificate and a further 1,524 had been surrendered for destruction. Separate information on the number of late applications is not available. It is for the police to determine in individual cases whether the circumstances warrant acceptance of a late application. Owners have already had over three months in which to either surrender their guns or apply for a certificate. Those who have failed to do so are committing an offence although the Association of Chief Police Officers have advised that where somebody voluntarily comes forward to surrender a gun which they have only just learned has been banned, it will often be sufficient to seize the gun and not to prosecute.

Amyl Nitrate

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he proposes to take to tackle solvent abuse through the use of poppers containing amyl nitrate, with particular reference to the products *(a)* Liquid Gold, *(b)* Pure Gold and *(c)* TNT. [178804]

Caroline Flint: None. The alkyl nitrites (poppers) are not controlled under the misuse of drugs legislation. The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has considered whether they should be controlled and concluded that they did not give rise to a social problem justifying their control under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The substances Liquid Gold, Pure Gold and TNT are all brands of poppers. They are not solvents but are controlled under the Medicines Act 1968.

Animal Research

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 14 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 603W, on animal research, what discussions Ministers have had since 1999 to ensure that businesses and individuals can carry on working without interference from animal rights protesters; and on what dates these discussions took place. [185072]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: Under exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information it is Government policy that information relating to internal meetings is not disclosed.

Anti-drugs Co-ordinator

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* the cost of recruitment and *(b)* the total cumulative salary bill of the UK Anti-drugs Coordinator is. [184455]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: Following the general election in 2001, the Home Secretary took over lead responsibility for driving forward delivery of the UK Drug Strategy.

Within the Home Office, the Home Secretary is supported in this role at official level by the Drug Strategy Directorate, led by Vic Hogg.

Asylum Seekers

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what conditions have been placed within his Department's contract with Reliance Monitoring Service to provide a system for tagging persons seeking asylum in relation to *(a)* the monitoring of families and *(b)* the monitoring of people under the age of 18 years. [183921]

Mr. Browne: Clause 36 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) Bill provides the legislative authority for electronic monitoring within the immigration context. Tagging is likely to be appropriate for those who would otherwise have been detained and will, therefore, be used as an alternative to detention.

A number of factors are taken into consideration when assessing the risk of a family absconding. These may result in one or both of the parents being subject to electronic monitoring.

Electronic Monitoring for immigration purposes will only be available to those who are 18 years of age and over.

Botox Toxicity

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the (i) accuracy and (ii) reproducibility of in vitro tests for botox toxicity; and if he will make a statement. [181806]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office has not commissioned research of the kind described, but it has provided funds for three projects aimed at trying to develop and evaluate alternatives to using animals in this type of testing. Further details are in the Reports of the Animal Procedures Committee for the years 1996, 1997, and 2002, copies of which are available in the House Library. In addition the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate considers and advises on progress made in this field.

Botulinium

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many licences were issued for the animal testing of botulinium toxin in each year since 1997; how many animals were involved, broken down by *(a)* breed and *(b)* type; and how much toxin was involved in each case. [181809]

Caroline Flint: A survey of currently held data indicates that 10 project licences have been granted since 1997 under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, authorising the use of animals in research and testing involving botulinum toxin. The figures are:

	Number of project licences issued
1997	1
1998	1
1999	1
2000–01	0
2002	4
2003	2
2004 (To date)	1

The licensed work has covered safety testing of the toxin for clinical use, research and development as regards possible new clinical applications, research into alternative methods of testing, and forensic food safety checks. None has been connected with publicised use of the substance for non-medical cosmetic purposes.

The animals used for clinical purpose safety testing in 2002 are a subset of those reported at column 1 of table 15 in the publication entitled Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals in Great Britain 2002 (Command 5886, available in the House Library). This relates to all protected animals used in safety testing of pharmaceuticals—those used for testing botulinum toxin are not identified separately. Although all the testing is undertaken using rodent species, the precise details of the numbers, breed and type are not collated centrally. This is also the case as regards earlier years.

The amount of toxin used varies between testing programmes and studies, but licence authorities mandate only the use of the minimum intended to achieve the scientific objective.

Bribery/Corruption

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures the National Criminal Intelligence Service employs to grade allegations of overseas bribery held on the national register; and how many allegations in each grade are held on the NCIS register. [174032]

Caroline Flint: Upon receipt of all allegations, research is made and, if appropriate, sent to the relevant investigation authority.

Allegations are not graded as all are of a serious nature and should there be a prima facie case, which falls within this legislation, further investigation will always be made.

Cannabis

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what studies his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* received regarding the use of cannabis since its reclassification took place; and if he will place a copy of these studies in the Library. [184868]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: The British Crime Survey provides annual updates on drug use. The Home Office is working closely with police forces to monitor the policing of drug offences since cannabis was reclassified and early figures are encouraging. As more robust data become available, a more thorough assessment of the impact of reclassification will be undertaken.

Careless Driving

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to introduce an offence of causing death by careless driving. [184915]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: The Government are reviewing the existing framework of the criminal law concerning bad driving, particularly where death or injury results, in order to ensure that appropriate offences and penalties are put in place. Any comprehensive review of this area of the law must examine the adequacy of the law relating to fatalities that occur as a result of careless driving. We will publish a consultation paper detailing our proposals as soon as possible.

Carter Report

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the terms of reference were for the Carter report. [182318]

Paul Goggins: As set out in the report, "Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime", the terms of reference for the Correctional Services Review were to establish a credible and effective system for the correctional services that focused on reducing crime and maintaining public confidence, whilst remaining affordable.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which of the recommendations from the Carter Report have been implemented. [182320]

Paul Goggins: The Carter Report 'Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime' a copy of which was placed in the Library on 6 January 2004 was welcomed by Ministers at the time of its publication. The Government response was published on the same date. Much work has been done since to take forward the recommendations made, particularly those involving the development of a single National Offender Management Service.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the external consultants who contributed to Patrick Carter's review of the correctional services; and how much they were paid in each case. [182095]

Paul Goggins: External consultants were engaged by the Cabinet Office at a cost of £33,378 to carry out a high level review of the non-operating costs incurred by the correctional services.

Child Trafficking

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unaccompanied minors entered the UK in each of the last five years for which figures are available, broken down by country of origin. [182844]

Mr. Browne: The requested information on the number of unaccompanied children entering the UK in each year is not available.

The available information on applications for asylum from unaccompanied children is given in the table.

Information on asylum applications from unaccompanied minors is published in quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin 'Asylum Statistics United Kingdom'. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Unaccompanied[1,2,3] children, aged 17 or under, applying for asylum in the United Kingdom, by nationality, 1999 to 2003

Nationality	1999[4]	2000[4]	2001[4]	2002[5,6]	2003[6]
Albania	125	95	85	300	145
Czech Republic	30	20	20	10	—
Macedonia	—	—	100	110	55
Moldova	*	5	35	145	5
Poland	45	15	25	10	60
Romania	85	40	50	130	5
Russia	5	*	5	10	170
SAM	1,520	665	475	725	15
Turkey	115	155	95	85	85
Ukraine	*	5	*	5	5
Other Former US	25	20	10	10	5
Other Former Yug	30	35	80	5	*
Europe other	10	5	—	—	*
Europe total	1,995	1,055	985	1,545	560
Colombia	20	5	5	5	5
Ecuador	15	5	5	5	5
Jamaica	5	5	*	15	5
Americas other	5	*	5	—	5
Americas total	40	15	20	30	15
Algeria	10	25	20	40	20
Angola	40	100	145	210	115
Burundi	10	20	20	30	60
Cameroon	—	5	20	30	20
Congo	5	10	30	25	15
Dem. Rep. Congo	35	45	80	145	95
Eritrea	95	65	110	220	125
Ethiopia	55	60	140	140	100
Gambia	—	—	*	5	5
Ghana	*	10	5	5	5
Ivory Coast	—	5	5	5	10
Kenya	10	10	15	30	25
Nigeria	45	25	35	55	35
Rwanda	35	50	40	65	20
Sierra Leone	65	75	130	110	35
Somalia	190	175	200	345	255
Sudan	5	10	5	15	30
Tanzania	*	5	*	5	5
Uganda	10	25	45	105	125
Zimbabwe	5	35	35	90	10
Africa other	10	25	25	70	105
Africa total	630	800	1,115	1,745	1,225
Iran	15	65	25	50	65
Iraq	60	110	180	1,310	220
Middle East other	15	15	20	50	30
Middle East total	90	190	225	1,410	310
Afghanistan	215	300	675	720	235
Bangladesh	5	5	15	60	50
China	165	115	135	260	145
India	15	15	20	60	60
Pakistan	20	25	25	40	45
Sri Lanka	125	170	140	125	15
Vietnam	5	20	90	180	125
Asia other	5	5	5	15	10
Asia total	550	655	1,100	1,460	685
Nationality not known	40	20	25	5	5
Grand total	3,350	2,735	3,470	6,200	2,800

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5 with * = 1 or 2
[2] Unaccompanied at point of arrival, aged (or if no proof) determined to be 17 or under and not known to be joining a relative or guardian in the United Kingdom.
[3] Figures exclude disputed age cases.
[4] May excluded some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices.
[5] Not comparable with manual counts data prior to 2002.
[6] Provisional figures.

Civil Service Recruitment

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the effects of cuts in civil servants will be on his Department. [185812]

Fiona Mactaggart: As my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced on 14 July, the size of the Home Office will be reduced by 2,700 people.

Community Sentences

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he intends to improve the information received by magistrates regarding prison alternatives. [182286]

Paul Goggins: The National Probation Service has put in place a number of measures to improve the information provided to magistrates on prison alternatives. These include the provision of: a sentencer communications strategy and a sentencer liaison officer in all areas; national and local information about the work of the service; leaflets about the content of successful schemes and programmes attached to pre-sentence reports; and videos on the content of community interventions and the 'what works' initiative.

As the new National Offender Management Service is taken forward we intend to strengthen the liaison arrangements between sentencers and the prison and probation services.

The new Sentencing Guidelines Council will also have a role in providing information to sentencers, for example about sentencing patterns, which will inform discussions at a local level. The council will have key role in re-balancing the system to make better use of resources. In framing sentencing guidelines, the council must, among other things, take account of the cost of different sentences and their relative effectiveness in preventing re-offending. One of its earliest priorities is to produce a guideline on the new generic community sentence.

Computer Misuse

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases of computer misuse there were in his Department in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003, broken down by category of misuse; and how many of those cases resulted in disciplinary action. [163249]

Fiona Mactaggart: The figures, so far as information is available in the form requested, are as follows:

Cases of computer misuse

Area	*1997*	*2003*
Core Home Office, including IND		
Sending inappropriate email	[1]—	18
Accessing inappropriate sites	[1]—	4
Prison Service Agency		
Sending inappropriate email	[1]—	2
Accessing inappropriate sites	[1]—	[1]—
UK Passport Agency		
Sending inappropriate emails	[1]—	15
Accessing inappropriate sites	[1]—	[1]—
Forensic Science Service		
Sending inappropriate emails	[1]—	1
Accessing inappropriate sites	[1]—	[1]—

[1] Indicates that no comprehensive figures available.

Constitutional Treaty

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department has commissioned on the possible *(a)* impact and *(b)* cost that may follow from the adoption of the proposed European Union constitution, in relation to criminal matters. [184015]

Caroline Flint: The Government carried out detailed examination of all proposals in the field of criminal justice with regard to their potential impact, prior to agreement on the Constitutional Treaty. The Government have not commissioned separate research in this area following agreement on the text of the Constitutional Treaty.

Contracted Prisons

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Prison Service annual report for 2003–04 will contain statistical data on the performance of contracted prisons against key performance indicators; and if he will make a statement. [181518]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service is no longer responsible for the performance of contracted prisons and so the Service's Annual Report does not contain data on the performance of these prisons. The aggregate performance of all prisons in England and Wales, and details of the performance of contracted prison estate are set out in the written ministerial statement I made on 15 July. Details of the performance of individual establishments will be published at a later date.

Conviction Data Systems

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he plans to take to develop IT systems that can share conviction and non-conviction data across police forces in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. [183266]

Paul Goggins: As part of current arrangements Scottish conviction records are uploaded automatically to the Police National Computer (PNC) in England and Wales through the Scottish Criminal Records Office. The Police Service in Northern Ireland has PNC, which provides them with 24-hour access to the service.

As part of the important work for implementing the recommendations of the Bichard Inquiry we will look to resolve the issue of sharing Intelligence non-conviction data between the 43 forces in England and Wales as well as with Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Correspondence

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 5 July from the hon. Member for Liverpool, Riverside relating to entry to the UK of Dr. Yusuf Ali Qaradawi; and what investigations were conducted in advance of his entry to the UK. [184544]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* I wrote to my hon. Friend on 21 July 2004.

My hon. Friend also asks what investigations were conducted in advance of Dr. Qaradawi's entry to the United Kingdom: I am withholding that information under exemption 5 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

It is not our practice to disclose details of individual entry clearance cases in a public forum.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight dated 25 May concerning the National Offender Management Service. [181804]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 1 July 2004]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 7 July 2004.

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the hon. Member for West Worcestershire will receive a response to his letter of 15 April (Ref: M480/4). [182930]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 July 2004]:* I wrote to the hon. Member on 22 July 2004.

Crime Solving

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes in *(a)* Merseyside, *(b)* Lancashire, *(c)* Cheshire, *(d)* Cumbria and *(e)* Greater Manchester have involved (i) the Forensic Science Service and (ii) a private company in their solution in each of the last 12 months. [181674]

Caroline Flint: From the data recorded by these police forces it is not possible to identify how many crimes involved use of forensic science in their solution. The best indicator of the relative use of (i) the Forensic Science Service (FSS) and (ii) private sector forensic science providers is the number of submissions made by the five named forces to each of these within the last 12 months.

(a) For Merseyside police forensic submissions during the year 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 were as follows:

	Forensic provider	
	(i) FSS	*(ii) Private companies*
April	69	344
May	65	418
June	96	377
July	93	367
August	73	376
September	100	391
October	96	311
November	77	318
December	64	252
January	77	311
February	73	268
March	60	289

Differences in the level of detail to which data on submissions for forensic analysis is recorded by police forces prevents similar presentation of figures for the remaining forces. The data recorded by these forces indicate:

(b) For Lancashire Constabulary forensic submissions during the year 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 were as follows:

	Number
April	419
May	342
June	398
July	389
August	389
September	355
October	355
November	359
December	372
January	421
February	371
March	432

Lancashire Constabulary was unable to report how many of these submissions were made to(i) the Forensic Science Service (FSS) and (ii) private sector forensic science providers.

(c) For Cheshire Constabulary forensic submissions during the year 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 were as follows:

(i) FSS: 525

(ii) Private companies: 609.

Cheshire Constabulary was unable to provide a monthly breakdown of these figures.

(d) For Cumbria Constabulary the number of submission for DNA analysis reflects is related to the level of volume crime, the predominant category of crime in Cumbria. These submissions were all made to the FSS:

	Number
April	26
May	28
June	37
July	20
August	18
September	41
October	30
November	11
December	17
January	18
February	23
March	32

(e) For Greater Manchester Police forensic submissions during the year 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 were as follows:

(i) FSS: 8,392

(ii) Private companies: 135.

GMP was unable to provide a monthly breakdown of these figures.

Criminal Cases Review Commission

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases have been considered by the Criminal Cases Review Commission since its inception; and how many are awaiting determination. [184798]

Paul Goggins: At 31 May 2004 the Criminal Cases Review Commission had received 6,798 applications of which 638 had yet to be determined. Further detail is available on the Commission's website at www.ccrc.gov.uk.

CS Gas

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the use of CS gas spray by police forces in England and Wales. [184797]

Caroline Flint: CS incapacitant spray has been available to police forces in England and Wales since 1996. Currently out of 43 police forces, 40 are using CS incapacitant spray as an item of self-defence equipment.

Departmental Accounting Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who the Finance Director of the *(a)* Department, *(b)* Probation Service, *(c)* Charity Commission and *(d)* Assets Recovery Agency is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183423]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested, is shown in the table.

	Finance Director	Accountancy qualifications held
(a) Home Office	William Nye	—
(b) Probation Service	Ray McBurney	Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
(c) Charity Commission	Nick Allaway	Member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
(d) Assets Recovery Agency	Ivor Jamison	Member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting

In respect of Departmental Accounts, the audit opinion has been given on the accounts for the periods requested. Of the Departments requested the Probation Service is a part of the Home Office while the Asset Recovery Agency and the Charities Commission are non-Ministerial Departments. The Asset Recovery Agency has only recently been created and no accounts are yet available. Audit opinion for the Department and for the Charities Commission are given in the Table:

Financial year	National Audit Office opinion: The Home Office	National Audit Office opinion: The Charities Commission
1999–2000	Disclaimed	Unqualified
2000–01	Qualified	Unqualified
2001–02	Qualified	Qualified
2002–03	Unqualified as true and fair, but qualified arising from an expenditure in excess of amounts authorised for Request for Resource 2	Unqualified
2003–04	Resource Accounts not yet audited—an opinion will not be available until later in the year	Unqualified

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total floor space area of buildings owned or leased by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* his agencies has been in each year since 1997. [182220]

Fiona Mactaggart: The non-agency part of the Home Office currently occupies 274,693 sq m of freehold space and 498,664 sq m of rented space. The Department's Executive Agencies occupy 4,188,012 sq m of freehold space and 69,256 sq m of rented space. Together these comprise offices, prisons and other specialised accommodation.

The figures exclude residential properties, premises that are not rented but taken under service agreements and those where costs are shared with other Government Departments who pay the rent.

Departmental Expenditure

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of satellite and cable subscriptions in his Department's buildings in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will list the premium channels that his Department subscribes to. [185277]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: Figures for all the Department's buildings are not held centrally. The subscription for cable for the Home Office HQ for 2004–05 will be £20,609.67 plus VAT. No premium channels are subscribed to. This is to ensure access to full range of news and current affairs channels.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was of running the canteen facilities of his Department in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [184457]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: Information on the level of the subsidy for canteen facilities in the Department's main central London buildings in 1996–97 is not available. The subsidy paid in 2002–03 was £180,000.

Departmental Mobile Phones

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many mobile phones owned by his Department were reported lost or stolen since 2001. [185268]

Fiona Mactaggart: Only one item is showing on the Losses Register since 2001.

Departmental Refurbishment

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost has been of refurbishments to the fabric of buildings owned by his Department since May 1997. [184454]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meirionnydd Nant Conwy (Mr. Llwyd) on 24 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1409W.

Direct Communications Unit

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what work is undertaken by the Direct Communications Unit at his Department; and if he will make a statement. [183163]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Direct Communications Unit consists of two sections—a Customer Communications Service and a Resource and Planning Section.

The Customer Communications Service consists of 72 staff and is responsible for a wide range of work in the area of customer communications. They provide:

A Front of House (reception) service at the Home Office's HQ building;

A public inquiry telephone service

Management and co-ordination of the production of replies to ministerial correspondence across the Home Office group, excluding agencies

Management and co-ordination of the production of replies to public correspondence, including emails, across the Home Office group, excluding agencies, HMPS and the Immigration and Nationality Department

Management of responses to requests for publications

Support for the Home Office's internal Directory of Business

Internal communications relating to correspondence performance and management

User support for, and management of the ongoing development of, the Correspondence Tracking System introduced last year

Support, management and development of the Correspondence Tracking System's Management Information System, and production of performance and management data.

The Resource and Planning Section consists of 16 staff, and provides a full range of business support services for the Communication Directorate, of which Direct Communications Unit is one part. The services provided include finance and budget management, procurement, business planning, risk management, accommodation support, business continuity planning, and human resources management.

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what work is undertaken by the Public Contact Section of the Direct Communications Unit in his Department, broken down by policy areas covered; and how many *(a)* letters and *(b)* phone calls it has received each year since its creation, broken down by policy area. [183168]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Direct Communications Unit (DCU) was created on 1 September 2001.

The Public Contact Teams undertake the following work for all areas of the Home Office Group excluding Agencies:

Answering telephone calls from the public (other than on matters relating to HM Prison Service and Immigration and Nationality Department)

Front of House (Reception) Service at the Home Office headquarters building

The Correspondence Teams undertake the following work for all areas of the Home Office Group excluding Agencies:

Co-ordinating the provision of replies to correspondence from Members (and members of the House of Lords) addressed to Ministers

MP's hotline (for inquiries about correspondence from Members to Ministers)

Co-ordinating the provision of replies to correspondence from members of the public (not Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) or the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND)

(a) The volume of letters received is given in the tables.

Volume of Ministerial letters[1] handled by DCU

	Number
1 September to 31 December 2001	5,619
1 January to 31 December 2002	27,320
1 January to 31 December 2003	21,735
1 January to 31 May 2004	9,508

[1] Excludes agencies other than HMPS

Volume of letters[1] from the public handled by DCU

	Number
1 September to 31 December 2001	12,695
1 January to 31 December 2002	43,886
1 January to 31 December 2003	22,074
1 January to 30 April 2004	5,846

[1] Excludes correspondence on IND and HMPS matters and since 1 July 2003 campaign correspondence i.e. that where 50 or more identical items are received.

The computerised Correspondence Tracking System was introduced for Ministerial Correspondence on 1 April 2003. A breakdown by policy area is available only from that date and is shown in the table.

Ministerial correspondence handled by DCU, broken down by policy area

Policy area	*1 April to 31 December 2003*	*1 January to 31 May 2004*
IND	9007	5301
HMPS	661	426
Correctional Services	362	327
Human Resources	0	4
Crime Reduction and Community Safety Group	2,423	1,422
Community Policy	937	553
Criminal Justice Group	810	447
Reply drafted by DCU—no policy unit identified	1,465	1,028

Letters from members of the public (other than campaigns, HMPS and IND) were included on the Correspondence Tracking System from 1 July 2003. A breakdown by policy area is available only from that date and is shown in the following table.

Correspondence from members of the public handled by DCU, broken down by policy area

Policy area	*1 July to 31 December 2003*	*1 January to 30 April 2004*
Correctional Services	317	738
Crime Reduction and Community Safety Group	2,820	2,570
Community Policy	1,024	618
Criminal Justice Group	319	264
Reply drafted by DCU—no policy unit identified	3,207	1,656

The figures in the table do not include approximately 70,000 emails p.a. which are also handled by DCU. The handling of emails has only recently been transferred onto the Correspondence Tracking System, and data on distribution across policy areas are not yet available.

(b) The volume of telephone calls received from the public is given in the table. No breakdown by policy area is available.

	Number
1 September to 31 October 2001[1]	9,914
1 January to 31 December 2002	70,320
1 January to 31 December 2003	70,352
1 January to 30 June 2004	33,416

[1] Data for November and December 2001 is not held

Driving Disqualification/Offences

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were disqualified from driving in England and Wales in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003 under section 35 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988. [184767]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: The number of people disqualified at all courts in England and Wales as a result of 'totting up' of points on their driving licence under s.35 of the Road Traffic offenders Act 1988 is 30, 498 for the year 2002.

Data for 2003 will not be available until the autumn.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prosecutions were brought against and *(b)* cautions were given to drivers on motorways in the last 24 months for (i) speeding and (ii) non-speeding offences. [184956]

Caroline Flint: Information collected centrally on prosecutions for speeding and other road traffic offences does not distinguish the type of road on which the offence took place.

The available information for the year 2002 showing the total number of fixed penalties, written warnings issued and court proceedings in England and Wales for Motorway offences (other than speeding) under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 s. 17(4) and Motorways Traffic (England and Wales) Regulations 1982 Regs. 5–12 and 14 are given in the table.

Data for 2003 will not be available until the autumn.

Motorway offences[1] (other than speeding) by type of police action, England and Wales, 2002

Type of action	*Number of offences*
Total Court proceedings	2,947
Fixed penalty notices issued	5, 292
Written warnings issued	354
Total	8,593

[1] Offences under s. 17(4) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Motorways Traffic (England and Wales) Regulations 1982.

Drug/Alcohol Treatment

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding is available for drug addiction treatment of prisoners and ex-prisoners over the next five years *(a)* in Leeds and *(b)* in total. [181974]

Paul Goggins: It is not possible to differentiate between funding provided to treat ex-prisoners and others who access treatment in the community.

Table 1 shows the amount of funding available for all forms of drug treatment for prisons in the Leeds area. Funding is allocated on an annual basis, and therefore the figures for prisons in the Leeds area are provided only for 2004–05.

Table 1: Drug treatment funding in prisons in the Leeds area, 2004–05

Prison	*Funding (£)*
Leeds	1,200,000
Wealstun	332,000
Wetherby	118,000

Table 2 shows the total funding for drug treatment in adult prisons and juvenile establishments until March 2006, which is the latest date for which funding decisions have been taken.

Table 2: Total drug treatment in adult prisons and juvenile establishments until March 2006[1]

£

	2004–05	*2005–06*
Prison Service[2]	44,900,000	52,400,000
Department of Health	3,900,000	3,900,000
Youth Justice Board[3]	10,000,000	10,000,000
Total	58,800,000	66,300,000

[1] These are ring-fenced funds, made available from spending reviews since 1997–98.

[2] This figure includes £5,000,000 from the Home Office for the CJIP initiative.

[3] The YJB funding shown includes funding for secure training centres and local authority secure children's homes. The allocation for Juvenile Prisons are as follows:

2004–05: £2,500,000

2005–06: £3,200,000

Note:

All funding is projected and therefore still subject to negotiation. The remaining four years will be determined by further allocations made from SR2004.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to ensure that sufficient funds are made available for treatment programmes for all young people convicted of drug and alcohol offences. [184203]

Caroline Flint: Early identification of substance misuse problems and the provision of appropriate early intervention and treatment for young offenders is a key element of the young people's strand of the National Drug Strategy.

The Young People's Substance Misuse Grant brings together a number of funding streams which total £59 million for the development of young people's substance misuse services, alongside mainstream resources by Drug Action Teams.

Over £18 million of the Young People's Partnership Grant is currently invested in the provision of specialist young people's drug treatment services.

£30 million has been made available over three years for the development of an Integrated Substance Misuse Programme for the Secure Estate—Young Offenders Institutes, Secure Training Centres and Local Authority Secure Children's Homes.

As part of this programme of work Youth Offending Teams screen all young offenders and provide early intervention and/or onward referral to specialist young people's drug treatment services.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether drug testing on charge is in place in Crosby. [177936]

Caroline Flint: Drug testing of persons in police detention (after charge) is not currently available in Crosby.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to require prisons to record the proportion of prisoners who complete drug treatment following detoxification. [182230]

Paul Goggins: There are currently no plans to require prisons to record the proportion of prisoners who complete drug treatment following detoxification.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of drug treatment programmes within prisons. [182300]

Paul Goggins: Due to the need to wait two years for reconviction results, only a limited research base is so far available on the effectiveness of prison-based drug rehabilitation programmes in reducing re-offending.

Emerging research into the RAPt[1] programme is showing encouraging results, with 40 per cent. of graduates, rather than an expected 51 per cent., re-offending within two years. However, such results can only be achieved where effective through-care arrangements are made and timely after-care services are available in the community.

[1] RAPt—Rehabilitation of Addicted Prisoners Trust.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of people receiving drug treatment while in prison were offered aftercare on their release in each year since 1997. [182301]

Paul Goggins: Data are not collected centrally on those people that receive drug treatment in prison and who are subsequently offered aftercare on release.

Drugs

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to ensure that recreational drugs remain illegal; and if he will encourage police to prosecute criminals who supply such drugs. [184021]

Caroline Flint: The Government have no intention of legalising any currently controlled drug. The Government takes the supply and possession of illegal drugs very seriously. We work closely with the police to focus more effectively to disrupt the drug supply chain at all levels and prosecute offenders. The Drugs Strategy makes clear our priority is to tackle Class A drug supply offences. The Strategy is supported by the police as we all recognise that Class A drugs do most harm to individuals and to communities.

Electronic Tagging

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many criminals were released in Essex with electronic tags in each year since tagging was introduced. [183601]

Paul Goggins: The area in which electronically tagged prisoners reside upon release is not recorded centrally.

The number of prisoners released on the Home Detention Curfew Scheme (HOC) from HMP Bullwood Hall and HMP Chelmsford in each year since the scheme began, and to 31 May 2004, is provided in the table.

Prisoners released on the HOC scheme from Essex prisons, by year of release

	Number
1999	121
2000	150
2001	142
2002	316
2003	278
2004	58

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases against his Department, the agencies for which it is responsible and its predecessor organisations have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181476]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not available and could be collected only at disproportionate cost.

Energy Efficiency

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on energy efficiency in his Department's buildings. [185286]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office continues to improve the energy efficiency of its buildings. It is addressing the Government's target of increasing the energy efficiency on its estate in terms of kWh used per square metre of building floor area by 15 per cent. by 2010–11, relative to 1999–2000.

The Department actively improves the energy efficiency of its estate. A switch off campaign is currently in progress across the Central London and Croydon estates, which encourages staff to switch off lights and computer equipment when not in use. There is a contractual requirement to achieve energy consumption at least 10 per cent. below the targets in the Government's energy efficient best practice programme energy consumption guide at the Department's new headquarters building at 2 Marsham street. In September 2003, The Prison Service was re-accredited under the National Energy Foundation's scheme for energy efficiency.

Environmental Sustainability

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what steps he is taking to ensure that private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible create the minimum of environmental damage; [182214]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the sustainability of environmental impacts of private finance initiative projects and *(b)* the capacity of the PFI process to deliver environmentally sustainable projects; [182215]

(3) what plans he has to make private finance initiative contracts more accountable and transparent in terms of environmental sustainability. [182216]

Fiona Mactaggart: Guidance for Departments on how to include environmental considerations within PFI and PPP projects is set out in Green Public Private Partnerships, issued in 2002. A memorandum of understanding, signed by the Home Office Green Minister and the Director General of the Prison Service, requires all new prisons (including those constructed under PFI) to introduce a sustainable development policy and to be managed in an environmentally sound way.

Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) certificates are obtained for major new buildings. The new Home Office in 2 Marsham Street received the BREEAM excellent level certification of its design in June 2004. Excellent is the highest category certification. Once operational it will be managed under an accredited environmental management system.

The Home Office is committed to the targets set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. The biodiversity, energy and waste sections of the framework require Departments to include clauses relating to sustainable development issues in relevant contracts, including PFIs. Future sections of the framework are likely to include similar provisions on other environmental issues.

From 1 April 2004 all Departments have been required to explicitly identify any significant environmental and social costs and benefits when carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). This will cover RIAs carried out on new PFI/PPP projects.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what parts of his Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [182222]

Fiona Mactaggart: As set out in the departmental website statement of September 2002 the sites not covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate are those where one of the following apply: *(a)* the Department is not the major occupier, *(b)* the floor area of the site is less than 1,000 sq m or *(c)* the site has less than 50 staff.

This accounts for some, 150 office sites in the main Home Office, some 850 probation office sites, approximately 10 non-operational Prison Service establishments or premises and one UK Passport Agency site.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps have been taken by his Department to review arrangements for public reporting for sustainable development impacts. [182223]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department has developed a series of departmental sustainable development indicators, which monitor and record progress. These are published on the Home Office website and can be found at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs2/susdevindicators.html. The Home Office also reports sustainable development progress in the Home Office annual report and through the annual Sustainable Development in Government reports. Prison Service progress is covered by its own dedicated sustainable development report.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes there have been in *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions and *(b)* single occupancy car commuting from his Department against the baseline year in the framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [182224]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office collected baseline data for business mileage in 2002–03 which showed that staff travelled 12,908,999 miles. Data for 2003–04 has not been collated yet. In an effort to reduce business mileage the Home Office has committed to:

Review current levels of mileage payment

The policy relating to payment of mileage claims

The scope for providing incentives for use of alternatively fuelled vehicles

Promote the use of video-conferencing facilities

Collect baseline data on the use of hire cars with a view to reducing their use

A survey undertaken in 2003 showed that there were 27,146 car park spaces at Home Office sites. These included 21,158 spaces held for the Prison Service, some 3,033 held for the Immigration Service and 1,934 for the Probation Service. The Department is committed to making reasonable efforts to reduce the number of spaces.

External Consultants

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the external consultants which have carried out work for his Department under contracts in the last three years. [181500]

Fiona Mactaggart: The use of external consultants throughout the Home Office provides the Department with specialist knowledge, skills, capacity and technical expertise that is otherwise not available in house. This enables all units and organisations within the Department to achieve the levels of service required by the Home Office and the Government and assists in obtaining value for money.

The main external consultants which have carried out work for the Home Office under contracts in the last three years are in a list, which will be sent to the Library.

Financial Systems (Security)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many reports of *(a)* cyber attack and *(b)* misuse of the data and information systems of UK based banks and financial services companies he estimates there were in each year since 1997. [185164]

Caroline Flint: Reports of the unauthorised access to information systems and possible offences which might arise from the misuse or modification of data, are made to local police forces. There are no centrally aggregated figures of these reports.

Firearms Amnesty

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many of the firearms handed in during the amnesty of 2003 were *(a)* replica weapons, *(b)* antique or obsolete weapons, *(c)* toy guns, *(d)* blank firing airguns and *(e)* other types of firearms; [185400]

(2) how many firearms handed in during the amnesty of 2003 did not need a certificate for possession; [185401]

(3) whether people who handed in firearms during the 2003 amnesty that did not need a certificate were advised that they could lawfully keep them. [185402]

Caroline Flint: A detailed breakdown of the number and type of guns handed into the police was placed in the Library on 15 July 2003. These figures show that a total of 43,908 guns were handed in, including 13,974 air weapons and 9,480 imitations. It is not possible to break down these figures further into the categories requested.

The primary purpose of the amnesty was to enable people to surrender illegally held guns and ammunition. Given the stricter laws which were being introduced in relation to the possession of air weapons and imitation firearms in a public place without reasonable excuse, it also provided an opportunity for young people, and others, to hand in guns which, while not illegal, were perhaps being held for criminal or anti-social purposes, or were no longer wanted. It was for individual forces to determine the procedures to be adopted for the surrender of all such items.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the procedures for issuing fixed penalty notices by police officers. [183177]

Caroline Flint: Police issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for traffic offences under the powers set out in Part III of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988, as amended by the Road Traffic Act 1991. Fixed penalties are currently available for about 150 different traffic offences.

Where a driver is detected committing a fixed penalty offence, the police will decide what action to take in the particular case. The driver may be given an informal warning or issued with a fixed penalty notice or reported for prosecution. The police operate to Association of Chief Officer of Police (ACPO) guidelines advising on what course of action might be appropriate but it is in law ultimately a matter for the individual officer's decision.

Fixed penalty notices for traffic offences may be issued using one of four different procedures. One involves fixing the FPN to the vehicle. This is normally used for parking offences. The FPN may be issued to the driver at the time of the offence in two sets of circumstances: one for non-endorsable offences, such as failure to wear a seat belt, the other for an endorsable offence, such as speeding. For endorsable offences, the driver has to produce his driving licence at the roadside or later at a police station. The fourth procedure is used to deal with offending drivers detected by automatic speed camera and involves sending a conditional fixed penalty offer to the person identified by the vehicle number plate as being the registered keeper.

Police may also issue fixed penalty notices for disorder offences. Guidance has been provided by the Secretary of State for police, community support officers and persons accredited by a Chief Constable under community safety accreditation schemes under section 6 of the Act. Supplementary guidance has also been provided on the issue of fixed penalty notices to persons aged 16 and 17-years-old since the scheme was extended to them in January 2004. Copies of the guidance are available on the Home Office website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimpol/police/penalty/index.html

The main police operational guidance is currently being revised and a new version will be provided to the police and published shortly. The Home Office continues to take feedback from the police on the operation of the fixed penalty notice for disorder scheme so that guidance may be updated as and when necessary.

G8 Conference

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police forces will contribute to the security of the G8 Conference. [183036]

Caroline Flint: Responsibility for local policing in connection with the 2005 G8 Summit at Gleneagles, Perthshire, will rest with the Chief Constable of Tayside Police. Tayside Police will call on mutual aid from other police forces as appropriate, and arrangements for this are in hand.

Gold Incident Command Suite

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions the Prison Service GOLD Incident Command suite has been opened in each month since April 2003; and what the nature was of each incident. [181510]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service Gold Command suite opened on 40 occasions between 1 April 2003 and 28 June 2004. The suite was opened on 24 occasions to manage hostage incidents, on nine occasions to manage incidents of concerted indiscipline and on seven occasions to manage at height/roof climb incidents.

An incident is classified as a concerted indiscipline when a number of prisoners collectively refuse to comply with a lawful order or involve themselves in disruption of an establishment's normal regime. Hostage incidents are when a prisoner or prisoners take another prisoner, or on occasion a member of staff, hostage. At height incidents usually involve a prisoner or prisoners getting onto a roof but can be other climbs. A barricade incident is when a prisoner barricades his cell or another area to prevent staff access.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185134]

Fiona Mactaggart: As the Department's Green Minister I take the lead in improving the Department's performance in contributing towards sustainable development. I do this through meetings with the officials responsible for sustainable development to check progress and give my personal support where necessary. This has included giving a talk at a workshop to launch the Department's Sustainable Development Framework Project and judging a switch off poster competition, as well as attending more formal meetings on sustainable development issues.

I am a member of the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers.

HGVs (Road Accidents)

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many road traffic incidents involving left hand drive heavy goods vehicles have been recorded by Cheshire police in the last year for which figures are available. [185391]

Caroline Flint: Information collected by my Department on motoring offences recorded by the police does not distinguish the characteristics of the vehicles involved.

Home Office Legislation

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the Home Office legislation which has been implemented in different parts of England on different dates since 1997. [181835]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 5 July 2004]:* The following provisions of Home Office legislation passed since 1997 have been implemented in different parts of England and Wales on different dates.

Provision	*Subject matter of provision*
Crime and Disorder Act 1998	
Section 46	Date of first appearance in bail cases
Section 49	Powers of magistrates' courts exercisable by single justice
Section 51	No committal proceedings for indictable-only offences
Sections 65 and 66	Reprimands and warnings
Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000	
Section 52	Electronic monitoring
Section 57	Drug testing in police detention
Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001	
Section 130	Remands and committals of juveniles to secure accommodation
Private Security Industry Act 2001	
Section 3	Conduct prohibited without a licence
Police Reform Act 2002	
Schedule 4	Detention by Community Support Officers
Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003	
Sections 48–52	Removal of graffiti

Human Trafficking

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the progress in the UK's implementation of the European Union Council of Ministers' Framework Decision on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. [182463]

Mr. Browne: The European Union Framework Decision requires us to criminalise trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour. We are committed to criminalising trafficking effectively for these purposes, and in the case of trafficking for sexual exploitation legislative measures are already in force.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 includes offences covering trafficking into, within and out of the United Kingdom. These offences were brought into force on 1 May 2004. New offences covering trafficking for other forms of exploitation, including trafficking for the purposes of forced labour and removal of organs, are included in the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Bill, which is currently before Parliament.

Identity Cards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the experience of other countries regarding the experience of ethnic minorities with demands to show identity cards. [182299]

Mr. Browne: We have looked at schemes in other countries but the experience of ethnic minorities in other countries depends on a range of factors which are not necessarily comparable. These include:

(i) whether the scheme is voluntary or compulsory;

(ii) what police powers exist to require a person to produce an identity card or otherwise identify themselves;

(iii) how the card scheme is linked to the provision of public services;

(iv) what use the private sector makes of the card scheme; and

(v) what legal safeguards are in place to outlaw unlawful discrimination.

We have announced that we are building a base for a compulsory scheme. One of the advantages of a compulsory scheme is that any requirement to produce a card would not be discriminatory as everyone would have one. We have said that there will be no new power for the police to stop someone and demand to see their card. Our draft Bill does allow public services to specify how a card might be produced but Parliament will have to approve the rules on a case-by-case basis. There are also provisions to guard against 'compulsion by the back door' by prohibiting organisations from making an ID card the exclusive means of proving identity in advance of the scheme being compulsory.

Finally the administration of the scheme and how it is used to verify identity by public services will be bound by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Immigration Database

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 983W, on immigration, what

time it normally takes for the General Case Information Database to be updated with decisions; and how long it took in the case of Mr. Ahmed. [184765]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: Decisions made within General Group would normally be entered onto the General Case Information Database (G-CID) at the time of decision.

Following initial inquiries, General Group's decision was entered on G-CID six weeks after receiving Mr. Ahmed's file.

IMPACT System

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions have taken place between *(a)* his officials and *(b)* the Police Information Technology Organisation and representatives of the Scottish Intelligence Database regarding its suitability for extension throughout Great Britain; what assessment he has made of the costs and time scale of such a roll-out; and what cost and time scale he envisages for the completion of the IMPACT system. [184902]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: In my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary's response to the House on 22 June 2004, following publication of Sir Michael Bichard's report he told the House the Government shall introduce a national intelligence IT system for the police. Preparations for this are under way. The new system will take full account of the Scottish Intelligence Database.

Internet Fraud

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the actions taken by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the bodies for which he is responsible to combat fraud conducted over the internet. [178927]

Paul Goggins: Government seeks to educate computer users about the risks of fraud facilitated using the internet. The Home Office website provides advice on avoiding internet fraud, while the Department of Trade and Industry has a campaign entitled "Don't be a Mug" advising on scams and rip-offs, including internet scams.

The Home Office has recently launched the 'e-tailing mini site', which forms part of the Crime Reduction Website. This provides information to help both businesses and consumers protect themselves specifically when using the internet. We have also recently published, jointly with APACS, a leaflet on safe credit card use. This includes a section on using cards safely over the internet.

The Home Office is represented on an industry-led Steering Group which aims to tackle 'Card Not Present' (CNP) fraud (which includes fraud over the internet). We support practical measures being introduced by the industry to increase levels of security for internet transactions. These include Address Verification Services (AVS), Card Security Code (CSC), Mastercard Secure Code and Verified by Visa which are already making a significant impact on CNP Fraud.

There is no specific organisation which has a specific mandate to combat fraud where it is facilitated utilising the internet.

There are however a range of specialist units within forces which investigate fraud cases, regardless of the media used to commit or facilitate the offence, consulting computer crime units as appropriate in cases where technical expertise is required. Where cases involve serious and organised computer-enabled criminality at national and international levels the case may be dealt with by the National Hi Tech Crime Unit (NHTCU) within the National Crime Squad.

The West African Organised Crime Section of the National Criminal Intelligence Service investigates cases of advance fee fraud—in which letters are widely distributed by post, fax and email—which commonly lead to fraud, personal identity theft and corporate impersonation. They also deal with cases of website spoofing and obtaining goods by deception by West African criminal groups.

Law enforcement is also engaged in public awareness and education campaigns. For instance in October 2003 NHTCU issued advice together with the British Bankers Association and Association of Payment and Card Services (APACS) on how the public could avoid phishing attacks.

LD50 Tests

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many LD50 tests were licensed in each year since 1997 for *(a)* cosmetics and *(b)* dual purpose products; how many of the licenses were issued to the Health Protection Agency; how many animals were involved in each case, broken down by (i) type and (ii) breed; and what products were tested. [181812]

Caroline Flint: No licensed LD50 tests have been conducted, under the regulatory provisions of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, since 1997—either for cosmetic products, or in respect of dual purpose products where one of the intended purposes is use as a cosmetic.

Ministerial Air Travel

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list for each year since 1997 the number of miles flown by each Minister on official departmental business. [181870]

Fiona Mactaggart: Detailed information for all Ministers in respect of UK travel is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for 2003–04 is currently being assembled and will be published shortly.

All ministerial and civil service travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code, Travel by Ministers, and Civil Service Management Code, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was for *(a)* ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department in the latest year for which figures are available. [182129]

Fiona Mactaggart: Detailed information for all Ministers (and staff) in respect of UK travel is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Money Laundering

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents possibly related to money laundering *(a)* the Inland Revenue and *(b)* Customs and Excise reported to the appropriate investigative agencies in each year since 1997; and how many prosecutions each year resulted from these reports. [185165]

Caroline Flint: Powers to allow the Inland Revenue to pass disclosures relating to incidents of suspected money laundering to other investigatory agencies came into force with other provisions of the Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 on 14 December 2001.

Since that time the number of disclosures passed to the appropriate agencies by the Inland Revenue in each tax year has been as follows:

	Number
2001–02	0
2002–03	3
2003–04	7

The Inland Revenue do not have the power to prosecute incidents of suspected money laundering.

For HM Customs and Excise (HMCE), the investigation of money laundering is an assigned matter with the result that, where investigators from the organisation discover incidences of its occurrence, they are empowered to investigate and prosecute the offence themselves and do not need to make disclosures to another agency.

HMCE may refer cases to another agency where their investigations find that money laundering is related to offences which are not assigned, for example people trafficking or robbery. Since 2001, 17 money laundering cases have been referred to other agencies for them to pursue.

The information provided by disclosures relating to incidents of money laundering is used by law enforcement agencies in a variety of ways to detect crime and trace the proceeds of criminal activity. For example, such information may contribute to an ongoing investigation, be the trigger for a new one, or be held on the relevant intelligence databases for future cases.

Given the variety of ways in which this information is used, it is not possible to link particular disclosures with particular prosecutions and convictions in the majority of cases.

Motoring Offences (Mobile Phones)

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance his Department has issued to police forces in England and Wales concerning the implementation of the ban on using hand-held mobile phones while driving; and what measures are in place to monitor its enforcement. [183931]

Caroline Flint: The new, specific, offence of using a hand-held phone while driving is intended to provide a simple, objective offence, the enforcement and prosecution of which does not depend on judgements of control or carelessness. The Association of Chief Police Officers have welcomed it as a straightforward method of dealing with this dangerous behaviour. The police will enforce the offence as operationally appropriate, and no specific guidance has been issued by the Government.

Data on action to enforce the new offence (written warnings, fixed penalty notices and court proceedings) will be available in autumn 2004.

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many motorists have been found using mobile phones whilst driving since 1 December 2003; and how many drivers were *(a)* fined on the spot, *(b)* successfully prosecuted and *(c)* driving vans, buses, coaches and lorries. [184796]

Caroline Flint: Data on police action (written warnings, fixed penalty notices and court proceedings) for the new offence of driving while using a hand held mobile telephone will not be available until the autumn of 2004. Information collected centrally does not identify the type of vehicle involved unless specific to the legislation. Use of a hands free mobile phone is not an offence.

National Firearms Database

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the project to develop a National Firearms Database was first initiated; when the system was completed and in operation; and what the total cost was of the project. [184901]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The requirement under section 39 of the Firearms (Amendment) Act 1997 for a central register of all persons who have applied for and been granted or refused a firearm or shot gun certificate is now being taken forward as part of a National Firearms Licensing Management System (NFLMS). I understand from the Police Information Technology Organisation that this project was initiated in September 2002. It is scheduled to be ready for service at the end of August 2004. The migration of individual force records from their local systems to NFLMS will take about six months to include all forces. The final cost of the project will not be available before then.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many representations his Department has received *(a)* in support of and *(b)* against the setting up of the National Offender Management Service. [171413]

Paul Goggins: We have received a total 264 responses to the initial consultation on the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and 177 responses to the consultation paper on the NOMS organisational design.

52 of these responses requested specific information or further copies of the consultation document. Of the responses that offered an opinion, over half, 114, offered general support for the new service and 98 expressed concern. Responses to the NOMS organisational design-consultation paper are currently being analysed.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to ensure that voluntary sector organisations have sufficient capacity to bid for contracts under the National Offender Management Service arrangements. [180972]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is in the process of establishing a Voluntary Sector Unit, which will have oversight of the relationship between NOMS and the voluntary and community sector. Identifying the capacity building requirements of the sector to enable organisations to participate as providers in NOMS and putting in place the ways of addressing these will form part of the work of the Unit.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish the business case for the introduction of contestability and market testing into the National Offender Management Service. [181815]

Paul Goggins: The case for the establishment of the National Offender Management Service was outlined in Patrick Carter's independent report 'Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime' published along with the Government response 'Reducing Crime—Changing Lives' on 6 January 04. This includes the case for increased competition and wider contestability.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the new IT systems *(a)* Community-Tag and *(b)* Institution-Tag will be integrated into the National Offender Management Service and the measures contained in the Criminal Justice Act 2003. [182310]

Paul Goggins: Proposed IT support for the integrated management of offenders, serving either custodial or community sentences, is being piloted using the TAG product from Syscon Justice Systems Ltd. over the next 12 months. The pilot is intended to confirm the business model of the National Offender Management Service and take into account new sentencing provisions.

Subject to successful completion of the pilot, approval to build and implement the new system will be sought with a view to implementation in 2006–07.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what responses he has received to the consultation document on the National Offender Management Service organisational design; and how many supported the proposals. [182311]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office has received 177 responses to the consultation paper on the National Offender Management Service's organisational design. The responses are currently being analysed.

Mr. Osten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff he expects to be employed by the National Offender Management Service on 1 June broken down by *(a)* grade and *(b)* function. [172409]

Paul Goggins: Currently the Prison Service has around 47,500 members of staff and the National Probation Service has around 19,000 full-time equivalent employees. The Correctional Services Head Quarters has around 400 staff.

All of these employees now come under the ambit of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). However as NOMS Directors are currently developing proposals for the shape, size and structure of the new Service, at this point in time we are unable to advise how this will be split in relation to grade or function.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many non-departmental public bodies for which his Department is responsible have been *(a)* established and *(b)* abolished since 1997. [182948]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office sponsors over 46 public bodies, of which 28 are non-departmental public bodies. Details of Home Office non-departmental public bodies are submitted annually to the Cabinet Office for their publication "Public Bodies", which is a series of annual publications, providing information on public bodies sponsored by Government. The latest publication being "Public Bodies 2003".

The information required for this PQ has been extracted from past editions of the Cabinet Office "Public Bodies" publications. Details of non-departmental public bodies that have been established and abolished since 1997 are shown in the table.

	(a) Established	*(b) Abolished*
1997–98	1	1
1998–99	3	1
1999–2000	2	0
2000–01	4	5
2001–02	1	3
2002–03	4	3

Obscene Websites

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are for meetings to be held between Ministers and computer manufacturers to discuss ways of limiting access to obscene websites, with particular reference to fitting filters at source. [184459]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The Government firmly believes that users of the internet should be able to control what they see, and in particular what children are able to see, online. We support the development of a range of products and approaches to

achieve this. Tools to enable such control can be applied by use of specific filtering software or by use of an Internet Service Provider which offers access controls as part of the internet connection "package". Pre-loaded safety software, pre-set at point of sale to a high safety level, would be one of these options. We are currently working with the British Standards Institute to develop a BSI "kitemark" for filtering products, which could help guide consumers in their choices. This development follows initial work done by the Task Force on Child Protection on the Internet.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are to provide funding to police authorities specifically for tackling obscene publications on the internet in terms of *(a)* manpower and *(b)* IT expertise. [184462]

Paul Goggins: Funding for this area of activity is met from within police authorities' own budgets. We have no plans to hypothecate the funding that police authorities should make available to tackle this particular issue.

Provision for policing in England and Wales has increased by over £2.3 billion (over 30 per cent.) since 2000–01. The recent Spending Review settlement will allow us to continue with this significant investment in policing, although we are still to decide the detailed allocation of the settlement.

The deployment of officers to deal with this issue and the training they receive is a matter for individual chief officers.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to *(a)* review and *(b)* propose amendments to the law governing obscene publications. [184463]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* We are concerned about the availability of obscene material, particularly on the internet. We are currently considering whether the law governing obscene publications should be strengthened. This issue was discussed during the adjournment debate on 18 May, which was obtained by my hon. Friend the Member for Brighton, Pavilion (Mr. Lepper).

Offender Behaviour Programmes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer to the right hon. Member for Haltemprice and Howden (David Davis) of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 331W, on offender behaviour programmes, how many completions of each programme there were at each privately run prison. [183994]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The following table gives information on the number of offending behaviour programmes that have been completed by prisoners at contracted out prison which provide these courses for 2003–04.

Offending behaviour programme	*Establishment*	*Number of course completions*
Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it (CALM)	HMP Wolds	19
Cognitive Skills Booster Programme	HMP Wolds	15
Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS)	HMP Altcourse	37
Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS)	HMP Doncaster	36
Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS)	HMP Dovegate	48
Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS)	HMP Forest Bank	35
Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)	HMP Dovegate	16
Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)	HMP Lowdham Grange	38
Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)	HMP Parc	47
Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)	HMP Rye Hill	55
Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)	HMP Wolds	33
Sex Offender Treatment Programme (core)	HMP Rye Hill	7
Sex Offender Treatment Programme (adapted)	HMP Rye Hill	17
Sex Offender Treatment Programme (rolling)	HMP Parc	21
Total number of Sex Offender Treatment Programme Completions (Post IQR)		45
Total number of Offender Behaviour Programme Completions (Post IQR)		469

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the accredited offender behaviour programmes that have been developed and accredited by private sector prison companies. [183995]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The Correctional Services Accreditation Panel (CSAP) accredits offending behaviour programmes for delivery to offenders in prison (and in the community under the auspices of the National Probation Service).

In March 2004 a "Democratic Therapeutic Community Core Model" was accredited by the CSAP. This model was a collaborative development between four public sector prisons (Grendon, Gartree, Winchester West Hill and Aylesbury) and one private sector prison (Dovegate). The work was co-ordinated by the 'What Works In Prison Unit' in HM Prison Service Headquarters. HMP Dovegate contributed the majority of new material in the accreditation submission relating to training for staff.

There have been no other programmes submitted by private sector prison companies, which have been accredited by CSAP.

Overseas Corruption Allegations

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much ring-fenced funding has been available to law enforcement agencies to deal with overseas corruption allegations in each of the last five years. [183447]

Paul Goggins: Implementation of Part 12 of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 Act (ATCS) forms part of the National Policing Plan. Each police authority will take the National Policing Plan into account when drawing up their Local Policing Plans.

As far as police authorities are concerned, every effort is made to allow police authorities as much scope as possible by not ring-fencing grant wherever feasible. In exceptional circumstances, the Home Secretary may be prepared to contribute to unforeseen costs within certain limits.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money has been repatriated, and to which overseas countries, as a result of corruption investigations in the UK in each of the last five years. [183448]

Caroline Flint: I am not aware of any instances of repatriation of funds as a result of corruption investigations over the past five years. The UK Central Authority (UKCA) in the Home Office received a total of 22 incoming requests for restraint and confiscation of assets in 2003, and has received 10 so far this year. However, more detailed statistics detailing the offences to which requests relate and whether funds have been repatriated are not available.

The UK is committed to assist its international partners in this area. It has signed the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which obliges parties to return assets to the requesting State where the case involves the embezzlement of public funds or the laundering of public funds.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government have to revise the legislation on corruption; and if he will make a statement. [183449]

Paul Goggins: The Government published a draft Corruption Bill in March 2003 for pre-legislative scrutiny in order to consolidate and clarify the criminal law on bribery. Pursuant to the Joint Committee report and recommendations, the Government published their reply to the Joint Committee in December 2003 setting out the extent to which it agreed with the Committee. It indicated that the intention is to introduce a revised Bill to Parliament in due course, which remains the position.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases are on the national register of overseas corruption allegations held by the National Criminal Intelligence Service; and of these how many are being investigated. [183450]

Caroline Flint: The National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) currently has 23 referrals on the Anti-terrorism and Crime Security Act register. Of those which it is possible to pursue, six are being considered by NCIS and six have been passed to law enforcement agencies for investigation under the Act.

Paedophiles

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Government's strategy is for monitoring repeat paedophiles returning to the community after release from prison. [184176]

Paul Goggins: The protection of the public from sexual and violent offenders is one of the Government's highest priorities, particularly where children are involved. The release of such offenders into the community requires the robust assessment and management of risk. Since April 2001 ensuring such arrangements are in place have been the responsibility of police and probation in each of the 42 Areas of England and Wales. The arrangements, which are known as the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), have recently been strengthened by the Criminal Justice Act (2003).

PFI/PPP Schemes

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the private finance initiative and public private partnership schemes his Department has entered into that have been subject to refinancing deals, indicating in each case how much of the windfall gain has been repaid to the Government. [179063]

Fiona Mactaggart: Her Majesty's Prison Altcourse was refinanced in 1999. HM Prison Service received payment of £1 million representing 9.3 per cent. share of the total refinancing gains and 20 per cent. of the amount requiring the Prison Service's consent under the contract.

Her Majesty's Prison Pare was refinanced in 2001. Her Majesty's Prison Service did not have a contractual right to share in the refinancing benefit and did not receive any share in this benefit.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* book value of the stakeholding, *(b)* onward sale price and *(c)* arrangements for sharing any windfall gain from subsequent refinancing arrangements are for each of the private finance initiative and public private partnership schemes his Department has entered into where there has been an onward sale of the private sector stakeholding into secondary market. [179066]

Fiona Mactaggart: From the best information available, there have been no instances where there has been an onward sale of the private sector stakeholding into a secondary market.

Police (Speeding)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many policemen have been fined for speeding whilst driving in police cars in each of the last three years. [185873]

Caroline Flint: The information is not collected centrally.

Police Intelligence Database

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made with his proposals for establishing a national police intelligence database; and if he will make a statement. [180794]

Caroline Flint: As announced by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary in his statement to the House on 22 June 2004, following publication of Sir Michael

Bichard's Report, the Government shall introduce the first national police intelligence computer system. Entitled "Impact", it will ensure that all forces use the same system to manage and share intelligence information. In the following debate, in answer to the hon. Member for Winchester (Mr. Oaten), the Home Secretary indicated Impact could be in operation in two years, building on the Police Local Exchange (PLX) which should be available next spring. In the meantime three phases are being taken forward. Firstly, Impact will combine intelligence and data from forces' operational systems to deliver real data sharing. This is happening as we speak and progress is encouraging. Secondly, Impact will have analysis tools to pick out patterns of crime. Thirdly, it will enable specific police operations, within and between forces, through briefing and tasking functions. The Police Information Technology Organisation is now undertaking a full feasibility study of the requirements and solutions to build a technical demonstrator by next spring.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will arrange for the early inspection of all police force intelligence systems before issuing the proposed statutory code. [181455]

Caroline Flint: The Police Information Technology Organisation will review and evaluate all intelligence systems available off-the-shelf either commercially or already within police forces as part of the work to build a technical demonstrator for the 'Impact' national intelligence system. Additionally, the data sharing phase of Impact will require a systems and data healthcheck in each force to prepare data held locally in a common format.

The National Policing Plan requires all forces to comply with the National Intelligence Model for gathering and analysis of criminal intelligence. The Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) minimum standards form part of the baseline assessment of forces undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). The National Centre for Policing Excellence will co-ordinate the additional guidance to forces recommended by Sir Michael Bichard. This Statutory Code will set out the standards to be monitored both through HMIC Inspections and the Police Standards Unit through the 'Policing Performance Assessment Framework'.

Polls/Focus Groups

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much his Department has spent on *(a)* opinion polling and *(b)* focus groups in each year since 2001. [185270]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office undertakes a wide range of research activities that support the development of information led policy.

The Department conducts or commissions such work only when it is justified by the specific needs of a particular policy or programme and when this is the most economical, efficient and effective way to achieve the purpose. Consulting and involving the public helps inform both policy formulation and the delivery of better quality public services.

Research programmes are often complex and combine a mixture of quantitative and qualitative elements. It is therefore not always possible to break down the separate costs of polling and focus group components from the overall cost of a research project. It has therefore not been possible to provide the breakdown requested without incurring disproportionate cost.

Prison Officers

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to regard assaults on prison officers in the execution of their duties as notifiable offences. [183445]

Paul Goggins: Assault is already a notifiable offence. There are no specific plans to make all assaults on prison officers separately notifiable.

In certain circumstances, assaults on a prison officer are already included in the recorded crime (notifiable offences) series. Any offence, which is reported to and investigated by the police, will be recorded as a notifiable offence by them.

However, a minor offence which is dealt with under prison discipline, would not usually be recorded by the police.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to regard prison officers as constables for the purposes of section 89 of the Police Act 1996. [183446]

Paul Goggins: There are no current plans to do so.

Prison Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison officers were employed by the Prison Service on a part-time basis on 31 March in each of the last five years. [183953]

Paul Goggins: The table contains the number of part-time officers in each year since 1999. The figures include prison officers, senior officers and principal officers.

31 March	*Number*
2004	662
2003	501
2002	343
2001	211
2000	142
1999	140

The figures for 1999 and 2000 are estimates.

There has been a significant increase in the number of officers working part-time, which is a reflection of the greater emphasis placed on work-life balance in recent years.

An addition, the Prison Service Equal Opportunities policy was issued in 2003 to encourage more staff to work part-time hours. This part of the Service's work-life balance policy, which also includes; job sharing and other flexible working patterns.

It is now the case that all posts including those on recruitment must be available on either a part-time or job-share basis, except where critical examination by line management shows the post to be unsuitable for part-time or job-share.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the prison population was on 31 March in each of the last five years. [183954]

Paul Goggins: The prison population in England and Wales on 31 March in each of the last five years is provided in the table.

Prison population, England and Wales, 31 March

	Number
2000	65,463
2001	65,394
2002	69,784
2003	72,954
2004	75,295

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have undertaken dirty protests in each of the last five years. [183955]

Paul Goggins: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been required to remain in a hospital overnight with prison officer supervision in each of the last five years. [183956]

Paul Goggins: This information is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the main benefits of competition within the Prison Service are. [182304]

Paul Goggins: Competitive tendering is one of the principles underlying Government purchasing activities and contributes to seeking and demonstrating good value for money. Additionally, requirements above certain financial thresholds stipulated by the EU have to be advertised in accordance with EU rules on public procurement.

Competition ensures that a contract is formed with the most suitable supplier in the market for the goods or services required. Checks undertaken as part of the procurement process will mean that the supplier is financially sound, technically and commercially capable of providing the goods or services, submits the best offer in value for money terms and can be expected to provide the goods or service successfully.

All of this reduces the risk to the Department of a failed contract and provides an audit trail that illustrates the department's commitment to an impartial selection and award process.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison healthcare officers were *(a)* in post and *(b)* planned to be in post on 31 March. [183983]

Paul Goggins: On 31 March 2004 the Prison Service corporate personnel database recorded 488 prison officer healthcare staff in post, compared to an operational staffing requirement of 550. This includes prison officer, senior officer and principal officer specialists. It excludes officers who are training to be specialist healthcare officers.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison healthcare officers there were in each prison establishment on 31 March in each of the last five years. [183984]

Paul Goggins: Information on the number of specialist healthcare officers within each public sector prison establishment for each year since 2001 is contained in the table. Prior to 2001, this data was not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The figures include prison officer, senior officer and principal officer specialists and are all on a headcount basis.

Specialist healthcare officers

Establishment	*31 March 2001*	*31 March 2002*	*31 March 2003*	*31 March 2004*
Acklington	3	2	1	—
Aylesbury	3	2	1	2
Bedford	4	3	2	2
Belmarsh	9	11	10	9
Birmingham	19	15	13	14
Blantyre House	1	1	1	1
Blundeston	3	3	2	—
Bristol	5	3	5	5
Brixton	23	21	13	11
Brockhill	1	—	—	—
Bullingdon	5	5	6	6
Canterbury	6	5	5	5
Cardiff	7	7	8	7
Castington	1	1	1	1
Channings Wood	3	3	3	4
Chelmsford	6	5	6	7
Coldingley	1	2	2	2
Dartmoor	8	6	6	4
Dorchester	3	3	2	2
Dover	3	2	2	2
Downview	2	1	1	—
Durham	9	7	6	6
Eastwood Park	—	—	1	—
Elmley	8	6	10	7
Everthorpe	2	1	1	—
Exeter	7	6	5	6
Featherstone	3	2	2	2
Feltham	6	5	4	15
Ford	2	1	1	1
Frankland	15	13	12	12
Full Sutton	14	11	7	6
Garth	14	14	12	6
Gartree	7	7	8	7
Glen Parva	5	5	4	2
Gloucester	5	4	4	2
Grendon	14	12	6	7
Guys Marsh	2	2	2	2
Haverigg	2	2	2	2
High Down	3	3	4	7
Highpoint	4	3	1	—
Hindley	11	12	10	8
Hollesley Bay	3	3	—	—
Holme House	8	7	7	8
HQ	1	4	3	1
Hull	11	8	11	10
Huntercombe	1	1	4	3
Kingston	4	3	3	2
Kirkham	1	1	1	1
Lancaster	—	—	—	1
Latchmere House	1	1	1	1

Specialist healthcare officers

Establishment	*31 March 2001*	*31 March 2002*	*31 March 2003*	*31 March 2004*
Leeds	17	14	14	14
Leicester	5	7	5	7
Lewes	11	8	5	4
Leyhill	1	2	1	1
Lincoln	16	14	8	8
Lindholme	3	3	3	2
Littlehey	5	5	2	2
Liverpool	41	35	34	28
Long Lartin	2	2	2	
Low Newton	2	2	2	2
Maidstone	2	2	1	1
Manchester	15	15	13	12
Moorland	15	15	13	13
New Hall	—	—	—	2
Northallerton	1	—	—	—
Norwich	10	8	10	9
Nottingham	9	8	8	6
Onley	2	2	2	2
Parkhurst	15	15	14	16
Pentonville	7	7	7	5
Portland	4	4	4	3
Preston	19	19	17	13
Ranby	4	6	5	5
Reading	4	4	5	5
Risley	2	2	2	1
Rochester	9	6	6	5
Send	1	—	—	—
Shrewsbury	2	—	—	—
Edmunds Hill	—	2	2	2
Stafford	9	8	6	4
Standford Hill	3	3	3	3
Stocken	2	1	—	—
Sudbury	2	1	1	1
Swaleside	4	5	5	8
Swansea	6	6	7	7
Swinfen Hall	5	3	1	1
The Mount	1	1	1	1
The Verne	1	—	—	—
Thorn Cross	2	2	3	3
Usk/Prescoed	—	—	—	1
Wakefield	16	14	14	14
Wandsworth	8	6	7	4
Warren Hill	—	—	4	5
Wayland	4	4	4	3
Wealstun	1	1	1	—
Weare	1	—	1	1
Werrington	2	3	4	2
Wetherby	1	2	2	2
Whitemoor	5	9	9	6
Winchester	13	12	13	11
Woodhill	12	20	16	14
Wormwood Scrubs	16	18	14	14
Wymott	—	—	—	6
Total	617	571	523	488

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the training programme is for prison healthcare officers; and how many officers have undertaken the training in each of the last five years. [183985]

Paul Goggins: This information is not available in precisely the form requested. Prison staff without nursing qualifications are eligible to become healthcare officers. The expectation is that they will obtain a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in custodial healthcare or another health-related subject.

The first pilot for the NVQ in custodial healthcare, which began in June 2002 with 53 candidates from 24 establishments, is due to be completed on 4 August 2004. The Prison Service is currently compiling information on which healthcare officers already have a relevant NVQ and who would like to obtain one.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison custody officer certificates have been withdrawn by his Department from staff at Her Majesty's Prison Bronzefield. [183986]

Paul Goggins: The Office for Contracted Prisons certifies all Prison Custody Officers. The Certification of the first Prison Custody Officer for HMP Bronzefield took place on the 10 June 2004. From this date 123 people have been certified to work at HMP Bronzefield as Prison Custody Officers. At present no certificates have been withdrawn.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the innovative working practices, methods and programmes that have been introduced at privately run prison establishments that have been subsequently introduced into publicly run prisons as best practice; and if he will make a statement. [184690]

Paul Goggins: There is no simple way to track the spread of innovative working practices between the private and public sectors of the Prison Service. However since the first private prison opened in 1992 significant improvements have been achieved in the treatment of prisoners, regimes and facilities, staff deployment and the use of technology. The introduction of contestability through Market Testing will further encourage the dissemination of good practice.

Probation Office (Leighton Buzzard)

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the probation office in Leighton Buzzard was closed; and what plans there are to re-open it. [182924]

Paul Goggins: The probation office in Leighton Buzzard was closed in 1997. The building has since been demolished and redeveloped as retirement flats. There are no current plans to re-open a probation office in Leighton Buzzard.

Probation Programmes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the evidential basis was for the decision to separate probation case management and accredited programme work within the National Offender Management Service structure. [178799]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 21 June 2004]*: Patrick Carter's independent report "Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime", published along with the Government response "Reducing Crime—Changing Lives" on 6 January 2004, recommended separating offender management from accredited programmes as a way of developing greater contestability.

Project Endurance

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on Project Endurance. [185435]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: Officials from the Home Office and other Government Departments are engaged in talks with industry and law enforcement representatives concerning a possible joint public awareness campaign regarding computer security and staying safe on line. These initial discussions have gone under the title of Project Endurance.

Public Order Act

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has given to police and magistrates on interpreting the meaning of what constitutes harassment, alarm and distress in Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986. [184065]

Caroline Flint: Home Office Circular 11/1987 provided guidance on section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986. The Circular has been supplemented by the decisions of the courts

Recidivism

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has commissioned research into the effectiveness of programme and case management integration on *(a)* programme completion and *(b)* re-offending rates. [181814]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office's National Probation Directorate (NPD) has commissioned one study that looked at the relationship between case management and accredited programme completion in the Probation Service. The research was conducted by Oxford University and it was managed and published by the National Probation Directorate in 2004. The Home Office's Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS) has evaluated it. The published findings "Think First Prospective Research Study: Effectiveness and Reducing Attrition" are available on the National Probation Service website (www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk).

The research found that good case management was associated with improved completion rates of the Think First programme. Of greatest value was when case management involved intense supervision around the start of the programme, support with personal problems, and frequent contact after completion of the programme to assist offenders in using what had been learnt.

NPD is planning to carry out a study to look at the impact of the Think First programme on reconviction rates (an established proxy measure for re-offending). The results should be available in 2005.

Also, the Home Office RDS is carrying out a systematic review of the international evidence in what works in offender management in the delivery of correctional services to reduce re-offending. The results from this are expected to be available in 2005.

Regional Offender Management

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he will ensure that Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements boards will continue to function locally under regional offender management arrangements. [181816]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) will build upon the range of work probation boards undertake at a local level. The significant contribution the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements have made to public protection will form a key part of the core offender management function within NOMS.

Operationally MAPPA usually function at a local rather than area level and will continue to do so under the arrangements for NOMS. The Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels, which oversee the management of the highest risk offenders, will continue to manage the risks posed by the individual offenders in question.

Rehabilitation Regimes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he will measure the impact of *(a)* prison regimes and *(b)* probation work with individual offenders, if those offenders (i) move prisons and (ii) move probation areas. [167521]

Paul Goggins: Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) is planned as a longitudinal survey of a representative sample of around 4,000 new prisoners. The study will examine the range of interventions that prisoners receive during their sentence and whether these make a difference during and after custody. Tracking the movement of prisoners between establishments will be an important part of this work.

A parallel study of offenders on community sentences is also planned. Investigating Targeting, Tailoring and Sequencing of Interventions on Re-offending of Offenders on Community Sentences (ITTSI) will explore how interventions work in combination to address the range of criminogenic needs of offenders on community sentences. It will track a large and representative sample of offenders; profile offenders and their needs; track experiences of interventions; and evaluate the impact of interventions in combination on reducing re-offending. The research will also aim to track any offender from the cohort who moves out of the study probation areas.

Shotgun Licensing

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of people who will be affected by changes to the licensing on shotgun ownership; what assessment he has made of the effect of the proposed changes on the number of crimes committed; how many crimes were committed with licensed shotguns in the last year for which figures are available; and what estimate he has made of the cost of implementation of the new arrangements. [185203]

Caroline Flint: The Government have made no specific proposals for changes to the arrangements for licensing shotgun owners. Our consultation paper on firearms control seeks views by 31 August on a range of issues concerning the use and possession of firearms. We will consider all responses carefully before deciding what needs to be done, if anything, to improve existing controls. There were 561,762 shot gun certificates on

issue at the end of March 2003. Shot guns were used to commit 671 recorded crimes in 2002–03; it is not known how many of these were legally held.

Departmental Publications (Storage)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183872]

Fiona Mactaggart: Latest stock records show that 1,745 titles relating to the Home Office are currently in storage. This includes a wide range of departmental publications including policy and consultation documents, crime reduction materials, research documents and other public information literature.

Stock levels are monitored to ensure that only regularly ordered materials are retained.

Publications are stored by our contracted Data Management and Distribution Warehouse Prolog UK (Phase 2), Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottinghamshire NG15 ODJ.

Crime Victims

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* road use related crime victims and *(b)* non-road use related crime victims there were in the last year for which figures are available. [183549]

Caroline Flint: In Great Britain in 2002, 3,431 people were killed in road traffic incidents, 35,976 were seriously injured and 263,198 were slightly injured. A proportion of these would have involved serious motoring offences such as Careless Driving, Dangerous Driving and Causing Death by Dangerous Driving.

Information is not available on the number of victims of other forms of road use related crime, such as unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle and aggravated vehicle taking or on victims of any other types of criminal offence. However, police recorded crime statistics for 2002–03 show that out of a total of 5,899,450 offences, a range of incidents related specifically to road use, as detailed in the table.

Offence	*Number of offences*
Dangerous driving	7,551
Aggravated vehicle taking	11,530
Theft from a vehicle	658,740
Vehicle interference and tampering	91,653
Criminal damage to a vehicle	428,110
Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	305,654
Total	1,503,238

The remaining 4,396,212 recorded offences related largely to non-road use crime.

Visas (China)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government has changed its policy on assessing visa applications from Chinese students. [184880]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

There has been no change in the policy on assessing applications from Chinese students although procedures for processing applications have been revised.

Our visa teams across China are working hard to ensure a proper balance between the facilitation of genuine student applications and effective immigration control. They have now developed better mechanisms to identify the increasing problem of visa and document abuse. Visa sections in China have also altered the procedures covering the assessment of student applications. This has streamlined the process and provided a more convenient service to the applicant, whilst reflecting increased concerns over the level of visa abuse, relating to the student market in China.

Water Consumption

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the non-office sites within his Department's estates that have been identified as being likely to provide opportunities for significant water savings. [182227]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service has benchmarked water consumption on their estate. This has identified some 71 sites that are consuming more than typical consumption benchmark. These are as follows

HMP Askham Grange

HMP North Sea Camp

HMP Brixton

HMP Haverigg

HMP Portsmouth Kingston

HMP Ford

HMP Foston Hall

HMP Full Sutton

HMP Long Lartin

HMP Garth

HMP Maidstone

HMP Grendon/Springhill

HMP Send

HMP Chelmsford

HMP Preston

HMP Swaleside/HMP Elmley

HMP Moorland

HMP and YOI Guys Marsh

HMP Blantyre House

HMP Wayland

HMP Dorchester

HMP Pentonville

HMP Bullwood Hall

HMP Highpoint

HMYOI Deerbolt
HMP Standford Hill
HMP Hewell Grange
HMP Canterbury
HMP Wolds
HMP High Down
HMP Leeds
HMP Coldingley
HMP Frankland
HMP Featherstone
HMP Wymott
HMP The Mount
HMP Sudbury
HMP Lindholme
HMP Lancaster
HMP Shotts
HMP Porterfield
HMP Acklington/Castington
HMP Lewes
HMP Wandsworth
HMP Gloucester
HMYOI Huntercombe
HMYOI Dover
HMP Barlinnie
HMYOI Brinsford
HMP Kirkham
HMP Peterhead
HMP Hollesley Bay
HMP East Sutton Park
HMP Leyhill
HMP Prescoed
HMYOI Thorn Cross
HMP Parkhurst
HMP Edinburgh
HMYOI Swinfen Hall
HMP Holloway
HMP Woodhill
HMP Latchmere House
HMP Blantyre House
HMP Wayland
HMP Dorchester
HMP Pentonville
HMP Bullwood Hall
HMP Highpoint
HMYOI Deerbolt
HMP Standford Hill
HMP Hewell Grange
HMP Canterbury
HMP Wolds
HMP High Down
HMP Leeds
HMP Coldingley
HMP Frankland
HMP Featherstone
HMP Wymott
HMP The Mount
HMP Sudbury
HMP Lindholme
HMP Lancaster
HMP Shotts
HMP Porterfield
HMP Acklington/Castington
HMP Lewes
HMP Wandsworth
HMP Gloucester
HMYOI Huntercombe
HMYOI Dover
HMP Barlinnie
HMYOI Brinsford
HMP Kirkham
HMP Peterhead
HMP Hollesley Bay
HMP East Sutton Park
HMP Leyhill
HMP Prescoed
HMYOI Thorn Cross
HMP Parkhurst
HMP Edinburgh
HMYOI Swinfen Hall
HMP Holloway
HMP Woodhill
HMP Latchmere House
HMP New Hall
HMP Wealstun
HMP and YOI Drake Hall
HMP/RC Exeter
HMP Doncaster
HMYOI Werrington
HMP Portland
HMYOI Portland
HMP North Sea Camp
HMP Haverigg
HMP Ford
HMP Full Sutton
HMP Garth
HMP Grendon/Springhill
HMP Chelmsford
HMP Swaleside/HMP Elmley
HMP and YOI Guys Marsh

Immigration Removal Centres, Contracted Out Prisons and Forensic Science Service Laboratories have not been benchmarked, but their sites listed as follows, may have a potential for significant water savings.

Immigration Removal Centres

Campsfield House
Colnbrook
Dover
Forest Bank
Haslar
Lindholme
Oakington

Tinsley House
Yarls Wood
Dungavel

Privately Managed Prisons

Altcourse
Ashfield
Dovegate
Forest Bank
Lowdham Grange
Parc
Rye Hill
Bronzefield
Doncaster
The Wolds

Forensic Science Service Laboratories

Lambeth
Huntingdon
Chepstow
Chorley
Wetherby
Priory House
Trident Court

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies of the Department have spent on water and sewerage services in each year since 1997; [182218]

(2) what changes there have been in water consumption by his Department between each year since 1997. [182226]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service has collected its water consumption and cost figures centrally for the period covered by the question. The non-prison estate has only been collecting water consumption figures for key office buildings since 1999–2000, when these figures were included in the annual "Sustainable Development in Government" annual reports (previously known as the Greening Government annual report). As these reports only required consumption per staff member figures, information on consumption prior to 2001–02 was not retained. The figures are set out in the table.

	Prison			*Non-prison*		
	Cost (£000)	*Consumption (m3)*	*Consumption per prisoner (m3)*	*Cost (£)*	*Consumption (m3)*	*Consumption per staff member (m3)*
1997–98	10,512	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998–99	11,172	8,598,181	138.7	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	11,312	8,313,496	138.4	n/a	n/a	16
2000–01	9,491	8,123,215	138.0	n/a	n/a	15
2001–02	10,041	8,361,421	135.8	n/a	143,091	13.9
2002–03	10,761	8,147,572	125.7	176,000	202,520	12.7
2003–04	11,127	7,661,278	114.4	[1]	[1]	[1]

n/a = not available
[1] Not yet known

Notes:
1. The non-prison figures relate to key office buildings in the core Home Office and UK Passport Agency.
2. The figures do not include any Home Office sponsored non-departmental public bodies.
3. The Prison Service figures for 2003–04 are provisional.

Watermark Project

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department has joined the Watermark project. [182225]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office joined the Watermark project in 2001.

HEALTH

Social Work Degree

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many bursaries have been taken up by students studying for the new social work degree. [185525]

Dr. Ladyman: The total number of social work bursaries awarded by the General Social Care Council in the 2003–04 academic year was 7,626.

This represents students on the new degree and diploma in social work programmes. It is not possible to separately identify those on the new degree.

Alzheimer's Disease

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people *(a)* under the age of 40, *(b)* aged 40 to 50 and *(c)* aged 50 to 60 years are (i) diagnosed with Alzheimer's and (ii) receiving NHS treatment for Alzheimer's. [185414]

Dr. Ladyman: Although the Department does not routinely collect information on the number of people diagnosed with dementia, there are an estimated 750,000 people with dementia in the United Kingdom, of whom around 400,000 have Alzheimer's disease (around 55 per cent.). Around 18,000 of the total number of people with dementia are aged under 65 years.

Anaphylaxis

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in England have died from anaphylaxis in each of the last five years; how many hospital doctors in England have received specialist training in the treatment of anaphylaxis; and what plans he has to fund further *(a)* research and *(b)* professional development in this field. [184431]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of deaths in England and Wales between 1998–2002 where one or more of the conditions mentioned on the death certificate was classified as anaphylactic shock by the International Classification of Diseases (ICD).

Number of deaths where the underlying or one of the contributory causes of death was classified as anaphylactic shock[1] England and Wales, 1998 to 2002[2]

Calendar year	*Number of deaths*
1998	9
1999	12
2000	11
2001	3
2002	10

[1] Causes of death were classified as anaphylactic shock for the years 1998 to 2000 using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes

995.0—Anaphylactic shock
999.4—Anaphylactic shock due to serum

and for the years 2001 and 2002 using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes

T78.0—Anaphylactic shock due to adverse food reaction
T78.2—Anaphylactic shock, unspecified
T80.5—Anaphylactic shock due to serum
T88.6—Anaphylactic shock due to adverse effect of correct drug or medicament properly administered.

[2] Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Information is not available centrally on hospital doctors who have received specialist training in anaphylaxis. Post registration training needs for national health service staff are determined against local NHS priorities, through appraisal processes and training needs analyses informed by Local Delivery Plans and the needs of the service.

The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body which receives its grant-in-aid from the Office of Science and Technology. The Medical Research Council does not currently fund any research directly on anaphylaxis. However, the Council does fund a considerable amount of basic underpinning research in immunology and allergy which may lead to further understanding of the mechanisms involved.

Antipsychotic Drugs

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many prescription items were dispensed in the community in England for atypical antipsychotic drugs, in each of the last three years *(a)* broken down by health authority and *(b)* in total; and if he will make a statement; [184801]

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (2) how many prescription items were dispensed in the community in England for all antipsychotic drugs, in each of the last three years *(a)* broken down by health authority and *(b)* in total; and if he will make a statement. [184802]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the numbers of prescription items of atypical traditional and all antipsychotic drugs dispensed in the community in England in each of the last three years broken down by strategic health authority is shown in the table.

Number of prescription items of antipsychotics dispensed in the community in England by strategic health authorities, 2001 to 2003

Thousand

	Number of prescription items of Atypical Antipsychotics			*Number of prescription items of Traditional Antipsychotics*			*Number of prescription items of all Antipsychotics*		
Strategic health authority in which dispensed	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	72.5	98.2	124.0	146.3	131.2	121.2	218.8	229.4	245.2
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	55.8	73.8	88.1	63.1	53.7	47.8	119.0	127.5	135.9
Essex	54.3	70.7	87.3	73.0	62.8	56.5	127.2	133.4	143.8
North West London	65.5	87.6	104.9	71.0	60.0	51.8	136.5	147.6	156.7
North Central London	53.4	69.0	80.0	57.0	47.8	41.9	110.4	116.8	121.9
North East London	57.6	75.3	94.3	61.7	53.4	47.8	119.4	128.7	142.0
South East London	54.7	72.0	86.9	59.7	48.6	42.0	114.5	120.6	128.9
South West London	55.8	71.7	86.0	53.7	45.1	40.9	109.5	116.8	127.0
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	71.0	90.3	108.9	83.5	70.5	61.4	154.5	160.9	170.2
County Durham and Tees Valley	40.5	54.2	71.1	83.5	72.2	65.8	124.0	126.5	137.0
North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire	51.1	72.9	94.2	100.1	90.3	79.4	151.1	163.2	173.6
West Yorkshire	96.9	128.5	159.2	133.4	119.5	110.7	230.3	247.9	270.0
Cumbria and Lancashire	86.7	118.5	148.9	134.9	120.3	108.0	221.7	238.8	256.8
Greater Manchester	122.6	168.1	218.1	223.3	194.6	178.6	345.8	362.6	396.7
Cheshire and Merseyside	121.5	162.0	200.4	180.6	161.1	146.2	302.1	323.1	346.6
Thames Valley	70.3	94.0	115.8	81.2	70.4	62.2	151.5	164.4	178.0
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	76.8	101.2	123.0	94.0	81.6	75.1	170.9	182.8	198.1
Kent and Medway	59.9	79.0	96.8	76.2	63.4	56.3	136.1	142.4	153.2
Surrey and Sussex	90.1	117.4	147.7	141.6	120.7	104.9	231.7	238.1	252.5
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	73.4	101.7	127.6	120.7	103.7	92.4	194.1	205.5	220.0
South West Peninsula	62.7	82.3	100.1	109.4	95.3	83.6	172.2	177.6	183.7
Somerset and Dorset	37.8	51.9	64.7	65.1	57.4	50.5	102.9	109.3	115.2
South Yorkshire	37.8	52.0	68.3	94.2	83.7	75.3	132.0	135.7	143.6
Trent	54.1	77.5	103.4	171.6	153.3	136.1	225.7	230.8	239.5
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	43.6	60.5	78.5	80.2	72.2	68.3	123.8	132.7	146.8

Number of prescription items of antipsychotics dispensed in the community in England by strategic health authorities, 2001 to 2003

Thousand

Strategic health authority in which dispensed	Number of prescription items of Atypical Antipsychotics			Number of prescription items of Traditional Antipsychotics			Number of prescription items of all Antipsychotics		
	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003
Shropshire and Staffordshire	43.6	58.6	73.8	85.5	73.7	66.8	129.2	132.3	140.6
Birmingham and the Black Country	76.4	105.9	137.4	150.1	131.5	118.0	226.5	237.4	255.4
West Midlands South	55.4	76.3	94.3	81.2	68.9	61.9	136.6	145.3	156.2
England	1,842.0	2,471.3	3,083.7	2,876.0	2,507.2	2,251.3	4,718.0	4,978.5	5,335.0

Notes:
1. PCA data covers all prescription items that are dispensed in the community in England, (this covers items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors, dispensing doctors, and prescriptions submitted by prescribing doctors for items personally administered PCA data does not include items dispensed in hospitals or private prescriptions.
2. Antipsychotics are defined in the British National Formulary (BNF) paragraph 4.2.1, antipsychotic drugs. Atypical antipsychotics cover the drugs Amisulpride, Clozapine, Olanzapine, Quetiapine, Risperidone, Sertindole and Zotepine contained within BNF 4.2.1. Antipsychotic depot injections (BNF 4.2.2) have been excluded from this analysis, the same as the StHA in which the drug was prescribed.
3. The information by Strategic Health Authority (StHA) is the StHA in which the drug was dispensed in the community. This is not necessarily
4. Doctors, dentists or nurses write prescriptions on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.

Source:
Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) data from the Prescription Pricing Authority

Art Therapy

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what contribution art therapy has made towards patient treatment and recovery within the NHS; and what plans the Government has to recruit more art therapists. [185366]

Mr. Hutton: The Department has not recently commissioned or undertaken a national review of the contribution of art therapy. Primary care trusts (PCTs) have the responsibility for improving the health of the community, securing the provision of high quality services and integrating health and social care locally. They are also responsible for addressing the service needs of their local communities and developing the workforce they require to deliver services. In commissioning services, PCTs need to plan local services near to patients and ensure that they are identifying the health needs of patients and securing services for them. It is for PCTs, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Bacterial Meningitis

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the cost of providing a booster vaccination for bacterial meningitis; [185408]

(2) what plans he has to introduce a booster vaccination programme for bacterial meningitis; and if he will make a statement. [185409]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Since the meningitis C vaccine was introduced into the United Kingdom, rates of this disease have fallen by over 90 per cent.

We currently have no plans to introduce a booster dose. However, we carefully monitor rates of disease and other evidence to ensure our vaccination programme offers the most effective and safest protection.

Bed Occupancy

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the bed occupancy rates were in *(a)* England, *(b)* each strategic health authority and *(c)* each NHS hospital trust in each year since 1996. [184098]

Mr. Hutton: Information on beds is collected on a provider basis from national health service organisations and the latest data available are for the year 2002–03. Beds data for 2003–04 will be published later this year.

The table shows the average occupancy rate for England between 1996–97 and 2002–03.

NHS organisation data are available from the Department's website from 2000–01 at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/index.htm. Beds data from 1987–88 to 1999–2000 are available in the Library.

Average daily number of available and occupied beds in wards open overnight, England, 1996–97 to 2002–03

Percentage occupancy

	All specialties	General and acute
1996–97	81.3	80.8
1997–98	80.9	80.5
1998–99	82.5	82.5
1999–2000	82.7	83.1
2000–01	84.0	84.7
2001–02	85.1	86.0
2002–03	85.4	86.5

Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Births/Terminations

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* births and *(b)* terminations there were of babies with Down's Syndrome in each of the last five years; [181536]

(2) how many *(a)* births and *(b)* terminations there were of babies with (i) spina bifida, (ii) heart defects and (iii) kidney problems recognised during pregnancy in each of the last five years; [181538]

(3) if he will estimate the percentage of terminations conducted in each of the past 10 years on account of potential handicap of the baby; [181539]

(4) if he will estimate the number of terminations conducted on account of *(a)* foot deformities, *(b)* cleft lips and *(c)* cleft palates in each of the past five years. [181541]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is published annually in the Office for National Statistics publication, "Congenital Anomaly Statistics Notifications", series MB3; copies of which are available in the Library.

In each of the past 10 years, one per cent. of the total number of abortions performed on residents of England and Wales were performed under section 1(1)*(d)* of the Abortion Act 1967 (that there is a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped).

Bureaucracy

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his Written Statement of 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 61–4WS, on bureaucracy, (1) what the budget of each arm's length body is in this financial year; and how many staff in each body are *(a)* providing duplicated functions and *(b)* involved in unnecessary regulatory and policy activities; [176714]

(2) if he will list the arm's length bodies he has identified which could be moved to a more independent status with greater stakeholder control; [176717]

(3) how many of the planned 25 per cent. fewer staff posts will be lost through *(a)* natural wastage, *(b)* compulsory redundancy, *(c)* transfer to another arm's length body and *(d)* transfer to his Department; [176715]

(4) if he will list the arm's length bodies he has identified to be merged or closed; and which of these was created in the last six years; [176716]

(5) if he will list the unnecessary regulatory and policy activities identified in the review of arm's length bodies. [176718]

Ms Rosie Winterton: For budgetary information, I refer the hon. Member to the reply sent to the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr. Lansley) today.

A report on the Department's review of its arm's length bodies was published today by way of a written statement.

Canteen Facilities

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost was of running the Department of Health's canteen facilities in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [184553]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The Department's canteen facilities are run on a nil subsidy basis and there is no direct payment to the catering contractor. Utilities to the canteen facilities are provided free of charge, but are not separately metered and cost cannot be apportioned.

Children of Related Parents

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information he makes available to the public concerning the possible health implications for children born from patients who are cousins or otherwise related. [183781]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Specific guidance or information is not issued direct to the public concerning the possible health implications for children born from parents who are related. National Health Service genetics counselling services are provided for families affected by genetic disorders, appropriate to their needs and circumstance, irrespective of whether the parents are related or not.

Civil Service Recruitment

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisors. [185460]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Boateng) on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 190W.

Continuing Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many of *(a)* the total number of applicants for NHS continuing care funding and *(b)* the number of successful applicants who are awarded continuing care suffer from (i) a form of dementia and (ii) Alzheimer's disease; and if he will make a statement; [185991]

(2) how many people in receipt of NHS continuing care are *(a)* living in their own home, *(b)* living in a care home and *(c)* in hospital, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement; [185995]

(3) what the average funding per week is for those who receive fully funded NHS continuing care; and if he will make a statement. [186008]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not routinely collect, or hold, this data centrally.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action NHS bodies have taken to make local people aware of the available process for review of cases where applicants may have been wrongly denied NHS continuing care. [185992]

Dr. Ladyman: Continued national coverage, through the media and the health service ombudsman's reports, has ensured a high level of awareness and National Health Service bodies have used a range of actions to further improve awareness of the recompense process. These methods include working with voluntary bodies, local media interviews, advertising within local newspapers or other publications and case finding.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average length of time is between a local health authority making a decision about an applicant's eligibility for NHS continuing care and informing the applicant about that decision; [185997]

(2) what the average length of time taken to process an application for fully funded NHS continuing care is, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [186007]

Dr. Ladyman: This data is not collected by the Department. As stated in Directions, published earlier this year, when an individual has been assessed for fully funded National Health Service continuing care and is dissatisfied with the outcome, a review should be completed
within two weeks of the individual registering their dissatisfaction.

A Written Ministerial Statement, made to the House 22 June 2004, stated that it is expected that all reviews as a result of the Health Service Ombudsman's 2003 report will be completed within two months of all the information on the case being received by the strategic health authority.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rejected applications for NHS continuing care since 2000 have been overturned following an appeal, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [185998]

Dr. Ladyman: My written statement, of 22 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 78WS, details the number of cases which, as a result of the Health Service Ombudsman's 2003 report, have undergone a retrospective review, and the number found to have been wrongly assessed, broken down by strategic health authority.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how often a person in receipt of NHS continuing care must be re-assessed to ascertain whether they are still eligible for this funding; and if he will make a statement. [185999]

Dr. Ladyman: As care is needs based, individuals should be reassessed when their needs change to ensure that they continue to receive the correct level and type of care. This was reiterated and reinforced in the Continuing Care (National Health Service Responsibilities) Directions.

Correspondence

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if his Department will respond to the letters written by the hon. Member for Bexhill and Battle on *(a)* 13 May and *(b)* 24 June to the hon. Member for Doncaster, Central regarding the inquiry into clinical governance at the Conquest hospital, East Sussex before the House rises on 22 July. [185502]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I responded to the hon. Member on 22 July.

Dentistry

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce a returners scheme for NHS dental practitioners. [183328]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A scheme for dental returners was launched in June. This provides incentives for dentists to return to practice. It is operated by the recruitment and returning advisers in each strategic health authority who liase with individual dentists and assess the level of support they may need.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of Government funding for dentistry services was in *(a)* Wales, *(b)* England, *(c)* Herefordshire and *(d)* Worcestershire in each year since 1997. [183946]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The gross and net fees paid to dentists for the provision of general dental services (GDS) represent the main element of primary dental care costs and are the data most readily available by health authority area. Data since 1997 is shown in the table. These figures exclude some payments to dentists such as commitment payments, maternity and seniority payments as well as superannuation payments made on their behalf. There is a discontinuity in the figures for Hampshire and Worcestershire in the middle of 2002–03 because of the change in health administration areas.

Community, personal and hospital dental services have not been included in this table; these are directly commissioned by individual health authorities from locally managed resources rather than funded from a central national budget as is the case with the GDS.

NHS dental service: gross and net fees paid for by the GDS
March ending each year

£ million

Year/health authority (HA)/primary care trust (PCT)	*Gross fees*	*Net fees*[1]
1997–98		
England	1,271.0	882.2
Wales	73.3	52.4
Herefordshire HA	4.5	2.8
Worcestershire HA	13.5	8.7
1998–99		
England	1,351.90	931.8
Wales	78.4	55.9
Herefordshire HA	4.9	3.0
Worcestershire HA	13.9	9.1
1999–2000		
England	1,394.3	962.1
Wales	81.8	58.1
Herefordshire HA	5.0	3.1
Worcestershire HA	14.3	9.3
2000–01		
England	1,453.6	1,000.2
Wales	85.3	60.7
Herefordshire HA	5.0	3.2
Worcestershire HA	14.5	9.3
2001–02		
England	1,502.3	1,032.3
Wales	87.7	63.2
Herefordshire HA	5.0	3.3
Worcestershire HA	14.9	9.7

NHS dental service: gross and net fees paid for by the GDS March ending each year

£ million

Year/health authority (HA)/primary care trust (PCT)	*Gross fees*	*Net fees*[1]
2002–03		
First half of 2002–03		
England	769.6	529.6
Wales	50.4	28.6
Herefordshire HA	2.4	1.6
Worcestershire HA	7.5	4.9
Second half of 2002–03		
England	774.1	532.5
Wales	45.9	32.9
Herefordshire PCT	2.3	1.6
South Worcestershire PCT	3.8	2.4
Redditch and Bromsgrove PCT	2.5	1.7
Wyre Forest PCT	1.5	1.0
2003–04		
England	1,589.2	1,105.5
Wales	92.5	66.8
Herefordshire PCT	4.5	3.1
South Worcestershire PCT	7.9	5.2
Redditch and Bromsgrove PCT	5.3	3.6
Wyre Forest PCT	2.8	2.0

[1] Exclude patient charge

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists left the national health service in each of the last seven years. [185871]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the total number of dentists leaving the general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) is given in the table. Information is not available on the reason for leaving. The leavers include dentists who are retiring or taking a career break.

General dental service and personal dental service: Number of leavers at 30 September each year—England and Wales

	Exits
1998	1,000
1999	1,066
2000	1,228
2001	1,257
2002	1,374
2003	1,256

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Dentists on the GDS and PDS are mainly self-employed and are free to vary the amount of national health service work they do. Information is not collected on private working.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many copies of his Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183887]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table. The Departmental report is also available free of charge via the Department's website.

£000

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Number printed	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,500	1,500	1,500
Number sold	n/a	750	672	605	634	507	463	[1]342
Publication cost (£)[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	37,865	42,253	31,668	18,282	27,626

Notes:
n/a = Information not available.
[1] The Stationery Office has indicated that it expects further sales of around 100 copies.
[2] The publication costs are those that fall directly to the Department for design, typesetting and artwork. Il remaining costs for printing and publication were met centrally by the Stationery Office

Departmental Priorities

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the Chancellor of the Exchequer and *(b)* the Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury regarding departmental priorities. [180531]

Mr. Hutton: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has been in regular discussions with the Chancellor and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Epilepsy (Dogs)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will commission research into the use of dogs trained to alert people with epilepsy of an impending fit; and if he will make a statement. [184208]

Dr. Ladyman: No. The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology. In 2001–02 it spent £3.65 million on research into epilepsy. The Department's national health service research and development programme is additionally supporting a £1.35 million trial of longer term clinical outcomes and cost effectiveness of standard and new antiepileptic drugs.

Food Labelling

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what checks his Department makes on the accuracy of food labelling; what amendments to the requirements he has considered; what representations he has received on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [185146]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Food labelling rules, which are agreed at European Union level, prohibit false or misleading labelling. Local authorities enforce them. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) carries out ad-hoc surveys, in close co-operation with local authorities, to

check the accuracy of certain aspects of labelling, for example where new methodology is being employed to tackle suspected food problems.

Where ad-hoc surveys identify shortcomings in current legislation, these may be resolved through the establishment of FSA or industry guidance or by working toward changes in EU legislation.

Foundation Trusts

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost has been of conducting elections for the membership of boards on the proposed foundation trusts, broken down by *(a)* staff costs, *(b)* costs of payments to the Electoral Reform Society, *(c)* costs of setting up databases, *(d)* publicity, *(e)* recruitment of members and *(f)* public consultations. [185639]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* The cost of conducting elections is a matter for each national health service organisation applying for NHS foundation trust status. These costs will not be entirely additional, as they will replicate some current activity that trusts are already doing around informing the public, patients and staff about issues affecting each trust.

General Practitioners (Out-of-hours Service)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact on hospital emergency services of Nottingham general practitioners shifting their out-of-hours service to an arm's length provider. [184968]

Dr. Ladyman: There is to be no change to the pattern of provision for 80 per cent. of Nottingham residents already served by the general practitioner co-operative, Nottingham Emergency Medical Services (NEMS), and which have been in place for six years. Rather than an 'arm's length provider', NEMS is currently constituted as a not-for-profit GP co-operative with over 300 GP members. It will be moving in 2005 to a community interest mutual company with significant local population and stakeholder involvement.

No adverse impact of the NEMS service on emergency care has been identified by local emergency services and only 1 per cent. of out-of-hours patient contacts are referred to emergency services by NEMS. NEMS is an active participant of the local emergency care network and continues to have a close working relationship with other local emergency care services.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of calls to National Emergency Medical Services doctors in Nottingham resulted in *(a)* a home visit by the doctor and *(b)* a vehicle being sent to collect the patient in the last year for which figures are available. [184972]

Dr. Ladyman: 7,406, or 12.4 per cent. of all out-of-hours patient contacts with Nottingham Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) resulted in a home visit last year. Over 70 per cent. of the visits were done in under two hours.

2,951, or 5 per cent. of all out-of-hours patients who contacted NEMS used NEMS transport last year. Out-of-hours patient transport was introduced voluntarily by NEMS when it began operations in 1998. It is to support access to care for patients unable to access alternative means of transport to the NEMS primary care centre. The service is free and ensures that the patient is returned home after their consultation.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185126]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department is a key player in supporting the Government's objective of building a fair, inclusive and economically thriving society through improving and protecting the health and social well being of the people of England. Sustainable development is an intrinsic part of this aim.

As the Department's Green Minister, I have a number of responsibilities that help underpin sustainable development goals. These include health inequalities, healthy eating, for example, '5 a Day', and physical activity, such as activity co-ordination teams. My on-going portfolio of work in these, and other, areas actively contributes to the delivery of sustainable development. Further details of the Department's work in these areas can be found at: http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/fs/en

Recent work has centred on the Department's public health consultation, Choosing Health? We are working closely with colleagues in the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that our proposals in the 'Choosing Health?' consultation encompass the broad aims of sustainable development, particularly with respect to improving health, promoting community development and social justice.

I recently spoke about the 'Choosing Health?' consultation at a meeting of the sustainable development taskforce.

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost was of conducting the elections of public and patients to the board of Guy's and St. Thomas' Foundation Trust; and if he will break down the total, by sums for *(a)* staff costs, *(b)* publicity, *(c)* recruitment of members, *(d)* payments to the Electoral Reform Society, *(e)* building a database and *(f)* public consultation. [185638]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* This is a matter for the chair of Guy's and St. Thomas' National Health Service Foundation Trust. I have written to Dr. Patricia Mobberley, chair, informing her of my hon. Friend's inquiry.

Health Literacy

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the health literacy of the population of England; and what plans he has for a future assessment. [186012]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Health literacy relates to the ability to navigate the health care system and to get the most out of health care services and information about health including self care and healthy living. It correlates strongly with levels of educational attainment. It is estimated that in England 5.2 million adults have poor literacy levels.

Hospital Infections

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people who died in Basildon and Thurrock Hospital Trust hospital wards in each of the past three years were suffering from MRSA or related infections; and if he will make a statement. [185736]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* Information on the number of patients who died in Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital Trust over the past three years is not held centrally.

It is difficult to produce statistics on methicillin resistant "Staphylococcus aureus" (MRSA) because there are no codes for antibiotic resistance in the international classification of diseases. However, they will be introduced in the future: thus, better data should be available.

However, the results of a recent special study has shown that deaths involving MRSA have increased substantially from 1993 to 2002. The number of certificates with any mention of MRSA either as the underlying cause or contributing factor increased from 51 in 1993 to 800 in 2002.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assistance the Department has given to Heriot-Watt University in developing new drugs to combat MRSA; and if he will make a statement. [184419]

Ms Rosie Winterton: None. The Department last year commissioned a £2.5 million strategic programme of research aimed at improving scientific understanding of antimicrobial resistance. £590,000 of that total sum will be spent on projects that will provide useful information relating to best practice in preventing methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*.

King's College Hospital Foundation Trust

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost of conducting the elections of public and patients to the board of governors of the proposed King's College Hospital Foundation Trust was; and if he will break down the total, by sums for *(a)* recruitment of members, *(b)* publicity, *(c)* setting up of a database, *(d)* payment to the Electoral Reform Society and *(e)* staff time. [185636]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* The Department does not hold information on the costs of conducting elections in individual national health service organisations. The cost of conducting elections is a matter for each NHS organisation applying for NHS foundation trust status. These costs will not be entirely additional as they will replicate some current activity that trusts are already doing around informing the public, patients and staff about issues affecting each trust.

Latex Gloves

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to publish updated guidance to NHS employers on the use of powdered latex gloves. [184104]

Mr. Hutton: Allergic reactions following exposure to natural rubber latex have risen significantly over the past 10 years, particularly within healthcare occupations and this prompted action by the Department and the NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency to remove powdered latex gloves, (the biggest cause of latex sensitisation), from sale to national health service employers. This action has reduced significantly the incidence of latex allergy, and has been followed up by the Department and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) issuing a latex toolkit. The toolkit covers issues concerning latex allergy, including what steps employers and employees should be taking to avoid it in the workplace. It also includes comprehensive advice on single-use glove selection, taking into account the importance of infection control. The toolkit can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/latex

Major Incident Plans

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of National Health Service trusts meet *(a)* all, *(b)* at least six and *(c)* four or fewer of the eight criteria against which their major incident plans and preparedness have been assessed. [177255]

Mr. Hutton: In response to a specific survey of National Health Service major incident planning conducted by the Department last year, all strategic health authorities confirmed that, when judged against the eight criteria, all NHS trusts in their area had met these eight criteria and could be assessed as being at least "prepared" to respond to major incidents.

Market Research

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on *(a)* opinion polling and *(b)* focus groups in each year since 2001. [185868]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A list of the Department's expenditure incurred on opinion polls and focus groups in each year since 2001 can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Medical Trainees (Electives)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 6 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 613W, on medical trainees (electives), what the total cost in England was of sending undergraduate medical students on electives in 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [184207]

Mr. Hutton: There is no cost to the national health service where undergraduate medical students decide to go abroad to gain experience as part of their training.

Individual university medical schools determine their own undergraduate medical curriculum in the light of recommendations from the General Medical Council's education committee, which has the statutory responsibility to determine the extent, knowledge and skill required for the granting of primary medical

qualifications in the United Kingdom. We welcome any educational experience that adds to a student's knowledge of medicine and broadens his or her experience of, and perspective on, healthcare systems at home and overseas.

Midwifery

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures he proposes to take in response to the Independent Midwives Association's proposed model for midwifery, The NHS Community Midwifery Model. [182978]

Dr. Ladyman: I met with representatives of the Independent Midwives Association on 6 May to discuss their proposed model. At the meeting, they agreed to provide me with further information on the acceptability of the model for midwives and users of the maternity service. This is awaited.

In the meantime, the model is being considered as part of the on-going work looking at midwifery recruitment and retention.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research into myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome his Department *(a)* is conducting and *(b)* has commissioned since 1997. [184515]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body, funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

The MRC is currently funding two complementary trials into various treatments options for chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME) that aim to improve quality of life for those who are ill. The Department is meeting part of the cost of the trials. Patient recruitment will start later this year.

The first trial is known as pacing, activity and cognitive behaviour therapy: a randomised evaluation (PACE). PACE will be led by Dr. Peter White at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London, Dr. Michael Sharpe of the University of Edinburgh and Dr. Trudie Chalder of King's College London.

The second trial, known as fatigue intervention by nurses evaluation (FINE), will test two different treatments that are particularly suited to those who are too ill to attend a specialist clinic. FINE will be headed by Dr. Alison Wearden at the University of Manchester.

The MRC also funded a research project: "The role of Noradrenaline in the Neuropsychological Pathogenesis of the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome", which was completed in 1998.

The Department has separately over the last seven years commissioned a number of small scale research projects related to aspects of CFS/ME and, through the national health service research and development programme, is funding: "Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: A Randomised Controlled Trial of an Out-patient Group Programme."

NHS E-mail

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost of reaching a settlement with EDS in respect of the cancelled contract for NHS e-mail and directory services. [185067]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The National Health Service Information Authority (NHSIA) has reached a settlement with Electronic Data Services Corporation (EDS), following mediation, without admission of liability on either side. The terms provide for the payment by the NHSIA of outstanding invoices. They further provide that should EDS make redundancies as a consequence of the change of service provider, the NHSIA will indemnify the actual costs incurred. The NHSIA will also make payments in respect of costs relating to the conclusion of the project. Further details of the settlement are covered by a legally-binding confidentiality agreement.

The exact costs are not yet known, but will be clarified when the contract ends in October.

NHS Staff

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* clinical and *(b)* non-clinical staff are employed by the national health service; and what plans he has to change the numbers. [184043]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of clinical and non-clinical staff employed by the national health service is shown in the table.

The Government expects that, within the clinical staff group, over a 2001 baseline, there will be increases of 15,000 general practitioners (GPs) and consultants, 35,000 nurses and midwives and 30,000 therapists and scientists by 2008. The nursing and midwifery forecast has already been achieved and significant progress has been made towards the others, as at September 2003, there were 35,978 more nurses and midwives, 5,231 more GPs and consultants and 11,825 more therapists and scientists than in September 2001.

NHS hospital and community health services (HCHS): Total employed staff by clinical [1] and non-clinical [2] staff in England as at 30 September 2003

	Headcount
Total employed staff (HCHS)	1,144,697
Clinical staff [1]	886,839
Qualified clinical staff	583,566
Other clinical staff	303,273
Non-clinical staff [2]	257,858

[1] Clinical staff consists of HCHS medical and dental staff (excluding locums), ambulance staff, nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff, scientific, therapeutic and technical staff and health care assistants and other support staff.

[2] Non-clinical staff consists of administration and estates staff and other non-medical staff and those with unknown classification.

Note:

All figures in this table exclude GP and GP practice staff.

Source:

Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census

NHS Funding

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding the NHS received in 2003–04. [185517]

Mr. Hutton: Total net expenditure in the national health service in England, in 2003–04, is estimated to be £63.7 billion. Outturn figures will be available in the autumn.

NHS Statistics (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS beds were available in Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [179395]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service is treating patients in better more efficient ways, for example the proportion of finished admission episodes at London NHS providers classified as day cases (where patients are admitted to hospital for a planned surgical procedure, returning home on the same day) increased from 28.8 per cent. in 1997–98 to 31.8 per cent. in 2002–03. Over the same period the total number of finished admission episodes increase by 15.6 per cent. to 1,639,915.

We have also increased capacity outside of hospitals with the introduction of 10 NHS treatment centres in London. Treatment centres separate elective care from emergency care so that it is not disrupted and between April 2003 and May this year, 65,000 patients received treatment in this way.

To make healthcare more convenient for patients, the NHS is increasingly offering services in primary care or in outpatient departments, without the need for a hospital admission. With more staff, more facilities and new ways of working, more patients are being treated in primary care.

The information requested on NHS beds has been placed in the Library.

NHS Non-clinical Staff (Research)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated regarding the role of non-clinical staff in the national health service. [184045]

Mr. Hutton: The Department has commissioned a range of research projects on the national health service workforce, including on ward staffing, training, pay and human resource management and staff involvement, which has included in its scope staff in non-clinical roles. Full details of these and other policy research programme projects are on the Department website at http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/ResearchAndDevelopment/PolicyResearchProgramme/fs/en

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many non-departmental public bodies for which his Department is responsible have been *(a)* established and *(b)* abolished since 1997. [182940]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since 1997, the Department has established 32 and abolished 25 executive, advisory and tribunal non-departmental public bodies.

Oral Health

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the oral health of UK citizens is measured. [185177]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National surveys of the oral health of adult citizens in England and Wales have been carried out since 1968 and across the United Kingdom since 1978 and have been undertaken on a 10 year basis since then.

National surveys of child dental health in the UK commenced in 1973 and have also been undertaken on a 10 year basis. The initial results of the most recent survey in 2003 were published by the Office for National Statistics on 30 June 2004.

Out-of-hours Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms are in place to ensure that people are receiving high quality, safe services from private providers of out-of-hours primary care services; and if he will make a statement. [184103]

Mr. Hutton: In England, all organised providers of out of hours services, including private providers, must meet the national quality standards, which ensure that patients receive the highest quality care. Primary care trusts (PCTs) have a legal responsibility to provide an out-of-hours service for their patients, which meets the national quality standards.

PCTs will monitor their providers in the delivery of their services in the management of their contracts, to ensure they meet the standards, and the strategic health authorities in turn will performance manage the PCTs in delivering these services.

Pharmaceutical Services

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements he has made to align out-of-hours pharmaceutical services with the new arrangements for general practitioner services. [185780]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Pharmacy opening hours are being discussed as part of the new community pharmacy contractual framework negotiations. Discussions are on-going.

Primary Care Trust Mergers

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is regarding the maintenance of independent decision-making for each component trust where the managements of adjacent primary care trusts that were previously autonomous are merged. [185979]

Mr. Hutton: There is no national policy regarding the maintenance of independent decision-making for each component trust where the management arrangements of adjacent primary care trusts (PCTs) are shared.

This is a local issue, for consideration by PCTs and to be supported by their respective strategic health authorities.

Private Sector Operations

Geraint Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his estimate is of the annual cost to the NHS of contributing towards the cost of all those opting for private sector operations at a rate of 50 per cent. of the NHS cost for the equivalent operation. [181145]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 29 June 2004]*: The estimated cost to the Exchequer is about £1 billion per year.

Public Bodies (Staffing)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many staff are employed by *(a)* the Independent Regulator of Foundation Trusts and *(b)* the Modernisation Agency; and what the budget of each is for this financial year; [175320]

(2) how many staff are employed by *(a)* the Mental Health Act Commission, *(b)* the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, *(c)* the National Biological Standards Board, *(d)* the Family Health Services Appeal Authority, *(e)* the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health, *(f)* the National Radiological Protection Board and *(g)* the Public Health Laboratory Service; and what the budget is of each for this financial year; [175323]

(3) how many staff are employed by *(a)* the Healthcare Commission, *(b)* the Commission for Social Care Inspection, *(c)* the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, *(d)* NHS Estates, *(e)* the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency, *(f)* NHSU and *(g)* the NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service; and what the budget of each is for this financial year. [175324]

(4) how many staff are employed by *(a)* the NHS Pensions Agency, *(b)* NHS Professionals, *(c)* the Microbiological Research Authority, *(d)* the Council for the Regulation of Health Care Professionals, *(e)* the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board, *(f)* the National Joint Registry and *(g)* NHS Direct; and what the budget of each is for this financial year; [175321]

(5) how many staff are employed by *(a)* the Health Development Agency, *(b)* the NHS Information Authority, *(c)* the General Social Care Council, *(d)* the NHS Litigation Authority, *(e)* the NHS Logistics Authority, *(f)* the Dental Practice Board, *(g)* the National Patient Safety Agency, *(h)* UK Transplant and *(i)* the National Institute for Clinical Excellence; and what the budget of each is for this financial year; [175322]

(6) how many staff are employed by *(a)* the Dental Vocational Training Authority, *(b)* the NHS Appointments Commission, *(c)* the Health Protection Agency, *(d)* the National Clinical Assessment Authority, *(e)* the National Blood Authority, *(f)* the National Treatment Agency, *(g)* the Prescription Pricing Authority and *(h)* the National Prescribing Centre; and what the budget of each is for this financial year. [175325]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Body	*Number of staff*[1]	*Budget for 2004–05 (£ million)*
Dental Vocational Training Authority	4	0.26
NHS Appointments Commission	46	3.56
Health Protection Agency	2,518	195.7
National Clinical Assessment Authority	71	10.2
National Blood Authority	5,916	53.27
National Treatment Agency	79	3.97
Prescription Pricing Authority	2,919	68.00
National Prescribing Centre	25	1.56
Independent Regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts	28	5
Modernisation Agency	765	161
NHS Pensions Agency	277	22.66
NHS Professionals	671	27.5
Microbiological Research Authority	[2]—	[2]—
Council for the Regulation of Health Care Professionals	3	2.0
Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board	27	1.83
National Joint Registry	29	2.19
NHS Direct	2,000	131
Health Development Agency	132	12.10
NHS Information Authority	918	217.6
General Social Care Council	146	13.18
NHS Litigation Authority	182	11.146
NHS Logistics Authority	1,377	709.2
Dental Practice Board	325	24.7
National Patient Safety Agency	149	[3]14.67
UK Transplant	121	13.8
National Institute for Clinical Excellence	81	18.14
Mental Health Act Commission	45	4.82
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority	106	5.30
National Biological Standards Board	305	24.3
Family Health Services Appeal Authority	13	1.41
Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health	150	31.0
National Radiological Protection Board	315	15.9
Public Health Laboratory Service	69	0.350
Healthcare Commission (CHAD	456	71.5
Commission for Social Care Inspection	2,622	147
Medicines and Health Care products Regulatory Agency	747	66.9
NHS Estates	[4]218	19.93
NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency	318	21
(f) NHSU	234	44.6
Counter Fraud and Security Management Service	250	16.37

[1] The number of staff shown is the average in post in 2003–04 as stated in the annual accounts, except for the following bodies, where the number of staff shown is the rounded whole-time equivalent figure as at 31 March 2004:
National Prescribing Centre
NHS Professionals
Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board
NHS Direct
Health Fertilisation and Embryology Authority
National Biological Standards Board
Public Health Laboratory Service
Healthcare Commission
Commission for Healthcare Inspection
NHSU
Independent regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts
NHS Modernisation Agency

[2] The Authority was subsumed into the Health Protection Agency on 1 April 2003.

[3] National Patient Safety Agency will receive an additional proportional contribution from the National Assembly for Wales according to the Barnett formula.

[4] The staff figure for NHS Estates does not include the 2004 Inventures staff.

Qualifications (Mutual Recognition)

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether in the negotiations on a separate directive on mutual recognition of qualifications, safeguards will be adopted to ensure that regulated health professionals will be covered by processes designed to protect public safety. [183936]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 13 July 2004]:* Yes. The text of the draft, as agreed by the Council, largely consolidates the existing directives which already include safeguards for those professions which benefit from automatic recognition: the current draft includes specific safeguards on service provision for professions having public health or safety implications.

Residential Care (Visually Impaired)

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what obligations there are on social services authorities in relation to provision of residential care for the visually impaired; and if he will make a statement. [185139]

Dr. Ladyman: Social services departments are required to assess the needs of adults in accordance with the principles set out in Fair Access to Care Services, effective from 7 April 2003. Those eligible for care, including those who may have a sensory impairment, should receive care appropriate to their assessed needs in an appropriate setting. Except where an individual has complex or multiple needs, those with sensory impairments will often receive services in their own home.

Schizophrenia

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been diagnosed with schizophrenia in England in each of the last 30 years for which figures are available. [184427]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of people diagnosed with schizophrenia in England in each of the last 30 years is not available. Figures are, however, available on the number of finished consultant episodes with a primary diagnosis of schizophrenic psychoses for the years 1995–96 to 2002–03, and are provided in the table.

	Number
1995–96	35,960
1996–97	35,500
1997–98	35,820
1998–99	36,920
1999–2000	36,420
2000–01	36,460
2001–02	30,080
2002–03	30,250

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics.

Seroxat

Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice he has received about the prescribing of Seroxat to people in the 18 to 29 years age group. [184292]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In May 2003, the Government's independent scientific advisory committee, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM), established an expert working group on the safety of Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) because of continuing concerns about withdrawal reactions and possible suicidal behaviour associated with these products. The expert working group is still considering evidence regarding the safety of all SSRIs (including paroxetine). The group is expected to report on its findings later this year, and its report will be made available to the public with copies placed in the Library.

In June 2003, the CSM considered newly received clinical trial data for paroxetine in children and adolescents and, on the basis of these data and advised that paroxetine should not be used in patients under 18 years of age in the treatment of major depressive illness, because of evidence of an increased risk of suicidal behaviour and a lack of efficacy in this population group. This advice was communicated to prescribers and patients in June 2003 and again in December 2003.

In March 2004, the CSM issued advice to remind prescribes of the recommended starting and daily doses of paroxetine, as stated in the summary of product characteristics for this medicine.

A Europe wide review of the risks and benefits of paroxetine has also been undertaken by European Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products (CPMP), with the United Kingdom in the lead. This review included an assessment of whether some young adults as well as those in the under 18 patient group may have an increased risk of suicidal behaviour when using this drug. No strong evidence has been found to support an increased risk and the CSM and the CPMP have advised that the balance of risks and benefits for paroxetine in the treatment of major depressive illness and anxiety disorders in patients of 18 years or older is favourable.

The CPMP has recommended that patients at high baseline risk of suicidal behaviour should be closely monitored during treatment with paroxetine. These include patients with a known history of suicidal behaviour or thoughts prior to starting treatment, and possibly young adults as a patient group. In April, a summary of the opinion of the CPMP referring to the need for monitoring during paroxetine treatment of patients at risk of suicidal behaviour, including those with a history of suicidal behaviour and young adults was released by both the European Medicines Agency and the UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

The CPMP review and recommendations are now being considered by the European Commission, with final decisions expected in the near future. When decisions have been reached by the Commission, a review of the evidence will be made public. If necessary, the product information for prescribers and patients will be updated and communicated, with details harmonised across the European Union.

The MHRA emphasises that the patient information leaflet for Seroxat currently advises that symptoms of depression, including suicidal behaviour, may increase in the first few weeks of treatment and that patients should seek urgent medical attention if they have any distressing thoughts or experiences during this initial period or at any other time.

St. Helens and Knowsley Hospital Trust

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what major capital projects have taken place in St. Helens since 1994; and what projects are planned over the next two years. [184620]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Strategic Health Authority Spending

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the spending per head of population was in each strategic health authority in the last year for which figures are available. [186000]

Mr. Hutton: Information for 2002–03, the latest year available, is available in the Library.

Thimerosal

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence has been presented to his Department concerning health risks in relation to thimerosal. [184097]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The only vaccine currently used in the United Kingdom routine childhood immunisation programme that contains a mercury compound is the diphtheria, tetanus and whole cell pertussis (DTwP) vaccine which is given combined with haemophilus influenzae type B vaccine. The mercury is present as ethylmercury in the excipient thiomersal (also known as thimerosal). As with all medicinal products, vaccine safety is continually monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) with advice from the independent expert advisory body, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). The MHRA and CSM have thoroughly reviewed the safety of mercury-containing vaccines, including alleged links with neurodevelopmental disorders, on a number of occasions.

In 2001, the CSM conducted a major review of the available evidence and has since then considered new data as it has emerged. In 2003, following a review of further studies, including two UK studies involving more than 100,000 children, CSM advice was placed on the MHRA website at http://medicines.mhra.gov.uk. Further studies from Denmark involving almost half a million children and a study from the United States have also specifically investigated the suggested link between mercury-containing vaccines and autism. None of these studies have found any evidence of a causal association with autism.

On the basis of the available data, the CSM's advice remains that there is no evidence of harm from the very small quantities of thiomersal contained in some vaccines, with the exception of possible hypersensitivity reactions (typically skin rashes or local swelling at the site of injection). This view concurs with that of the World Health Organisation, the United States Institute of Medicine and the European Medicines Agency (EMEA).

There is a global goal to minimise environmental exposure to mercury compounds. In line with this and despite the strong evidence supporting the safety of thiomersal in vaccines, the EMEA continues to promote the development of vaccines without thiomersal or with the lowest possible levels of thiomersal. However, the EMEA acknowledges that during some manufacturing processes, the use of mercury compounds is necessary and in such cases, residual levels might be present in the final vaccine product.

Traffic Offences (Ambulances)

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when new regulations relating to fines for speeding and red light offences for ambulance drivers will take effect; and whether they will apply to *(a)* all vehicles used by the ambulance service, including unmarked cars and motorcycles, *(b)* private ambulance drivers, *(c)* vehicles carrying donor organs for transplant, *(d)* vehicles transporting surgical teams for transplant operations and *(e)* journeys that are not initiated by a 999 call. [184792]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The new protocol issued by the Association for Chief Police Officers for dealing with speeding and red light offences committed by emergency service vehicles, took effect from 1 July 2004. The new protocol states that if an emergency service vehicle is caught speeding or going through a red light by a safety camera, a notice of intended prosecution will not be sent to the offending organisation if blue lights can be seen flashing on the photograph.

The protocol also states that if blue lights cannot be seen flashing, the police will send the normal section 172 form and a Notice of Intended Prosecution, together with a standard exemption form.

The protocol applies to all marked emergency ambulance vehicles being used for ambulance purposes.

The protocol only applies to emergency service vehicles.

If the vehicle transporting the organ is a marked emergency ambulance vehicle, the protocol covers such journeys.

If the vehicle transporting the surgical team is a marked emergency ambulance vehicle, the protocol covers such journeys.

The protocol applies to every ambulance journey undertaken by a marked emergency ambulance vehicle as defined in *(a)* above.

Trainee Doctors

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding has been available in each of the last seven years for part-time trainee doctors; and what has been budgeted for the future. [185406]

Mr. Hutton: The funding of medical training salary costs is resourced through a central overall funding allocation that makes no distinction between full-time and part-time trainees. The distribution of funding between full-time and part-time training at local level is the responsibility of the respective strategic health authorities (SHAs). No figures are held centrally for the local breakdown of resources; the total funding provided to SHAs in 2004–05 was £3.8 billion.

In addition and to support the introduction of the new contract, funding of £7 million in each of the years 2002–03 and 2003–04 was exceptionally provided to support the salary costs of part-time trainees. This was during a short period when new pay rates for full-time trainees were being progressively introduced and new part-time salaries, introduced in full in one step, were high by comparison; this is no longer the case.

Training Hospitals

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of UK hospitals are training hospitals. [185405]

Mr. Hutton: There are no defined criteria, functions or facilities required for any national health service hospital to describe itself as a training hospital. However, all NHS employer organisations are expected to be effective learning organisations that embrace lifelong learning for their staff.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183902]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Expenditure on travel and subsistence by the Department and Agencies has been as follows:

£000

Department		*NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency*	*NHS Pensions*	*NHS Estates*	*Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency*	*Medicines Control Agency*	*Medical Devices Agency*
1997–98	6,592	—	47	422	—	536	241
1998–99	5,814	—	48	689	—	577	208
1999–00	7,080	—	53	1,129	—	872	271
2000–01	7,295	524	67	1,477	—	674	171
2001–02	7,972	579	72	1,343	—	704	177
2002–03	7,607	635	46	1,510	—	711	161
2003–04	8,211	662	54	1,496	978	—	219

Treatment Abroad (NHS Scheme)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have taken up the option of treatment abroad under the NHS scheme; and what criteria are used to decide to which patients such treatment should be offered. [184039]

Mr. Hutton: From January 2002 to the end of June 2004, 879 patients have been treated overseas on the National Health Service.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for commissioning overseas treatment for NHS patients. Individual PCTs work with their local acute trusts to determine the criteria used to identify those patients suitable for treatment abroad. As a general rule, acute trusts have selected patients for treatment overseas who have been waiting a long time for simple elective procedures such as knee and hip replacements, hernia and cataract procedures. These patients' diagnoses, medical conditions, fitness and willingness to travel and be treated overseas will then be taken into account to determine which patients will benefit most from this treatment in Europe.

Triage

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what National Emergency Medical Services' triage practice is; and what its relationship is with NHS Direct nurse-led services. [184971]

Mr. Hutton: Nottingham Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) has been integrated with NHS Direct since 1998. NEMS is developing additional capacity with NHS Direct to support local out-of-hours care and to extend the range of coverage of this model to 100 per cent. of the Nottingham population in October. NEMS currently provides care for 80 per cent. and the remainder of Nottingham practices use the Sheffield and Birmingham based triage services of Primecare, a national commercial deputising service.

Since 2001, NEMS has been an out-of-hours exemplar site, with clinical integration of NHS Direct and the out-of-hours service. NEMS triage will continue to be that recommended by the review of general practitioners (GP) out-of-hours services in 2000, of using NHS Direct nurse assessment, followed by contact with a GP or other health professional, as required.

Waiting Times (Bury, North)

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list, for each of the last 10 years, the total number of patients in the Bury, North constituency, or the nearest relevant unit of population, waiting for NHS operations for longer than *(a)* 18 months, *(b)* 15 months, *(c)* 12 months, *(d)* nine months and *(e)* six months. [185251]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is only available from 1995–96 onwards and is shown in the table.

In-patient waiting information for the Bury area (Provider based)
(Quarter ending March 2004)

Month ending	Year	Qtr	Unit name	6 months +	9 months +	12 months +	15 months +	18 months +
March 1996	1995–96	4	Oldham NHS Trust	1,825	594	0	0	0
March 1996	1995–96	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	923	356	0	0	0
March 1996	1995–96	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	1,069	478	0	0	0
March 1996	1995–96	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	384	149	0	0	0
March 1996 Total				4,201	1,577	0	0	0
March 1997	1996–97	4	Oldham NHS Trust	2,306	967	0	0	0
March 1997	1996–97	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	1,124	547	173	0	0
March 1997	1996–97	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	1,320	612	185	28	6
March 1997	1996–97	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	353	157	37	0	0
March 1997 Total				5,103	2,283	395	28	6
March 1998	1997–98	4	Oldham NHS Trust	2,402	752	16	0	0
March 1998	1997–98	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	1,058	477	172	40	0
March 1998	1997–98	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	1,838	1,011	483	175	0
March 1998	1997–98	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	481	230	102	11	0
March 1998 Total				5,779	2,470	773	226	0
March 1999	1998–99	4	Oldham NHS Trust	1,278	383	68	1	0
March 1999	1998–99	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	944	460	203	36	0
March 1999	1998–99	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	620	251	103	27	0
March 1999	1998–99	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	576	336	209	51	0
March 1999 Total				3,418	1,430	583	115	0
March 2000	1999–2000	4	Oldham NHS Trust	1,108	426	55	5	0
March 2000	1999–2000	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	1,089	521	191	61	0
March 2000	1999–2000	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	478	248	98	20	0
March 2000	1999–2000	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	544	325	161	56	0
March 2000 Total				3,219	1,520	505	142	0
March 2001	2000–01	4	Oldham NHS Trust	857	256	43	0	0
March 2001	2000–01	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	707	310	61	16	0
March 2001	2000–01	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	452	149	30	3	0
March 2001	2000–01	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	299	118	0	0	0
March 2001 Total				2,315	833	134	19	0
March 2002	2001–02	4	Oldham NHS Trust	836	225	0	0	0
March 2002	2001–02	4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	826	299	45	0	0
March 2002	2001–02	4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	409	144	30	0	0
March 2002	2001–02	4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	298	80	2	0	0
March 2002 Total				2,369	748	77	0	0
March 2003	2002–03	4	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	2,039	464	0	0	0
March 2004	2003–04	4	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,402	0	0	0	0

Source:
Department of Health KH07.

In-patient waiting information for the Bury area (Commissioner based)
(Quarter ending March 2004)

Month ending	Year	Qtr	Unit name	6 months	9 months	12 months	15 months +
March 1997	1996–07	4	Bury and Rochdale HA	2,221	969	176	0
March 1998	1997–98	4	Bury and Rochdale HA	2,807	1,360	517	156
March 1999	1998–99	4	Bury and Rochdale HA	2,219	1,096	511	98
March 2000	1999–2000	4	Bury and Rochdale HA	2,305	1,198	500	159
March 2001	2000–01	4	Bury and Rochdale HA	1,727	778	220	51
March 2002	2001–02	4	Bury and Rochdale HA	1,752	673	123	0
March 2003	2002–03	4	Bury PCT	478	114	0	0
March 2004	2003–04	4	Bury PCT	307	0	0	0

Source:
Department of Health QF01.

TRANSPORT

Anti-terrorism Awareness

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what measures his Department has put in place to offer financial assistance to *(a)* sea freight and *(b)* air freight companies to help improve anti-terrorism awareness; [184591]

(2) what measures his Department has put in place to offer training to *(a)* shipping freight and *(b)* air freight companies in anti-terrorism awareness. [184592]

Mr. Jamieson: It has long been central to UK transport policy that users should pay the full costs, including those of security. Organisations delivering training in air cargo security are required to be approved in that role by the Department, and to that end the instructors are required to have attended an air cargo managers course and are then provided with a training

pack setting our the UK National Aviation Security Training Programme, with objectives and teaching points to ensure that the training, when they are accredited, represents a proper understanding of how responsibilities for air cargo security should be discharged.

For shipping freight companies it is part of the Port Facility Security Officer's (PFSO) responsibilities, under the International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) Code, to ensure that appropriate training is conducted by their security staff.

Aviation (External Costs)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the external costs associated with aviation, with particular reference to the environmental costs. [184848]

Mr. McNulty: The principal external costs considered in work supporting "The Future of Air Transport" White Paper were environmental costs, the largest of which is the impact of aviation on global emissions. The supporting paper to the White Paper, "Aviation and Global Warming", February 2004, reports—for an additional runway at Stansted followed by an additional runway at Heathrow—a net present value of the cost of associated global emissions to lie between £3.3 billion and £5.2 billion.

Bus Services

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost to each local authority in England arising from the tendering of local bus services was in each of the last five years. [185822]

Dr. Howells: The table shows expenditure on support for local bus services by local transport authorities London between 1998–99 and 2002–03, the last year for which figures are available.

£000

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Bath and North East Somerset	518	583	589	762	947
Bedfordshire	1,214	1,511	1,891	1,299	n/a
Blackburn Darwen	301	924	1,313	n/a	n/a
Blackpool	212	-57	1,114	n/a	n/a
Bournemouth	331	507	543	405	502
Bracknell Forest	375	489	360	246	377
Brighton and Hove	933	747	1,147	1,203	933
Bristol	1,625	1,580	1,781	1,767	2,407
Buckinghamshire	1,573	2,212	1,799	2,196	2,737
Cambridgeshire	1,735	1,802	1,669	2,766	1,605
Cheshire	3,567	3,681	4,575	3,295	3,858
Cornwall	2,298	2,579	2,668	3,159	3,698
Cumbria	384	1,326	1,569	1,967	2,298
Darlington	20	178	179	281	392
Derby City	213	239	731	640	760
Derbyshire	3,352	4,739	4,940	4,800	5,645
Devon	3,015	3,228	2,917	4,025	4,506
Dorset	1,747	1,744	1,611	2,061	2,179
Durham	2,724	2,845	2,626	3,529	3,887
East Riding	654	1,277	994	1,555	1,587
East Sussex	2,819	3,438	2,741	3,416	3,697
Essex	4,590	4,641	5,401	4,744	5,029
Gloucestershire	2,120	2,389	3,138	2,157	3,086
Greater Manchester PTE	20,520	20,996	25,159	21,010	20,239
Halton	619	625	483	665	632
Hampshire	4,866	5,586	5,287	7,075	6,874
Hartlepool	212	264	249	241	316
Herefordshire	1,612	2,102	1,250	1,579	2,081
Hertfordshire	4,996	5,237	5,586	5,974	6,472
Isle of Wight	483	464	541	505	547
Kent	4,731	4,722	4,436	5,401	6,394
Kingston upon Hull	447	399	768	451	661
Lancashire	3,583	4,255	5,534	4,465	4,446
Leicester City	795	831	573	794	1,457
Leicestershire	1,359	2,108	2,361	2,188	2,985
Lincolnshire	2,959	3,434	2,534	3,094	3,898
Luton	64	83	415	485	595
Medway	994	724	836	708	824
Merseyside PTE	25,418	11,607	25,499	13,215	14,247
Middlesbrough	567	273	925	198	202
Milton Keynes	1,186	1,245	1,487	971	1,162
Norfolk	2,957	3,360	4,338	3,291	4,337
North East Lincs.	217	221	67	75	76
North Lincs.	390	653	1,027	789	725
North Somerset	470	493	581	572	614
North Yorkshire	2,589	4,208	2,958	3,812	4,623
Northamptonshire	1,373	1,472	1,325	1,671	2,143
Northumberland	870	1,165	1,307	1,445	1,930
Nottingham City	—	—	612	689	n/a
Nottinghamshire	2,389	3,688	4,440	4,467	5,492
Oxfordshire	1,813	2,358	2,720	2,994	3,607
Peterborough	192	308	247	384	528
Plymouth	693	555	549	408	489
Poole	379	426	419	550	604
Portsmouth	425	438	602	508	591
Reading	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Redcar and Cleveland	810	876	570	n/a	1,135
Rutland UA	118	166	168	113	337
Shropshire	2,121	1,821	1,642	2,177	2,774
Slough	151	161	153	178	224
Somerset	1,628	1,756	1,685	2,450	2,836
South Glos.	1,198	1,448	1,327	1,924	1,992
South Yorkshire PTE	6,751	7,569	16,191	8,424	9,640
Southampton	502	526	555	663	719
Southend	122	225	173	265	415
Staffordshire	2,061	2,864	2,692	3,369	3,814
Stockton	908	968	617	783	937
Stoke on Trent	411	438	461	431	573
Suffolk	2,044	2,609	2,623	3,288	4,130
Surrey	4,642	4,533	5,527	6,963	8,644
Swindon	349	303	672	384	655
Telford and Wrekin	776	846	431	381	323
Thurrock	393	544	569	716	893
Torbay	106	96	156	174	198
Tyne and Wear PTE	9,575	10,225	11,578	10,829	12,320
Warrington	1,311	1,457	1,364	1,506	1,527
Warwickshire	661	897	1,521	1,392	2,875
West Berks	501	686	1,107	461	851
West Midlands PTE	27,241	28,343	24,687	30,754	24,581
West Sussex	2,134	2,626	2,402	3,311	3,459
West Yorkshire PTE	19,992	22,492	22,143	25,482	24,746
Wiltshire	2,597	2,892	2,605	4,212	4,492
Windsor and Maidenhead	414	573	636	714	820
Wokingham	483	194	497	234	429
Worcestershire	2,108	2,469	3,312	3,567	3,915
York	633	678	583	620	686

n/a = figures not available

These data have been taken from local authority and Passenger Transport Authority administrative returns. In addition to the cost of tenders for supported services, the figures include related expenditure on administrative services and some other payments.

Mr. Mole: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has discussed the competition implications of all bus through ticketing with the Department of Trade and Industry. [185390]

Mr. McNulty: I have discussed the issue of joint bus ticketing with my colleague the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Employment Relations, Competition and Consumers. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has discussed the matter with the

Chairman of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), the body which has responsibility for applying competition law to the bus industry. Department for Transport officials hold regular meetings with OFT officials to discuss progress on bus ticketing schemes.

Central Trains

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the stations in the Central Trains franchise area where selective door-opening of trains is permitted. [185848]

Mr. McNulty: There are five stations in the Central Trains franchise area where selective train door opening is permitted. They are: The Lakes (Warwickshire), Spooner Row, Whittlesea, Waterbeach and Bedworth.

Departmental Consultants

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent on *(a)* headhunters and recruitment consultants and *(b)* management consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [185246]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 21 July 2004]*: The Department was formed in May 2002. The Department spent £58.5 million in 2003–04 on all types of consultancy excluding research. Separate figures for management consultancy are not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. The Department spent £1.7 million in 2003–04 on recruitment consultants.

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent by his Department on public relations consultants in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185247]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 21 July 2004]*: Expenditure figures for the financial years are set out as follows. The majority of costs for public relations consultants were devoted to the THINK! road safety campaign and sustainable travel.

In the 2003–04 financial year the Department for Transport spent £347,666.56 on public relations consultants.

Identifying any public relations consultants' costs for the old Department of Transport in 1996–97 could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Cycling

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cycle routes there are in England; and what plans his Department has to improve safety for cyclists. [182169]

Dr. Howells: Cycle routes are in the main the responsibility of local highway authorities. A cycle route will often consist of a variety of linked highways such as dedicated cycle tracks, cycle lanes on the carriageway and the use of roads designated as suitable for cycle routes. Sustrans, the Transport charity, predict that the National Cycle Network will consist of 10,000 miles by the end of 2005. In addition local authorities forecast building over 6,000 miles of new cycle lanes and cycle tracks over between 2001–02 and 2005–06.

We have a safer cycling programme, which is a package of measures including improved infrastructure—better cycle routes, off road cycle tracks, cycle lanes, advance stop lines, toucan crossings etc., better driving standards by improving training and testing for motorists, and publicity aimed both at drivers and cyclists. It also covers the promotion of measures which cyclists can take to protect themselves, such as taking cycle training, making themselves conspicuous and wearing a cycle helmet.

We have also recently published an "Action Plan for Walking and Cycling", which sets out more than 40 actions from across Government to make cycling and walking easier, safer and more attractive, enabling people to get around more by foot and by bicycle. One of the actions will be to fund new sections of the National Cycle Network to link with existing safe cycling and walking routes to schools.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many footpaths and footways had their status formally changed in each of the past three years in order to allow cyclists to use them legally. [181684]

Dr. Howells: The conversion of footways (the pavement) under the Highways Act 1980 is a local highway authority function in which the Secretary of State has no formal role. We therefore have no details of the number of footway conversions.

Powers are available in the Cycle Tracks Act 1984 to enable local highway authorities to convert footpaths (as opposed to pavements) to cycle tracks. Only orders which are opposed by any party are referred to the Secretary of State for confirmation. Details of this subset of cases referred to the Secretary of State in each of the last three years and to date in 2004 are set out in the following table:

	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Cycle track orders confirmed	4	5	1	2
Cycle track orders not confirmed	2	1	2	0
Awaiting determination	3	2	2	3
Total	9	8	5	5

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his Answer of 16 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 934–5W, (1) on pedestrian/cyclist accidents, what assessment he has made of *(a)* the problems caused by cyclists using footpaths to access destinations adequately served by cycle paths and roads and *(b)* the reasons cyclists do this; [181685]

(2) if he will commission research into *(a)* the implications of allowing cyclists to use footpaths and pavements and *(b)* the effects on older people of cyclists using footpaths and pavements. [181681]

Dr. Howells: The Department has not carried out any formal assessment of the problems caused by cyclists cycling illegally on footpaths and footways (the pavement) and we have no plans to commission specific research into the subject. We are however aware from our post bag that many pedestrians, particularly elderly and disabled people are concerned at the danger and inconvenience caused by cyclists who cycle illegally on footpaths and pavements.

While we do not condone it, we believe that some cyclists cycle on the pavement because they feel safer there than cycling on heavily trafficked roads. We hope that as facilities for cyclists and cyclist training improve, cyclists will feel safer on the road and that the number of cyclists using footpaths and footways illegally will reduce.

Local Transport Note 2/86 (Stationery Office) concerns Shared Use by Cyclists and Pedestrians. This advises local highway authorities that such shared use facilities are not a general or area-wide remedy to cycle safety problems but should be confined to specific links in cycle routes and quiet footways along heavily trafficked roads. The guidance also advises that shared use may be unacceptable if significant use is made of a pedestrian facility by disabled, blind or partially sighted or elderly people.

Departmental Accountancy Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who the Finance Director of *(a)* the Department and *(b)* the Office of the Rail Regulator is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183420]

Mr. McNulty: The Finance Director of the Department for Transport is Mr. Ken Beeton. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. There have been no occasions on which DfT accounts have been qualified.

The Executive Director who had responsibility for finance for the Office of the Rail Regulator was Mr. Keith Webb. Responsibility for this appointment rested with the Rail Regulator. Mr. Webb did not hold an accountancy qualification. However, in line with Government Accounting, a senior manager who was a qualified accountant with 15 years post qualification experience, supported the Director and provided the appropriate level of financial advice. The new Office of Rail Regulation, which was established on 5 July 2004, will appoint a Finance Director. It does, however, have a Non-Executive Board member with responsibility for finance who is Mr. Peter Bucks.

Since April 1999, the accounts of the Office of the Rail Regulator have been qualified once. The Resource Accounts-for financial year 2002–03 were qualified. The qualification related to resource expenditure of £0.4 million in excess of the amount authorised for the Request for Resources. The cause of the excess was additional consultancy expenditure incurred on the interim review of Network Rail Access Charges not being forecast in time to secure a supplementary estimate.

Departmental Administration Costs

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total administration costs were in his Department in financial years *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* 1997–98. [186078]

Mr. McNulty: Details of gross running costs for 1996–97 and 1997–98 for the former Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions are contained in Table 5.5 of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2000–01 (Cm 4601). These figures are on a cash basis. From Public Expenditure Analyses 2001–02 (Cm 5101), Departments' administrative expenditure was reported on a resource basis, as administration costs.

Departmental Air Travel

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in the Department in the latest year for which figures are available. [184533]

Mr. McNulty: Ministers use a variety of public transport services when undertaking departmental business and all ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers.

The majority of this Department's air tickets are booked through a centrally negotiated travel agency contract. The total cost of travel between Great Britain and Northern Ireland booked through that contract in the financial year 2003–04 was £85,974.

The cost of any bookings outside the contract possibly made in the same period could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Buildings

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total floor space area has been of buildings owned or leased by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies in each year since 1997. [185727]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002 and as a result the information provided relates to the period from then.

No comprehensive figures are available and to obtain them across the estate would involve disproportinate cost. The available estimate we have as at 1 April 2003 is 22,000 m^2 for the central Department and 302,000 m^2 for the agencies.

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost of refurbishments to the fabric of buildings owned by the Department has been since May 1997. [185243]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 21 July 2004]*: There have been no refurbishments to any buildings owned by the Department for transport since its inception in May 2002.

Departmental Electricity Use

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of electricity used by buildings in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies has come from renewable sources in each year since 1997. [185724]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002, and as a result, the information provided relates to the period from then.

The latest year for which we have information available is 2002–03 when 93 per cent. of the Department for Transport Central and 43 per cent. of its

agencies electrical use came from renewable sources. The information for 2003–04 is still being collected and will be published in due course in the Sustainable Development in Government Report and on the Department's website.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies of his Department have spent on electricity use in each year since 1997. [185725]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002 and as a result the information provided relates to the period from then.

We do not have full details of spend on electricity across the Department estate but in 2002–03 the information we do have shows spend on electricity of £308,502 for the central Department and £1,554,527 for the agencies. The information for 2003–04 is still being collected.

Departmental Special Advisers

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the salary bill was for special advisers in his Department in 2003–04; and what it is expected to be in 2004–05. [180908]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given today by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, to the hon. Member for St. Helens, North (Dave Watts).

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186094]

Mr. McNulty: The normal retirement age for all staff in DfT and its agencies is 60. However, staff outside the Senior Civil Service have a contractual right to work until age 65 if they wish. Staff who opt to work beyond 60 can choose to retire at any time up to their 65th birthday. Beyond those restrictions, there is no maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185924]

Mr. Jamieson: The numbers of road vehicles operated by the Department and its agencies are not recorded centrally and neither is the number of personal injury accidents.

The Department's policy for central staff is contained within the Risk Assessment Procedures for Staff Working out of the Office Environment. It includes advice for staff and line managers on vehicle roadworthiness, alcohol/drugs, driver tiredness and illness, mobile phones, weather, driver competence and the availability of driver training. The policy is presently being reviewed and updated.

In the Department's agencies, responsibility for occupational health and safety management arrangements is delegated to agency Chief Executives. The agencies either have their own policy to suit their specific business needs or they follow the central policy.

The Government Car and Despatch Agency will provide an answer covering its ministerial and other vehicles that it provides to Government Departments.

Departmental Water and Sewerage

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies of his Department have spent on water and sewerage services in each year since 1997. [185726]

Mr. McNulty: No figures are readily available and to obtain them across the estate for some 1,170 properties would involve disproportionate cost.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many names and addresses of vehicle owners or keepers have been disclosed by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority to third parties by virtue of that party showing reasonable cause for the disclosure over the last 12 months, broken down by category of reasonable cause; in how many cases disclosure has been subsequently shown not to be for a reasonable cause; what action was taken in each case; and if he will make a statement. [185951]

Mr. Jamieson: The DVLA vehicle register is a record of vehicle keepers. It does not contain details of the person who actually owns the vehicle.

The number of 'reasonable cause' enquiries resulting in the disclosure of keeper details for the year 2003/04 is 1,014,309. The majority of requests are from insurance companies and finance houses in respect of insurance claims and vehicle-related loan arrangements. The remainder are from solicitors, car parking enforcement companies and members of the public.

The Information Commissioner has powers under the Data Protection Act to prosecute anyone who knowingly obtains information without consent. Any disclosure subsequently used for a purpose other that stated in the application is referred to the Commissioner to investigate. Two such cases were referred in the past year.

East Coast Main Line

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Department's future plans are for the East Coast Main Line. [185417]

Dr. Howells: The current East Coast Main Line franchise is due to expire in April 2005. SRA announced on 7 May that four companies had pre-qualified to bid for the franchise. The franchise replacement process is continuing.

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cases against his Department and the agencies for which it is responsible have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181465]

Mr. McNulty: The Department was formed in May 2002. The table as follows sets out details of cases brought against the Department since that date and the costs involved in settling the claim(s) outside of the Tribunal along with the legal costs incurred with processing of these claims.

	2002	2003	2004
Number of cases brought in Employment Tribunals claiming			
Equal Pay	0	13	8
Sex Discrimination	2	3	0
Race Discrimination	1	9	3
Disability Discrimination	3	3	2
Unfair Dismissal	7	3	4
Cost Awards made against Respondents (£)	0	0	0
Costs Awards made against Applicant (£)	0	0	1,200
Money spent settling Employment Tribunal Claims (£)	0	0	0
Money spent contesting Employment Tribunal Claims (£)	5,500	20,727	10,000
	61,712.39	113,911.36	33,191.40

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185125]

Mr. McNulty: In my capacity as Green Minister, I have been actively involved in the work of both ENV(G) Cabinet sub-committee and the Sustainable Development Task Force.

In my wider role as Green Minister, I have overseen the publication of the Department's Sustainable Development Policy Statement which was published on the DfT website in March of this year. This outlines how DfT is integrating the principles of sustainable development into decision-making.

I met with a number of stakeholders during 2003–04 to discuss a range of sustainable development issues of mutual concern.

Heathrow Airport

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many flights there were *(a)* into and *(b)* out of Heathrow Airport in each of the last three years. [185344]

Mr. McNulty: In each of the last three years, the total number of flights (of all descriptions) at Heathrow were as follows:

	Arrivals	Departures
2001	231,756	231,799
2002	233,137	233,210
2003	231,721	231,884

Source:
National Air Traffic Services

International Ship and Port Facility Security Code

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he expects that, by 1 July, sufficient UK ports will have radiation detection equipment to satisfy the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. [184603]

Mr. Jamieson: The majority of UK ports (including all major and high risk ports) handling international shipping are compliant with the Government's mandated ISPS security requirements.

Her Majesty's Customs and Excise are implementing a programme of work to introduce screening equipment at UK ports for detecting the illicit importation of radioactive materials that could be used by terrorists. To date, screening equipment will be in place at a number of major UK ports of entry. This is an on-going programme based on prudent contingency planning which is planned to be complete by March 2007.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what grants are available from Her Majesty's Government to help small ports in Scotland with the costs of meeting the requirements of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code; [185856]

(2) what new funds will be available to small Scottish ports to meet the costs of the International Shipping and Port Facility Security Code as a result of the Spending Review. [185857]

Mr. Jamieson: In line with existing transport security regimes in the UK, the costs of implementing the security measures will fall to those the measures are designed to protect, in this case UK ships and ports and the persons and property associated with them.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what representations he has received from *(a)* the British Ports Authority and *(b)* trust ports in Scotland on the impact of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code; [185858]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive on the impact of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code on small Scottish trust ports. [185859]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has carried out extensive consultation with industry on the implementation of the ISPS Code, including with the British Ports Association and other main industry groups such as the United Kingdom Major Ports Group (UKMPG). This has kept trust ports in Scotland and other ports fully informed.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the Answer of 15 July, *Official Report*, column 1276W, on the International Ship and

Port Facility Security Code, which British ports have yet to receive an International Ship and Port Facility Security Code certificate. [185881]

Mr. Jamieson: It would not be appropriate for us to comment on what ports/port facilities may not have received security certificates for security reasons.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1276W, on the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code, when all *(a)* UK flagged ships and *(b)* British ports will be in possession of an International Ship and Port Facility Security Code certificate; and why the 1 July deadline for implementation of the code was missed; [185968]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1276W, on the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code, what proportion of *(a)* UK flagged ships and *(b)* British ports were in possession of an International Ship and Port Facility Security Code certificate on 1 July. [185969]

Mr. Jamieson: All Ship Security Plans and Port Facility Security Plans received by the deadlines set by my Department's Transport Security Directorate (TRANSEC) were approved by 1 July. On 1 July this represented 95 per cent. of all port facilities including all major and high risk ports, and 99.8 per cent. of all the UK flagged fleet, with the exception of one ship.

Port Facility Security Plans not approved by the 1 July deadline were because of very late submission, or not meeting the required standard and under-going revisions. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency are pursuing the one remaining UK flagged ship awaiting certification to arrange a verification visit.

Some small bulk cargo port facility operations are still submitting plans to TRANSEC. We expect that all remaining plans will be approved within the next few weeks.

Special Advisers

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisors. [185464]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the answer from my right hon. Friend, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury of 19 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 37W.

Ministerial Meetings

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the official meetings he and his predecessor had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 to discuss transport issues in London, and the dates and subject of each meeting. [172206]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 11 May 2004]*: Ministers and officials are in regular contact with the Mayor of London. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has met the Mayor on the following occasions, when a range of subjects were discussed:

26 September 2002; and

21 October 2002

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's predecessor, the right hon. Member for North Tyneside (Mr Stephen Byers), met the Mayor of London on the following occasions:

10 November 2000;

15 June 2001;

19 July 2001;

10 October 2001; and

12 December 2001.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on what dates in the last 12 months he has held meetings with the Mayor of London. [175177]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given to the hon. Member for Southwark and Bermondsey (Simon Hughes) today.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he last met representatives of NUMAST to discuss increasing the job opportunities for British Merchant Navy officers on UK flagged vessels. [184137]

Mr. Jamieson: Ministers and officials meet regularly with representatives of the maritime trade unions, including NUMAST, to discuss issues affecting the UK shipping industry. We are currently considering additional measures to enhance UK seafarer employment opportunities. Our social partners, including NUMAST, have been invited to submit proposals as part of the Government's review of tonnage tax. The possibility of an employment link in tonnage tax is one of the areas under consideration. We will announce our conclusions when all of the representations have been carefully considered.

Olympic Bid

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with Lord Coe regarding transport infrastructure for the 2012 Olympic bid. [184040]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State has discussed the 2012 Olympic bid with Lord Coe. Department for Transport Ministers and officials have met with London 2012 representatives, Transport for London and other key stakeholders to discuss the transport plans for the Olympic bid. The Government are confident that London can and will deliver outstanding transport for the Olympic and Paralympic games.

Policies (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185105]

Mr. McNulty: Our policies for a modern, efficient and sustainable transport system are set out in "The Future of Transport" White Paper, published on 20 July. The White Paper builds on the progress made since the publication of the 10-Year Plan for Transport in July 2000.

All our policies are assessed using an approach that takes account of sustainable development objectives. This builds on our New Approach To Appraisal which takes full account of the environmental impacts of transport projects.

Ports (South-west)

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress there has been on an environmental impact study into Teignmouth Harbour. [185794]

Mr. Jamieson: An Environmental Statement on the potential impacts of the Teignmouth Harbour proposals was prepared by the promoters in accordance with the Harbour Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999 and was considered at the public inquiry held last year into the application for a Harbour Revision Order.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the report of the inquiry into the extension to Teignmouth Docks to be published; and if he will make a statement. [185795]

Mr. Jamieson: The Inspector's report of the public inquiry into the proposed extension to Teignmouth Docks is under careful consideration by the Secretary of State as part of the statutory planning process. The report will be published at the same time as the Secretary of State's decision on the proposals.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent studies he has undertaken into the viability of ports in *(a)* Devon and *(b)* Cornwall. [185796]

Mr. Jamieson: My Department has not undertaken any recent studies into the viability of ports in Devon and Cornwall. However, in September 2001 the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) published their Regional Gateways Strategy which addressed the potential future roles of gateway ports in the South West region.

Press Officers

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent on press officers, broken down by grade, in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available. [185234]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: *(a)* I refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. Member for Truro and St. Austell (Matthew Taylor) on 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1626W that provided information for the financial year 1996–97.

(b) The salary cost of press officers employed in 2003–04 was £697,000. The average number of staff in post in that year broken down by grade (full time equivalent) is as follows:

2003–04

Pay band/grade	*Number*
Senior Civil Service 1	0.79
7.1 (Grade 6)	0.17
6.1 (Grade 7)	0.83
5.6 (Senior Information Officer)	3.08
4.7 (Information Officer)	8.92
Total	13.8

Private Finance Initiative (Environmental Impact)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to ensure that private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible create the minimum of environmental damage. [185721]

Mr. McNulty: Department for Transport projects are evaluated against the Department's "New approach to appraisal" (NATA). NATA provides an integrated approach to appraising environmental, economic and social aspects of transport projects. The same procedures apply to PFI projects, which are also subject to NATA appraisals.

Similarly approved PFI projects have to conform to the relevant planning provisions. The scale and nature of Department for Transport PFIs would usually require the Contracting Authority to prepare an environmental impact assessment on the project.

The Department for Transport has jointly published environmental guidance on PFI projects—"Green Public Private Partnerships"—with ODPM, OGC and DEFRA. The guidance note provides practical assistance on environmental aspects of PFI project development, procurement and management.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the sustainability and environmental impacts of private finance initiative (PFI) projects and *(b)* the capacity of the PFI process to deliver environmentally sustainable projects. [185722]

Mr. McNulty: Project design has an important bearing on sustainability and environmental impact. This is reflected in the Department for Transport PFI project appraisal methodology and spending round evaluation criteria.

The "Green Public Private Partnership" guidance note provides practical advice on how the PFI process can be used to deliver environmental benefits. The guidance directs contracting authorities to consider the scope for PFI projects to minimise waste, reduce whole life costs and design flexibility into facilities. The London Underground Power Supply PFI provides a case study of a project designed with tough environmental standards for power station decommissioning and redevelopment, and standards that reduce the level of greenhouse gasses produced.

Quantitative and qualitative assessments of PFI project outcomes will improve, as more projects become operational for a longer time.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to make private finance initiative contracts more accountable and transparent in terms of environmental sustainability. [185723]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport will consider the accountability and transparency of its PFI programmes when the consultation on new HM Treasury PFI Value for Money guidance has been completed and the guidance issued.

Private Motoring (External Costs)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent estimate he has made of the external costs associated with private motoring, with particular reference to the environmental costs. [184847]

Mr. Jamieson: An estimate of the external costs of road use is provided on page 73 of the report to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State of the Feasibility Study of Road Pricing in the UK (published by my Department on Tuesday 20 July 2004).

Public Highways (Expenditure)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the Government have spent on maintaining public highways in each year since 1997. [183791]

Mr. Jamieson: Government expenditure on maintaining motorways and trunk roads in England between 1996–97 and 2002–03 is shown in the following table:

	Expenditure (£ million)
1996–97	550
1997–98	582
1998–99	641
1999–2000	726
2000–01	736
2001–02	711
2002–03	796

Notes:
1. Figures are net totals (i.e. net of allowable receipts) for capital and resource expenditure.
2. 1996–97 to 2000–01 figures are on a cash accounting basis. Subsequent figures are on a resource accounting basis.
3. The figures for 1996–97 to the first quarter of 2000–01 include roads that subsequently transferred to the Greater London Authority.

Since 2000 there has been a substantial detrunking programme in England. Therefore the money the Government have spent during this period has been against a diminishing length of trunk road. Details of the lengths of road detrunked each year will be available in September; copies of the information will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

Local authority expenditure on maintaining local roads in England between 1996–97 and 2002–03 is shown in the following table:

	Expenditure (£ million)
1996–97	1,906
1997–98	1,858
1998–99	1,968
1999–2000	2,072
2000–01	1,802
2001–02	2,048
2002–03	2,094

Notes:
1. Figures are net totals of capital and revenue expenditure.
2. Figures from 2000–01 onwards do not include London.

Highway maintenance expenditure in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and London is a matter for those Devolved Administrations.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183858]

Mr. McNulty: The salary costs of staff employed by DfT(C), since its creation in May 2002, are as follows:

£000

	[1]*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Press Office	510	697
Publicity [2]	459	729

[1] From 28 May 2002. There was a high vacancy rate in this period as a result of the split of what is now DfT from the former Department of Transport Local Government and the Regions.
[2] Advertising and media buying for public information campaigns (e.g. Think! road safety), publishing (e.g. Rail Review), publication and distribution of information leaflets, posters etc.

Information for each of the financial years 1997–98 and 2001–02, when transport policy formed part of the remit of the former Departments' of Environment, Transport and the Regions and Transport, Local Government and the Regions (respectively), is not available in a comparable format.

Public Transport Subsidies

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has commissioned on the costs of public subsidies to public transport in the last five years. [184038]

Mr. Jamieson: In the last five years the Department has commissioned a number of research projects investigating the costs and benefits of public transport. Projects specifically investigating the effects of public subsidies included:

Monitoring Quality Partnerships (1999–2002)

Croydon Tramlink Impact Study (2000–01)

Evaluating Rural Bus Grant and Rural Bus Challenge (2001–04)

Monitoring Local Bus Tenders (2001–04)

Monitoring effects of extending BSOG to Community Transport (2003–04)

Further information about these and other research projects is available from the Research Database at www.rmd.dft.gov.uk.

Radioactive Materials (Shipment)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 19 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 999W, on radioactive materials, what constitutes a justifiable reason. [182863]

Mr. Jamieson: The use of the word 'justifiable' was intended to make clear that radioactive material being moved without a serious purpose would not be acceptable.

Rail Crossings (Safety Equipment)

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the audio and CCTV safety monitoring equipment installed in relation to the Medhurst Road, Edenbridge rail crossing has been approved by the Health and Safety Executive. [186072]

Dr. Howells: The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Railway Inspectorate (HMRI) approved the audio monitoring equipment installed at Medhurst Row, Edenbridge rail crossing. The HSE is not required to approve the CCTV monitoring equipment, which was fitted by Railtrack to gather evidence of level crossing user misuse.

Railways

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the effect on the punctuality performance of train operating companies of extensions of scheduled journey times; and if he will publish figures for punctuality performance for mainline services over the most recent 12 month period re-stated to be measured against pre-Hatfield scheduled journey times. [181548]

Mr. McNulty: Train operators can make timetable adjustments, which may lengthen or reduce journey times, so long as they do not exceed the maximum journey times stated in the Public Sector Requirement (PSR) for each franchise. To re-calculate the performance of services over the last 12 months against historic timetable schedules could be done only at disproportionate costs.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much has been spent on the development of the Global System for Mobile Communications for Railways in each of the last seven years; and what the estimated cost is for each of the next five years; [184437]

(2) what the total cost of the development of the Train Control System was, excluding costs for erection; [184438]

(3) what the cost has been of erecting railway telecommunications masts intended for the Track Control System; [184439]

(4) what proportion of railway telecommunications masts on the West Coast Main Line are operational and supporting an interim voice radio system. [184440]

Mr. McNulty: These are operational matters for Network Rail. I have passed these questions to Network Rail, for them to respond directly to the hon. Member.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what discussions he has had with the Strategic Rail Authority on the past and future funding for rail freight through *(a)* the Freight Small Schemes Fund, *(b)* incremental output statements for freight, *(c)* freight facilities grant and *(d)* track access charges. [180742]

(2) if he will list the Strategic Rail Authority Freight Small Schemes Fund schemes *(a)* which have commenced, *(b)* where feasibility studies (i) have been completed and (ii) are continuing, *(c)* which have been placed on hold and *(d)* which have been cancelled, indicating in each case funding from the Strategic Rail Authority, (A) awarded, (B) approved and (C) projected in 2004–05. [180743]

Mr. McNulty: Ministers and officials in the Department meet regularly with the Strategic Rail Authority about a wide range of issues. Details of the Freight Small Schemes Fund are shown in the Strategic Rail Authority's 2002 Strategic Plan. Of those listed Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine, is set to go ahead following approval by the Scottish Executive. Bletchley-Claydon is being developed by the SRA but remains unfunded.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list out-of-court settlements to which *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the Strategic Rail Authority and *(c)* other agencies of the Department were party during the last 12 months, broken down by (i) date and (ii) amount; and who the other parties were in each case. [180748]

Mr. McNulty: The Department does not maintain a comprehensive central record of-out of court settlements entered into by itself, its Agencies and the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA). The table sets out payments by three of the Department's Agencies which were made in out of court settlements following the commencement of legal proceedings finalised in the financial year 2003–04. Disproportionate costs would be incurred in identifying generally ex gratia and other settlement payments. However, maladministration claims against the Maritime and Coastguard Agency have been settled for a total of around £0.5 million, including one case finalised at the very beginning of the current financial year. These claims followed on from a ruling by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration in an earlier similar case that there had been maladministration in the carrying out of certain statutory functions relating to the safety of vessels.

Full details of the names of the parties and the circumstances of the cases have not been disclosed as this could be in breach of confidentiality either formally agreed with, or reasonably expected by, the other party. It would be disproportionately expensive to review each case to confirm the position and/or to write to the parties concerned to seek their consent to any disclosure.

The SRA was party to one out of court settlement in 2003–04 but the terms of the settlement expressly prohibit the parties from disclosing any details including the date, parties or amount of the settlement sum.

Type of case	*Amount Settled (£)*
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	
One compensation and six personal injury cases (Total)	31,508
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	
Refund of a Single Vehicle Approval fee	80
Highways Agency	
Four claims by third parties relating to property	

Type of case	Amount Settled (£)
damage and personal injury on the trunk road network (Total)	172,148

For information on cases brought to Employment Tribunals, I refer to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Gordon (Mr. Bruce) today (UIN ref 181465).

No non-employment based, out of court settlements following the commencement of legal proceedings are recorded for the central Department in the financial year 2003–04.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of the W. S. Atkins report for the Strategic Rail Authority on a North/South rail line with all commercially sensitive information removed. [180821]

Dr. Howells: I have asked the SRA to arrange for a revised text to be produced on this basis, and, once it is available I will place a copy in the Libraries of the House.

Rescue Co-ordination Centres

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* incidents, *(b)* accidents and *(c)* deaths occurred within the areas covered by each of the former rescue co-ordination centres at (i) Oban, (ii) Pentland and (iii) Tyne Tees in each year since 1998. [185855]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is as follows:

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Incidents						
Oban	286	281	205	310	240	297
Pentland	111	106	110	180	192	153
Tyne Tees	443	473	342	492	448	441
Accidents						
Oban	241	230	159	245	209	231
Pentland	77	68	67	117	105	107
Tyne Tees	274	232	259	328	287	307
Deaths						
Oban	10	14	7	11	10	9
Pentland	4	4	3	5	1	3
Tyne Tees	16	12	6	11	6	10

Road Improvement Costs

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the estimated cost is of the items in the programme of road improvements set out in Appendix 6 of the Highways Agency Business Plan which are dependent on the outcome of the Spending Review 2004. [176071]

Mr. Jamieson: The current estimated costs of the schemes referred to are:

	£ million
A249 Iwade-Queenborough Improvement	81
A5 Weeford—Fazeley Improvement	38
A14 Rookery Crossroads Grade Separated Junction	9
A421 Great Barford Bypass	43
A47 Thorney Bypass	28
A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction	23
M4 Junction 18 Eastbound Diverge	10
M5 Junctions 17–18 Northbound Climbing Lane	6

In most cases, the major costs of the schemes listed above will be incurred after 2004–05. The Highways Agency is proceeding with scheme preparation in order to allow the planned new starts to begin construction this year. Of the 8 new starts identified in the Business Plan, 2 are now under construction.

Road Schemes

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will set out in respect of each of the projects in the Highways Agency Targeted Programme of Improvements *(a)* the estimated project cost, *(b)* the cost benefit ratios and *(c)* the estimated date for completion. [182587]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 6 July 2004]:* The following projects, with their estimated cost and benefit cost ratio (BCR), are included in the Targeted Programme of Improvements (TPI).

Scheme	Last calculated BCR	Latest Estimated outturn cost (£ million)
A1 Adderstone to Belford Dualling	2.4	14
A1 Bramham—Wetherby (Including Wetherby Bypass)	6.1	62
A1 Dishforth to Leeming	1.5	325
A1 Leeming to Barton	1.5	1
A1 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst Bypass	2.5	68
A1 Morpeth to Felton Dualling	2.2	84
A1 Peterborough—Blyth Grade Separated Junctions	8.6	86
A1 Stannington Junction	6.3	8
A1 (M) Ferrybridge—Hook Moor (DBFO)	4.5	161
A1 (M) Wetherby—Walshford (DBFO)	3.5	34
A1/A19/A1068 Seaton Burn Junction Improvement	2.4	30
A10 Wadesmill Colliers End	4.5	39
A11 Attleborough Bypass	2.5	29
A11 Fiveways—Thetford Improvement	2.4	60
A14 Ellington—Fen Ditton Improvement	1.8	490
A14 Haughley New St.—Stowmarket Improvement	2.6	31
A14 Rookery Crossroads GSJ	2.5	9
A19/A184 Testos Junction Improvement	5.6	21
A2 Bean—Cobham Phase 1 Bean—Tollgate	-1.5	20
A2 Bean—Cobham Phase 2 Tollgate—Cobham	1.6	101
A2/A282 Dartford Improvement	1.5	80
A21 Lamberhurst Bypass	2.3	19
A21 Tonbridge to Pembury	1.6	65
A23 Handcross to Warninglid Widening	4.4	41
A249 Iwade-Queenborough Improvement (DBFO)	2.1	81

Scheme	Last calculated BCR	Latest Estimated outturn cost (£ million)
A27 Southerham to Beddingham Improvement	7.7	19
A3 Hindhead Improvement	2.7	236
A30 Bodmin Indian Queens	3.2	69
A30 Garland Cross to Chiverton Cross	2.6	125
A30 Temple to Higher Carblake improvement	1.2	41
A30/A3 82 Merrymeet Junction	2.5	9
A303 Stonehenge	1.3	223
A34 Chieveley/M4 J13 Improvement	4.8	76
A38 Dobwalls Bypass	1.7	36
A419 Blunsdon	3.3	40
A419 Commonhead Junction	3.9	16
A421 Bedford to M1 Junction 13	4.2	171
A421 Great Barford Bypass	3	43
A428 Caxton Common to Hardwick Improvement	3	44
A45/A46 Tollbar End Improvement	3	57
A453 Widening (M1 J24 to A52 Nottingham)	1.5	89
A46 Newark—Widmerpool Improvement	7.9	186
A47 Blofield to North Burlingham Dualling	7.1	15
A47 Thorney Bypass	1.9	28
A483 Pant-Llanymynech Bypass	1.5	41
A5 Weeford—Fazeley Improvement	2.7	38
A500 City Road and Stoke Junction Improvement	2.4	60
A505 Dunstable Northern Bypass (A5 to M1 Link)	4.3	48
A5117/A550 Deeside Park Junctions Improvement	3	43
A57/A628 Mottram in Longdendale, Hollingworth and Tintwistle Bypass	9	103
A590 High and Low Newton Bypass	3	22
A595 Parton—Lillyhall Improvement	2.5	25
A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction	24.7	23
A64 Colton Lane Grade Separated Junction	1.2	11
A64 Rillington Bypass	1.3	12
A66 Carkin Moor to Scotch Corner Improvement	5.8	11
A66 Greta Bridge to Stephen Bank Improvement	6.9	9
A66 Long Newton Junction	1.4	8
A66 Temple Sowerby and Improvement at Winderwath	1.4	23
A69 Haydon Bridge Bypass	1.4	24
M1 J19 Improvement	1.8	124
M1 J21–30	2.6	1,915
M1 Junction 10 to 13 Widening	4.3	382
M1 Junction 6a to 10 Widening	2.1	241
M20 Junction 10A	4.2	46
M25 J12–15 Widening	2.3	105
M25 J16–23 Widening	5.5	496
M25 J1b-3 Widening	9.9	66
M25 J23–27 Widening	2.2	419
M25 J27–30 Widening	2.4	402
M25 J5–7 Widening	4.6	214
M4 Junction 18 Eastbound Diverge	2.6	10
M40 Junction 15 (Longbridge)	6	57
M40/A404 Handy Cross Junction Improvement	3.7	12
M5 Junctions 17–18 Northbound Climbing Lane	7.5	6
M5 Junctions 19–20 Northbound Climbing Lane	2.3	8
M5 Junctions 19–20 Southbound Climbing Lane	3.1	8
M6 Carlisle to Guardsmill extension	3	69
M60 J5–8 Widening	3.8	117
M62 Junction 6 Improvement	8.6	38

[1] Cost included above

These costs include the latest Treasury guidance on risk and optimism bias and allow for inflation at 2.5 per cent. per annum.

Of these, the following schemes have already started works or, if they have not, have provisional start dates in 2004–05, with anticipated completion dates as shown:

Scheme	Date of completion
A1 Stannmgton Junction	2004–05
A1 (M) Ferrybridge—Hook Moor	2006–07
A1 (M) Wetherby—Walshford	2005–06
A10 Wadesmill Colliers End	2004–05
A14 Rookery Crossroads Grade Separated Junction	2005–06
A2 Bean—Cobham Phase 1 Bean—Tollgate	2004–05
A21 Lamberhurst Bypass	2004–05
A249 Iwade—Queenborough Improvement	2006–07
A34 Chieveley/M4 J13 Improvement	2004–05
A421 Great Barford Bypass	2006–07
A47 Thorney Bypass	2006–07
A5 Weeford—Fazeley Improvement	2005–06
A500 City Road and Stoke Road Junction Improvement	2006–07
A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction	2006–07
A64 Colton Lane Grade Separated Junction	2005–06
M25 J12–15 Widening	2005–06
M4 Junction 18 Eastbound Diverge	2005–06
M5 Junctions 17—18 Northbound Climbing Lane	2005–06
M60 J5–8 Widening	2006–07

Decisions on start of works for the remainder of the programme will be made in due course.

Road Spending

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the money spent in each county in England and Wales over the last year on roads by *(a)* the Highways Agency and *(b)* local authorities. [174161]

Mr. Jamieson: The table below sets out the latest available information on road spend by local authorities and the Highways Agency by county. Actual spend by local authorities in 2003/04 is not yet confirmed so the table provides the spend for 2002/03.

Information on Wales is available from the Welsh Assembly.

£million

County	Highways Agency Authority	Local	Total Spend
Bedfordshire	23.7	26.7	50.4
Berkshire	54.5	40.0	94.5
Buckinghamshire	64.6	39.3	103.9
Cambridgeshire	36.8	37.9	74.7
Cheshire	66.7	71.7	138.5
Cornwall	20.1	35.8	55.9
County Durham	21.6	47.3	68.9
Cumbria	16.4	38.0	54.4
Derbyshire	23.0	54.4	77.5
Devon	61.8	69.6	131.4
Dorset	9.2	34.7	43.9
East Riding of Yorkshire	18.9	24.5	43.4
East Sussex	12.0	33.7	45.7
Essex	98.4	97.2	195.6
Gloucestershire	72.0	62.8	134.7
Greater London	26.0	479.9	505.9
Greater Manchester	49.0	130.1	179.1
Hampshire	35.8	80.2	116.0
Herefordshire	20.6	12.4	33.0
Hertfordshire	53.6	56.3	109.9
Isle of Wight	0.0	13.0	13.0
Kent	79.5	83.5	163.0
Lancashire	94.7	81.8	176.5
Leicestershire	36.5	42.3	78.8
Lincolnshire	47.6	60.6	108.2
Merseyside	14.1	78.2	92.3
Norfolk	18.0	57.8	75.8
North Yorkshire	41.1	73.2	114.3
Northamptonshire	41.5	25.6	67.1
Northumberland	15.7	24.2	39.9
Nottinghamshire	52.5	56.4	108.8
Oxfordshire	55.3	34.4	89.7
Rutland	5.7	3.3	9.0
Shropshire	37.4	31.7	69.1
Somerset	18.5	52.9	71.4
South Yorkshire	54.4	57.1	111.5
Staffordshire	40.3	48.8	89.1
Suffolk	14.6	40.2	54.8
Surrey	33.2	57.0	90.2
Tyne & Wear	11.8	64.0	75.8
Warwickshire	53.1	25.6	78.7
West Midlands	64.4	122.7	187.1
West Sussex	11.1	33.9	45.0
West Yorkshire	34.9	106.2	141.1
Wiltshire	41.0	34.4	75.3S
Worcestershire	52.5	28.2	80.8
Grand Total	1,753.8	2,809.4	4,563.2

Note:
Numbers individually rounded to £0.1 million

Road Traffic Congestion

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his latest estimates are of the level of road traffic congestion, as measured by *(a)* seconds per vehicle kilometre and *(b)* average peak-time speeds on inter-urban routes. [186165]

Mr. Jamieson: The White Paper The Future of Transport' which was presented to the House on Tuesday 20 July by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State explains that we are developing new measures of traffic congestion. Estimates of average peak-time traffic speeds on weekdays were published in April of this year in Traffic Speeds on English Trunk Roads: 2003' available on the Department's website.

Roads

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's latest estimate is of *(a)* the cost of the local road repair backlog and *(b)* the proportion of principal local roads with no residual life as at 1 April. [186163]

Mr. McNulty: The Department does not yet have firm enough data to make a robust estimate of the maintenance backlog on roads and footpaths.

The structural condition of roads is represented by its "residual life". Where a road's residual life falls to or below zero its deterioration is no longer predictable. It may remain serviceable but needs to be monitored closely to see if maintenance is needed. In the most recent available figures, for 2003, 17 per cent. of English principal roads came into this category.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress the Government has made towards its target of halting the deterioration of the local road network by April. [186164]

Mr. McNulty: Results of the National Road Maintenance Condition Survey show that there has been a significant improvement in the condition of English local roads between 2000 and 2003, the latest year for which results are available. The Government is therefore on track to meet its target of halting the deterioration by 2004.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress the Government has made towards its target of completing or having under construction 40 schemes from the Highways Agency's targeted programme of improvements by 2005. [186170]

Mr. Jamieson: 31 out of the original 40 schemes, contained in the targeted programme of improvements (TPI), are already completed, under construction or will be on site by April 2005. A further three schemes are planned to start this year.

Rolling Stock

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what steps he is taking to facilitate the design and production of less energy-intensive railway rolling stock; [182379]

(2) what steps he is taking to lessen the power consumption of railway rolling stock. [182380]

Mr. McNulty: These are matters for the industry. Increased train weight arising from safety and other design features and the wider use of air conditioning and power operated doors have tended to increase the power needs of modern trains. But current and future developments should offset that. For example, future technology in body construction is expected to lead to lighter trains which draw less power and regenerative braking, which produces new power during the braking process, is already being introduced where practicable.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what powers *(a)* he and *(b)* other bodies have to require franchisees to maintain an adequate supply of rolling stock of acceptable quality. [185269]

Mr. McNulty: Rolling stock issues are among those considered when the terms of individual franchises are being drawn up. Where a need for rolling stock refurbishment or replacement is identified, the detailed requirements will be set out in the franchise agreement.

Franchises are currently awarded by the Strategic Rail Authority, though it is proposed that this responsibility will in due course pass to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State as described in his statement to the House of 15 July.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on progress with withdrawing Mark 1 slam door rolling stock from the train network. [185419]

Mr. McNulty: By early July 2004, 522 Mark 1 vehicles had been withdrawn. The remaining 1,200 or so will follow progressively over the coming months. The final date for the elimination of Mark 1s from passenger service is the subject of a consultation being conducted by Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate who have indicated that they are minded to approve a proposal that the deadline should be November 2005. 908 new vehicles have been introduced into service.

Salary and Recruitment Costs

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* recruitment costs and *(b)* total cumulative salary bill of (i) the Chairman of the UK Commission for Integrated Transport and (ii) the Chairman of the Strategic Rail Authority are. [185236]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* For the Chairman of the UK Commission for Integrated Transport, the recruitment costs specifically attributable to this post are not held separately. The most recent Chair appointment was in March 2002. The remuneration for the post is £30,000 per annum with the Chair expected to work five days per month.

Full details of the payments made to the Chairman of the Strategic Rail Authority can be found in the Authority's Annual Reports. The recruitment costs specifically attributable to this post are not held separately.

Security Forces (Ships in British Ports)

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who is responsible for a decision to allow security forces to board a ship in a British port. [184602]

Mr. Jamieson: Ultimate responsibility for authorising the deployment of special forces in a British port will fall to Ministers, at the request of the Chief Constable dealing with the incident.

Smartcards

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress is being made with the introduction of smartcard technology; what action he is taking to ensure national compatibility of smartcards; what support he is giving to the introduction of smartcard technology; and if he will make a statement. [185733]

Mr. McNulty: The Department published national interoperability specifications for smartcard ticketing in March this year (ISBN 0-9548042). The specifications enable a single bus or train ticket to be loaded at one location, used for travel across a network, and then used again at the new location. We are working with LAs and industry to set up the associated delivery framework that will provide the management, security and accreditation services to ensure ticketing schemes work seamlessly together.

We are supporting a number of projects to help existing schemes be compliant with the national specifications. The London Oyster Card is one example. Others are the conversion of existing schemes in Cheshire, Nottinghamshire and Southampton and a new rural scheme in Cumbria and Lancashire (known as NoWcard). The Department has also given provisional approval to the West and South Yorkshire major transport scheme Yorcard.

The Department is also working closely with ODPM and the Department for Education and Skills to ensure wider compatibility of smartcards, for example using the same card for school attendance, library access and travel.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for which *(a)* motorway, *(b)* trunk road and *(c)* other road locations in Spelthorne permission has been given for (i) fixed and (ii) mobile speed and traffic light cameras; and what criteria were taken into account when deciding whether to grant permission. [183299]

Mr. Jamieson: Surrey is one of five police force areas which does not at present participate in the national safety camera programme which provides for the costs of operating camera sites to be met from fixed fine resources. The camera sites operated by the police and local highway authorities in Surrey are therefore not subject to approval under the national programme.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been collected through fines imposed on those caught speeding by speed cameras in Havering since their introduction. [184246]

Caroline Flint: I have been asked to reply.

Information on the number of fixed penalties or fines paid for the offence of 'speeding detected by camera' is not collected centrally.

Sustainable Development (Government Estate)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes there have been in *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon emissions and *(b)* single occupancy car commuting from his Department against the baseline year set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [185697]

Mr. McNulty: The Department of Transport was unable to establish a baseline for 2002–03 for either *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions or *(b)* single occupancy car commuting, due to the lack of available data.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what have been identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of the estate of his Department. [185728]

Mr. McNulty: Most staff in the Department for Transport are located in about 100 larger properties while the remainder are located in relatively small properties belonging to the agencies. Consequently, the most significant sustainable development operational impacts of the main office estate are typically in respect of utility use, waste, paper, procurement and travel.

On the non-office estate there are also few sites that might be considered to have significant sustainable impacts beyond the typical and these are:

The Air Accidents Investigation Branch at Farnborough that handles crash wreckage from civil aircraft accidents and serious incidents within the UK, which they investigate.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency Maritime Rescue Sub Centres and Co-ordination Centres which are manned and operational 24 hours a day and include air-conditioned emergency operational areas, rescue equipment, emergency generators etc.

The 24 acre Driving Standards Agency's training residential centre at Cardington.

Vehicle Inspectorate's goods vehicle testing stations provide statutory testing of vehicles.

The 100 HA motorway maintenance depots which provide a base from which to undertake routine motorway maintenance, and especially winter maintenance and could include one or more rock salt storage barns, a number of winter maintenance vehicles, weighbridge and washdown areas, and diesel fuel tanks.

The sustainable impacts at these sites vary considerably depending on the nature of the work undertaken at them but are likely to cover such aspects as biodiversity, estates management, control of pollution, handling hazardous substances or waste and the discharge of water.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what parts of his Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [185729]

Mr. McNulty: The parts of the Department's estate not currently covered by the Framework commitments are:

The Marine Accident Investigation Bureau which only has 28 staff in a small minor occupied office in Southampton.

Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service at Crowthorne which comprise only 11 staff.

The Traffic Area Offices at Birmingham and Edinburgh because they are minor occupiers in their buildings and useful utility and other environmental information is not available.

643 Marine and Coastguard sites that are typically unmanned radio masts, garages or sheds where a vehicle or marine rescue equipment is stored.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps have been taken by his Department to review arrangements for public reporting of sustainable development impacts since publication of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [185730]

Mr. McNulty: Since the publication of the Framework the Department now reports publicly on its sustainable development impacts and performance on its website and through the Sustainable Development in Government annual report.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what arrangements his Department has in place to report publicly on its key sustainable development impacts. [185731]

Mr. McNulty: The Department reports on progress made in addressing the sustainable development impacts of its policies, in its Annual Report, and through our contribution to the Government's annual Sustainable Development Report.

We monitor our performance against the Government's sustainable development indicators, laid out in "Quality of Life Counts", by publishing them in "Transport Trends".

Thameslink 2000

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the future of Thameslink 2000. [186295]

Mr. McNulty: Network Rail's application for a Transport and Works Act order was considered at a public inquiry between June 2000 and May 2001. A decision on the project was deferred pending the resolution of three deficiencies identified by the inspector in his report, relating to the design of the scheme in central London. Network Rail has now submitted further applications addressing these issues, which are likely to be considered by a public inquiry next year.

Trunk Roads

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of public expenditure on new trunk roads in each year from 1990–91 to 2010–11; and if he will make a statement. [156694]

Mr. Jamieson: The following table sets out figures for outturn and forecast public expenditure on building new trunk roads and motorways and improving and widening existing roads from 1990–91 to 2005–06. The data do not allow expenditure on new trunk roads to be separately identified. Spending in future years is being reviewed as part of the Spending Review 2004.

For completeness, the table also sets out equivalent figures for private expenditure on building new trunk roads and motorways, and, improving and widening existing roads.

The table must be interpreted with care as, for a number of reasons, the trunk road network has reduced in size over the last few years and so the figures do not form a consistent series.

(1) The government's policy as set out in A New Deal for transport: Better for Everyone (1998 Cm 3950) is that there are a number of trunk roads which mainly serve local and regional traffic and are more appropriately managed at local level. Following negotiations we have, since 1999, transferred around 2,000kms of these non-strategic roads to local highway authorities—about 20 per cent. of the original network. The data have not been adjusted to take this into account. We would hope to complete the transfer of the remaining non-strategic roads, another 1,000kms, over the next two years.

(2) In addition, trunk roads (excluding motorways) within Greater London were transferred to Transport for London in July 2000.

(3) The public expenditure numbers include payments to private operators for their investment. The table sets out figures for the payments made to the private sector, which are deducted to produce the net expenditure figure.

£ million

Financial Year	*Public Expenditure*	*Private Expenditure Estimated*	*Shadow tolls*	*Net Expenditure*
1990–91	1,270	50	—	1,320
1991–92	1,277	29	—	1,306
1992–93	1,309	125	—	1,434
1993–94	1,345	75	—	1,420
1994–95	1,183	80	35	1,228
1995–96	1,100	101	25	1,176
1996–97	965	123	42	1,046
1997–98	787	238	88	937
1998–99	583	188	131	640
1999–2000	496	33	205	324
2000–01	506	28	202	332
2001–02	636	173	206	603
2002–03	731	223	220	734
2003–04	687	242	239	690
2004–05	724	150	261	613
2005–06	769	325	353	741

Notes:

Net expenditure equals public expenditure plus private expenditure less payments to private operators.

Private investment is that estimated in the Ten Year Plan.

Water

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes there have been in water consumption by his Department in each year since 1997. [185699]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002 and as a result the information provided relates to the period from then.

For the Department's London Headquarters building, Great Minster House, water consumption has fallen from 12,308m^3 to 11,380m^3 between 2002–03 and 2003–04 giving a per person ratio of 7.3m^3.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the non-office sites within his departmental estate which have been identified as being likely to provide opportunities for significant water savings. [185700]

Mr. McNulty: We have not identified any non-office sites within the departmental estate as being likely to provide opportunities for significant water savings.

Watermark Project

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department has joined the Watermark project. [185698]

Mr. McNulty: Yes.

Written Answers to Questions

The following answers were received between Friday 23 July and Friday 27 August 2004

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Polygamous Spouses

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many polygamous spouses were granted entry clearance in each of the last five years. [185670]

Mr. MacShane: UKvisas does not hold any records of how many polygamous spouses were granted entry clearance either for settlement or for other categories of application. However, polygamous spouses would not usually qualify for settlement under the Immigration Rules. Further details are set out in Chapter 13 Annex 3 of the Diplomatic Service Procedures available on the UKvisas website: www.ukvisas.gov.uk/dsps.

British Indian Ocean Territory

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what rights Government officials have to visit Diego Garcia *(a)* unannounced and *(b)* announced under the terms of the lease granted to the US Administration for the use of Diego Garcia. [183932]

Mr. Rammell: Under the 1976 United Kingdom/ United States Exchange of Notes concerning the US Defence Facility on Diego Garcia, access to Diego Garcia is in general restricted to members of the Forces of the United Kingdom and of the United States, the Commissioner and public officers in the service of the British Indian Ocean Territory, representatives of the Government of the United Kingdom and of the United States and, subject to normal immigration requirements, contractor personnel.

Turkey

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from British citizens with shares in the Turkish companies Ceas and Kepez Elektrik who have received no compensation following the Turkish Government's takeover of these companies; and if he will make a statement. [185614]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is not aware of any UK nationals who are shareholders in either of these companies. No British nationals have made representations to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on this issue. Such individuals should seek legal advice in Turkey and the British Embassy in Ankara would be happy to advise any UK shareholders of suitable legal firms. The United Kingdom Investment and Promotion Protection Agreement should then be used to seek redress, if appropriate, from the Turkish Government.

Cuba

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Cuban Government on the detention and treatment of *(a)* Jorge Luis Garcia Perez and *(b)* Dr. Oscar Ellias Biscet; and if he will make a statement. [186113]

Mr. Rammell: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew) today (UIN 185768).

Cyprus

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 15 July 2004, to question reference 184114, what financial assistance was set aside by *(a)* the Government and *(b)* the European Union specifically for facilities for the joint benefit of Greek and Turkish Cypriots in the town of Famagusta. [186138]

Mr. MacShane: EU member states are still negotiating the details of the European Commission's proposals for the disbursement of €259 million of financial aid for northern Cyprus. Until agreement has been reached on the details, it is not possible to say where the funds will be allocated and for what specific purpose. The UK does not at this stage have any plans for unilateral financial assistance but will pay its share of the EU funding.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals his Department has *(a)* received and *(b)* made to amend the mandate of the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to include authority to monitor and report on natural resource exploitation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and if he will make a statement. [186228]

Mr. MacShane: We have received recommendations from some Non-Governmental Organisations to include the authority to monitor and report on natural resource exploitation in the United Nations' Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (MONUC) mandate. We await the Secretary-General's report and recommendations for the future of MONUC, due on 15 August, which we will consider carefully.

Departmental Administration Costs

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total administration costs were in his Department in financial years *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* 1997–98. [186063]

Mr. MacShane: Details of the Department's gross running costs for 1996–97 and 1997–98 are contained in Table 5.5 of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2000–01 (Cm 4601). These figures are on a cash basis.

From Public Expenditure Analyses 2001–02 (Cm 5101), Departments' administrative expenditure was reported on a resource basis, as administration costs.

Copies of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses are in the Library of the House and are on HM Treasury's public website (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk).

China

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many visa applications from students in China have been refused *(a)* this year and *(b)* in each of the last five years. [184881]

Mr. MacShane: The information is as follows:

China[1]

	2003–04	*2002–03*	*2001–02*	*2000–01*	*1999–2000*	*1998–99*
Student applications received	35,508	34,477	29,338	18,933	12,574	5,429
Students refused	11,554	9,095	7,986	5,073	3,119	1,501
Refused as percentage of received	32.5	26.4	27.2	26.8	24.8	27.6

[1] Financial year running 1 April to 31 March.

The figures include statistics from our missions in Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou. The majority of student applications are made in Beijing.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr Michael Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much was spent by the Foreign Office in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available on special advisers' (i) salaries and (ii) travel expenses. [184506]

Mr. Straw: During the period 1 April 1996 to 31 March 1997 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent £98,978 on Special Advisers' salaries.

During the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent £162,106 on Special Advisers' salaries and pension contributions.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent a total of £23,192 on Special Advisers' travel expenses during the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004. Figures for travel expenses going back to 1996/97 are not available.

Egypt

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Egyptian Government on bringing to justice those responsible for the deaths of 21 Christians in El-Khosheh in 2000. [185066]

Mr. Rammell: We were deeply concerned by the sectarian violence in El-Khosheh in January 2001, which left 20 Christians and 1 Muslim dead. We have followed the case closely, and made our concerns known at the time. We were encouraged that the Prosecutor-General persistently sought judicial review of early judgements in the case, reflecting the authorities' concern that justice be done. We are concerned that this process seems, following a decision of the Court of Cassation last month, to be at an end. We will continue to make our concerns known to the appropriate authorities.

European Union

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to commission a cost-benefit analysis of the economic impact of the UK's membership of the European Union. [186187]

Mr. MacShane: While there are no immediate plans to commission further research, the Government continue to monitor the need for further evaluation and assessment in this area, as elsewhere. The Government are convinced of the benefits of UK membership of the European Union.

Hague Convention

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer to the right hon. Member for Tonbridge and Malling (Sir John Stanley) of 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1060W, on The Hague Convention, what strategy the Government have put in place, and what timeline they has drawn up, for enacting the primary and secondary legislation in order for the UK to ratify the UN Convention Against Corruption; and if he will make a statement. [186126]

Mr. MacShane: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Gordon (Malcolm Bruce) on 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1761W.

India

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what impact the strategic alliance agreed in January between the Indian and Iranian governments has had on the Government's decision to issue licences for strategic exports to India. [186117]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: There has been no need to change how we decide on our criteria on export licence applications for India following the agreement between the Indian and Iranian governments to increase their economic and civil nuclear co-operation because the policy enables changes in circumstances to be considered. We assess all export licence applications on a case-by-case basis against: the Consolidated EU and National Arms Licensing Criteria; the statement made by my hon. Friend the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Bradshaw) on 15 March 2002, *Official Report*, column 1298W; and in light of the circumstances prevailing at the time. Under criterion 7, we consider the risk of re-export of equipment under undesirable conditions.

Iraq

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how the Iraqi police force is funded. [184271]

Mr. Rammell: The Iraqi police budget is financed through the Iraqi budget and administered by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior. Iraq's budget consists of funds paid into the Development Fund for Iraq (DPI), established under United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1483 of 22 May 2003. The DPI includes receipts from oil exports and transferred assets of the former Government of Iraq. Additional funding from donor countries and the US Supplemental are paying for specific projects associated with improving the Iraqi Police Service. Donor funds are either committed bilaterally or through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI). US Supplemental funds are disbursed through the US-run Project and Contracting Office (formerly called the Project Management Office).

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has received evidence that terrorists operating in Iraq have secured since May 2003 material that can be put to weapons of mass destruction use. [185149]

Mr. MacShane: We regularly receive intelligence assessments that address the situation in Iraq and its wider impact, including on the threat from international terrorism.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether any hon. Members had an input into the preparation of the September 2002 Dossier, Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction. [185225]

Mr. MacShane: As has already been made clear the dossier was drafted by the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), and any changes suggested by Ministers and other officials were accepted or rejected by them. This process was fully discussed in Lord Hutton's Report.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether British officials were told of Abdel Bassel Turk's concern about human rights abuses in 2003. [185949]

Mr. MacShane: The then Iraqi Minister for Human Rights, Abdel Basit Turki, raised some aspects of Coalition detention practices with British officials in November 2003.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of Iraq's declaration of the status of its programmes of weapons of mass destruction, provided to the United Nations on 8 December 2002, had been translated up to 19 March 2003; what proportion has been translated to date; what plans there are for further translation; what efforts have been made to verify details of the declaration through the work of the Iraq Survey Group; and what plans he has to make public all or part of the translated text. [186182]

Mr. MacShane: Translation of the Iraqi declaration was complete by 19 March 2003.

The Iraq Survey Group was not tasked with verifying the December 2002 declaration.

The declaration was required by UN Security Council Resolution 1441. It is for the UN to decide whether to publish any part of the declaration.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether, in respect of the information Her Majesty's Government received from a foreign intelligence source suggesting that Iraq had attempted to procure uranium from Niger, checks were made with former Iraqi ambassador Wissam Al-Zahawi. [186183]

Mr. MacShane: No. In the circumstances prevailing in late 2002/early 2003 it would not have been possible for UK officials to have discussed the issue directly with ambassador Al-Zahawi.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he requested *(a)* the Secret Intelligence Service and *(b)* the Government Communications Headquarters for updated evaluations of the conclusions set out in the Government dossier on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (i) following the dossier's publication up to 20 March 2003 and (ii) once the United Kingdom was in receipt of Iraq's declaration on its programmes of weapons of mass destruction, pursuant to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441 (2002), provided on 8 December 2002. [186216]

Mr. MacShane: Intelligence has been gathered and evaluated on an on-going basis since the publication of the dossier.

Israel

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with members of the Quartet concerning an arms embargo on Israel. [186161]

Mr. Rammell: Both our EU partners and we are guided by the EU Code of Conduct on arms exports which means that we will not issue licences where there is a clear risk that the equipment might be used for internal repression or aggressively against another country.

The UK government has had no discussions with the Quartet (UN, US, Russia, EU) concerning an arms embargo on Israel.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice his Department has given to contractors working on the Israeli security wall on the International Court of Justice ruling on the legality of the wall. [186246]

Mr. MacShane: The UK Government have consistently made clear their view that the building of the barrier on occupied land is illegal and harms the prospects for peace. We have urged the Israeli Government to re-route it away from occupied land, and continue to do so.

Although agreements between the Israeli Government and UK contractors are a commercial and contractual issue in which the Government cannot get directly involved, we hope that contractors will take our view on the barrier into account. The UK Government are not aware of any UK companies working on the construction of the Israeli barrier.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the UK companies involved in the construction of the Israeli security wall. [186247]

Mr. MacShane: The UK Government is not aware of any UK companies involved in the construction of the Israeli barrier.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning the Citizenship and Entry into Israel law due for review at the end of July; and what assessment he has made of the human rights aspects of this law. [185441]

Mr. Rammell: My noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean discussed this law and its effects with several human rights groups during her visit to Israel in October 2003. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv has also raised the law and its impact with representatives of the Israeli government.

The Israeli Cabinet has approved a number of amendments to this law and extended it for six months rather than one year. Nonetheless, the Government remains concerned that this law discriminates against Arab Israelis. Along with our EU partners, we will continue to monitor the law and its effect on Arab Israelis.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the UN concerning the positioning of a human rights rapporteur in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. [185444]

Mr. Rammell: The UK Government welcomes the efforts of John Dugard, the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We remain gravely concerned by the humanitarian situation in the occupied territories, and we continue to raise our concerns with the Government of Israel.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has made no specific representations to the UN about the positioning of a human rights rapporteur in the occupied territories.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning underground aquifers and other water resources enclosed on the Israeli side of the security barrier. [185445]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean expressed concerns about the impact of the barrier, in particular the humanitarian impact on the lives of Palestinians, with a number of Israeli Ministers, most recently with the Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom. The damaging effect that the barrier has had on Palestinian access to water resources is one of the aspects our representations have focused on.

Ministerial Travel

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in the Department in the last year for which figures are available. [184529]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The information in the categories requested could only be provided at disproportionate costs. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not differentiate in its records between money spent by Ministers on air travel and money spent by officials accompanying Ministers. Nor do the records differentiate between travel to Northern Ireland and travel between other parts of the United Kingdom. In the Financial Year 2003–2004, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent £724,849 on domestic air travel for Ministers and officials.

Overseas Missions

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 57W, what proportion of the time that British missions overseas devote to trade development and investment work is for military goods at *(a)* UK embassies in general and *(b)* the UK embassy in Saudi Arabia. [184669]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Responsibility for advice on the purchase of UK military equipment UK Diplomatic Missions overseas normally rests with Defence Attaches or staff from the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO). In the case of Saudi Arabia, there is a dedicated First Secretary (Defence Supply) based in Riyadh. A number of other British Missions overseas also have both military and civilian staff who are dedicated to Defence sales. The duties of staff employed in Trade and Investment work in Embassy commercial sections world wide do not usually include defence sales, except in the few cases where neither DESO nor Defence Attache staff are represented at the Mission. To provide a more detailed breakdown would incur disproportionate costs. I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Gordon (Malcolm Bruce) on 30 June 2004 *Official Report*, column 350W for the proportion of Defence Attache's time spent supporting legitimate defence exports and defence procurement collaboration activities in accordance with Government policy on arm exports at our overseas Missions.

Overseas Prisoners (Resettlement)

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if his Department will develop a set of protocols to be followed in order to assist the resettlement of prisoners returning from abroad; and what actions his Department will take to ensure that *(a)* resettlement is as untraumatic as possible, and *(b)* returning prisoners are accorded sufficient assistance to begin rebuilding their lives. [186285]

Mr. MacShane: Her Majesty's Government believe that British nationals returning from imprisonment overseas need to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into society as quickly as possible. The best way for this to happen is through rapid entry into the benefit system when they return to the UK.

Returnees can be helped to do this by registering with "Prisoners Abroad", via their nearest UK Diplomatic Mission, as early as possible during their sentence.

'Prisoners Abroad' is an independent non-government organisation (NGO) and charity, co-funded by trust funds and private individuals as well as by government. It offers an excellent resettlement programme which aims to help eligible returning British nationals access the benefits available and looks after them while they do this.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's work with "Prisoners Abroad" is an excellent example of an effective partnership between government and the voluntary sector as envisaged by the Compact on relations between government and the voluntary and community sector in England. The Compact is a partnership agreement between government and the voluntary and community sector (VCS), providing a framework for their future relationship.

Palestine

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance the Government have offered the Palestinian Authority in trying to quell disturbances within Palestine. [185840]

Mr. Rammell: The UK has long said it is important that the Palestinian Authority build effective and transparently managed security services, which are able to deal with law and order on the Palestinian street. This will benefit the Palestinian public. It is also a commitment under the Roadmap. We have been working with the Palestinian Authority over recent months on improving their security capacity, and we continue to do so.

The UK has not, however, provided specific assistance to the Palestinian Authority's management of the disturbances in Gaza in recent days.

Sudan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the government of Sudan about *(a)* the ratification of the UN Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and *(b)* the reflection of that ratification in national legislation. [185572]

Mr. Rammell: The UN Convention Against Torture was raised as recently as 19 July as part of the EU-Sudan dialogue. A draft law is currently before the Council of Ministers for ratification.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of people who have been sentenced to *(a)* death, *(b)* amputation, *(c)* cross-amputation and *(d)* flogging in Sudan in the last 12 months. [185577]

Mr. Rammell: The Sudanese Organisation Against Torture says that in the 12 months March 2003 to March 2004 they received reports of 71 people being sentenced to death and two to cross amputation. The UK Government supports NGOs and human rights organisations which catalogue and document reports of human rights violations, but exact numbers are not available. We are speaking to the Government of Sudan about making their own figures public. We continue to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Sudan about the powers conferred on the Attorney-General and their compatibility with Article 9(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. [185578]

Mr. Rammell: The Attorney-General was ascribed the new powers under the National Security Act which was introduced in 1999 and has been regularly amended. Our Embassy in Khartoum regularly raises cases relating to incommunicado-detention with the Government of Sudan. On the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement, the Government of Sudan has committed itself to removing the emergency laws and implementing international human rights standards including the obligations of the International Convention for Civil and Political Rights.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Sudan about its adherence to Articles 10 and 13 of the UN Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary. [185579]

Mr. Rammell: We have made representations to the Government of Sudan on the need for due process in their legal system and the need for independence of the judiciary.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with members of the United Nations Security Council about the need for a mandatory resolution under Chapter VII of the UN Charter in respect of the conduct of the Government of Sudan in Darfur. [185580]

Mr. Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew) on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 344W.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has held with the President of Chad about the relationship between the Janjaweed in Sudan and the Renewed National Front of Chad. [185582]

Mr. Rammell: We have had no specific discussions with the President of Chad or his Government about the Renewed National Front of Chad. However we continue to monitor the situation with regard to cross-border attacks. The deployment of the African Union Ceasefire Commission in Darfur, to which we have donated £2 million should improve the overall security situation.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he had made to the Government of Sudan about the bombing in May 2004 by its forces of the Darfur town of Tabit, south of El Fashir. [185585]

Mr. Rammell: We regularly press the Government of Sudan to observe all its commitments under the 8 April ceasefire agreement. This includes refraining from aerial bombing.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Sudan about the operation of the specialised criminal courts in Darfur. [185591]

Mr. Rammell: Our Embassy in Khartoum, both bilaterally and through the EU-Sudan dialogue, regularly raises with the Sudanese Government cases that have passed through these courts; focusing not only on the sentences passed but also the lack of due legal process and the right to a fair trial.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Department has made to the Sudanese Government regarding the use of rape by pro-government forces within the Darfur region. [185829]

Mr. Rammell: Reports of rape in Darfur are most alarming. We have made clear to the Government of Sudan that they must act now to improve the security situation and protect civilians from such atrocities, or the Security Council will need to take further action. These reports also underline the need to get the AU monitoring mission fully operational as quickly as possible, and to deploy Human Rights monitors. Three all-women commissions to investigate rape allegations have recently been established by the Government of Sudan. We are also encouraging the Government of Sudan to ratify the Convention of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the countries which the Government *(a)* knows and *(b)* believes, to possess weapons of mass destruction. [183679]

Mr. MacShane: Under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), five states—the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Russia and China—are legally entitled to possess nuclear weapons. Additionally, India and Pakistan have both carried out tests of nuclear explosive devices. We regularly urge Israel to resolve international concerns about its nuclear status by acceding to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapons state. We continue to believe that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) has both the materials and the technical capability to produce nuclear weapons. We also remain very concerned that Iran continues to have ambitions to manufacture nuclear weapons.

All States Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention that have declared possession of chemical weapons are in the process of destroying their stocks of these weapons in accordance with their obligations under the Convention.

We warmly welcome recent moves by Libya to abandon its programmes for the development of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

We continue to believe that Iraq, under Saddam Hussein, was pursuing programmes for the development of WMD and are also concerned by persistent reports that Syria is also pursuing such programmes.

We regularly urge all countries to sign, ratify and abide by the obligations of all Treaties and Conventions covering the proliferation of WMD.

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Service Management Code

Alistair Burt: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what representations he has received to seek amendment to the Civil Service Management Code in order to allow an appeal process in relation to personnel matters which is independent of the Department in which the complaint arose; if he will take steps to make such an amendment; and if he will make a statement. [185624]

Mr. Alexander: Other than that received from the hon. Member no other representations have been received from hon. Members to seek amendment to the Civil Service Management Code's rules on personal grievance appeals.

Every civil servant has a right of appeal against a management decision that affects them adversely and departments and agencies have delegated authority to determine appropriate arrangements for hearing such appeals and I am not convinced that there are any compelling reasons to change the current arrangements.

Consultants

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) how much his Office spent on *(a)* head hunters and recruitment consultants and *(b)* management consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the last year for which figures are available; [185237]

(2) how much has been spent by his Office on *(a)* advertising and *(b)* public relations consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the last year for which figures are available. [185239]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: Financial information prior to the 1997–98 financial year was produced on a previous accounting system and cannot be readily be retrieved without incurring disproportionate cost.

The Cabinet Office spent £282,000 on advertising and £15.244 million on external consultancy in 2003–04. This figure may change due to accounting adjustments and is subject to final audit. External consultancy incorporates consultancy in several areas including financial, information technology and communications.

Expenditure on headhunters, recruitment consultants, management consultants and public relations consultants is contained within the external consultancy figure and cannot be separately identified without incurring disproportionate cost.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the total administration costs were in his Department in financial years *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* 1997–98. [186064]

Mr. Alexander: Details of the Department's gross running costs for 1996–97 and 1997–98 are contained in Table 5.5 of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2000–01 (Cm 4601). These figures are on a cash basis. From Public Expenditure Analyses 2001–02 (Cm 5101), departments' administrative expenditure was reported on a resource basis, as administration costs.

Copies of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses are in the Library and are on HM Treasury's public website (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk).

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186086]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office and its agencies (Government Car Despatch Agency and Central Office for Information) have flexible retirement and recruitment age policies.

The normal retirement age is 60 except for industrial staff in GCDA where the normal age is 65.

There is no set maximum age beyond which employment will not be considered.

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many cases against his Office and the agencies for which it is responsible have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181462]

Mr. Alexander: The information in respect of the Cabinet Office and its two agencies, COI and the Government Car and Despatch Service (GCDA) is shown in the table.

	Equal pay	*Sex discrimination*	*Race discrimination*	*Disability discrimination*	*Unfair dismissal*
1997	0	2	0	0	0
1998	0	0	0	0	0
1999	0	0	0	0	0
2000	0	0	1	1	0
2001	0	0	1	1	2
2002	0	[1]1	0	0	1
2003	0	0	0	0	[2]1

[1] Same case as the one originally brought in 1997. The total cost of contesting the case is recorded in 2002.
[2] Case is on-going.

Notes:
1. Figures given are for current Cabinet Office agencies and the year the case was settled.
2. The figures are supplied by the Treasury Solicitor's Department, which is responsible for litigation on behalf of the Cabinet Office.

Total cost involved in contesting claims in each year and the number of settlements is shown in the table.

	Number of cost awards made:			
	(i) Respondents	*(ii) Applicants*	*Costs of contesting claims (£)*	*Number of settlements*
1997	0	0	1,674	0
1998	0	0	0	0
1999	0	0	0	0
2000	0	0	4,055	0
2001	0	0	15,800	1
2002	0	0	6,480	1
2003	0	0	4,000	1

Notes:
1. Figures given are for current Cabinet Office agencies and the year the case was settled.
2. The figures are supplied by the Treasury Solicitor's Department, which is responsible for litigation on behalf of the Cabinet Office.

The total cost of settlements over this period was £36,379. Information about how much was spent on settling individual claims has been withheld to protect the confidentiality of individuals.

Government Car and Despatch Agency

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many people were employed in the Government Car and Despatch Agency *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* at the latest date for which information is available, broken down by job title; what functions were performed by those holding each job title; and how many people were employed whose primary function was (i) human resource or personnel functions, (ii) finance and accounting functions, (iii) information technology functions and (iv) other support, back office or administration functions. [183579]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 14 July 2004]:* The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the Framework Document to the Government Car and

Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive Mr. Nick Matheson to write to the hon. member. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Prime Minister's Delivery Unit

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* special advisers work in the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit, broken down by salary bracket. [180536]

Mr. Alexander: As at 1 June 2004 31 civil servants and no special advisers were working in the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit. The information is based on headcount. The number of civil servants broken down by salary bracket is shown in the table.

Salary bracket	*Number of staff by headcount*
£15,570-£24,289[1]	3
£21,268-£32,361[2]	6
£35,819-£50,035	10
£51,250 and above	12

[1] This incorporates two pay ranges.
[2] This incorporates two ranges.

Refurbishment Costs

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the total cost of refurbishments to the fabric of buildings owned by his Office has been since May 1997. [185238]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* Costs of renovation and refurbishment of freehold buildings on the Cabinet Office's estate (excluding the Civil Service College's site at Sunningdale Park) since 1997–98 to 2003–04 are shown in the table:

	Cost (£)
1997–98	0
1998–99	2,161,402
1999–2000	15,209,224
2000–01	12,428,647
2001–02	14,817,674
2002–03	12,304,117
2003–04	7,496,154

The period from 1998–99 to 2003–04 includes costs associated with the major redevelopment of the previously vacant and highly dilapidated Admiralty Arch, 22 and 26 Whitehall buildings.

A PFI/PPP partnership in relation to the Civil Service College's Sunningdale Park site commenced on 13 May 2002. From that date, the college's private sector partner has spent around £12 million on an overall investment plan. This has included expenditure on renovation, refurbishment and new build projects.

TRANSPORT

Road Congestion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made with reducing road congestion. [185420]

Mr. Jamieson: Significant progress has been made putting measures in place to tackle congestion. 100 road schemes have been completed since 2000, 22 of these delivered since June 2002. This includes the M6 Toll, which opened in December 2003. A further 12 strategic road schemes are currently under construction, including widening of the M25 between Junctions 12 to 15 around Heathrow. The London congestion charge has delivered significant benefits. Traffic Officers are already being deployed on the motorway network starting in the West Midlands, to improve the clearing of incidents, and new technologies are being introduced to help improve traffic flow. The Traffic Management Act gives new powers to the Traffic Officers, and to local authorities to improve the management of local roads.

Road Schemes

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what European Union financial support has been given for major inter regional road developments in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years. [185342]

Mr. Jamieson: The following table shows all the road projects and telematic schemes in the UK that have been awarded Trans-European Network (TENs) funding since the TENs fund was established in 1996.

At the current exchange rate this means that the UK has been awarded €30.618 million (equivalent to £20.413 million at present exchange rates). This is subject to confirmation from the Commission for two 2004 awards.

While TENs projects are awarded funding there can be a number of reasons as to why the payment could be less than the original award, including exchange rate fluctuations, changes in the scope of a project, or the Commission deciding that some costs are ineligible. It is therefore not possible to translate the awards into annual financial support.

Reference	*Project title*	*Award € million*	*Award £ million*
UK/96/88	UK—Ireland—Benelux road link	1.700	1.133
UK/96/90	Study on Newry—Dundalk cross border road link	0.325	0.217
UK/97/282	A75 Stranraer to Gretna Trunk Road	1.300	0.867
UK/97/283	UK—Ireland—Benelux road link	1.700	1.133
—	A14 route strategy studies	—	—
—	M6/M11 capacity studies	—	—
—	Bridge assessment study	—	—
UK/00/1503	Northern Ireland transportation infrastructure 2000	0.500	0.333
UK/01/1302	UK—Ireland—Benelux road link	5.000	3.333
—	A120 Stansted to Braintree road upgrading	—	—

Reference	Project title	Award € million	Award £ million
UK/02/1302	UK—Ireland—Benelux road link	2.500	1.667
—	A120 Stansted to Braintree road upgrading	5.000	3.333
UK/03/1302	UK—Ireland—Benelux road link	—	—
—	A120 Stansted to Braintree road upgrading	2.500	1.667
UK/04/	Loughbrickland to Beech Hill road[1]	2.400	1.600
UK/04/	UK—Ireland—Benelux road link[1]	—	—
—	A120 Stansted to Braintree road upgrading	22.925	15.283
Total[2]	—	0.300	0.200
—	Telematic schemes	0.300	0.200
UK/96/91	Study of National RDS-TMC implementation in the UK and its interconnection across national frontiers	0.400	0.267
UK/96/92	Study on road link network-real time traffic information	0.400	0.267
UK/97/275	Studies for traffic management and traffic information in Wales	1.000	0.667
UK/98/164	Study of National RDS—TMC implementation in the UK and its interconnection across national frontiers	—	—
UK/98/182	Telematics and traffic management on the TERN	—	—
UK/01/4001	Streetwise	0.900	0.600
—	Studies	0.900	0.600
—	Works	—	—
UK/02/4001	Streetwise	1.150	0.767
—	Studies	0.651	0.434
—	Works	—	—
UK/03/4001	Streetwise	1.110	0.740
—	Studies	0.582	0.388
—	Works	7.693	5.130
Total	—	30.618	20.413
Grand Total	—		

[1] Awaiting confirmation from the Commission.
[2] Total subject to confirmation from Commission.
Note:
Exchange rate used £1 equals €1.5.

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road schemes have been started in *(a)* the Thames Valley area and *(b)* Oxfordshire in each year since 1992. [186005]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* On the strategic road network construction has started on two major road schemes, since April 1998, in the Thames Valley area. These are as follows:

Scheme	Start of works	Actual/estimated completion
A41 Aston Clinton Bypass	August 2001	October 2003
A34 Chieveley/M4 J13 Improvement	March 2003	2004–05

Work has not started on any major strategic road schemes, Oxfordshire, since 1998. This information is available only for major road schemes costing in excess of £5 million starting after 1998 when the new Targeted Programme of Improvements was introduced.

On local roads there have been no starts on major schemes in the Thames Valley or Oxfordshire since 1998. For these roads the Department only make decisions about schemes over £5 million which are approved individually through the LTP process. Smaller schemes are funded by the local authorities out of their block allocations and the Department does not hold records of how that funding was used. We do not have records on major scheme starts before the new LTP system was introduced in 1999–2000 and getting it would be difficult, particularly since there have been changes to local authority structures. Trying to find the information would take time and be at a disproportionate cost.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how his Department measures his target to maintain the strategic road network at optimum level; and what the level of the strategic road network was estimated to be at 1 April. [186166]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department sets the Highways Agency an indicator to measure its performance in maintaining the network in a safe and serviceable condition. A new way of measuring the performance was introduced in the 2004–05 Highways Agency Business Plan, with a target to "achieve a road surface condition index score of 100|".

In consultation with the Department the Agency has developed an index that measures road surface condition. This is a major improvement on the previous indicator that was based on the percentage of the network that required investigation. The measure of road surface condition is based on a wider range of surveys covering rutting, unevenness, cracking and skid resistance. The target takes account of the fact that it is not practical or sustainable to maintain the whole road network in an as-new condition. The condition of the network is established, using the principles of minimising whole life costs taking into account disruption to road users. The condition at which the road network is to be maintained has been equated to a road surface condition index score of 100 and is the target level at which the road network will be

maintained year-on-year. To allow for variability/ uncertainty in annual condition scores, a tolerance of 1 is allowed in the target.

We estimate that the level at 1 April was within the parameters set out i.e. an index of 1001. The actual figure will be calculated and the result audited during 2004–05.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Government is on track to achieve its target of widening 360 miles of strategic road network by 2010; and if he will list the schemes involved in the widening programme indicating the *(a)* miles of road widened, *(b)* construction cost, *(c)* scheduled start of construction, *(d)* expected completion date and *(e)* status at 1 April. [186167]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government are on track to deliver 360 miles of widening of the strategic road network by the end of 2010–11 (within the period of the 10 Year Plan).

The following table provides a list of current and completed major schemes that are expected to contribute 387 route miles of widening by the end of 2010–11. Alongside each scheme is detailed: the miles of route widened; the Stage Reached or 2004–05 Key/ Critical Event as at 1 April 2004; the latest estimated outturn cost; and the anticipated dates of completion for those schemes that have already started works, or are expected to start works in 2004–05

Firm decisions have yet to be made on start of works for the remainder of the current programme so no forecast dates of opening are possible.

Scheme	*Stage reached or 2004–05 key/critical event (as at 1 April 2004)*	*Latest estimated outturn cost (£m)*	*Route miles*	*Estimated dates of completion*
A1 Willowburn-Denwick Improvement	Completed Scheme	9.0	2.6	—
A11 Roudham Heath- Attleborough Dualling	Completed Scheme	50.0	6.2	—
A43 Towcester to M40 Dualling (including A43 Whitfield Turn-Brackley Heath Improvement and A43 M40 to B4031 Dualling)	Completed Scheme	97.0	6.9	—
A46 Newark-Lincoln Improvement	Completed Scheme	41.0	8.1	—
A1033 Hedon Road Improvement, Hull	Completed Scheme	85.0	4.2	—
A2 Bean-Cobham Widening Phase 1	Road Open	20.0	3.8	2004–05
A34 Chieveley/M4 J13 Improvement	Road Open	76.0	1.3	2004–05
A1 (M) Wetherby to Walshford	No Event-Already on Site	34.0	3.7	2005–06
M25 J12–15 Widening	No Event-Already on Site	105.0	6.8	2005–06
M5 J17 to J18A Northbound Climbing Lane (Hallen Hill)	Start of Works	6.0	0.9	2005–06
A1 (M) Ferrybridge to Hook Moor	No Event-Already on Site	161.0	10.2	2006–07
A249 Iwade-Queenborough	Start of Works	81.0	3.3	2006–07
A500 City Road and Stoke Road Junctions	No Event-Already on Site	60.0	1.0	2006–07
M60 J 5–8 (formerly M63 J6–9 Widening)	No Event-Already on Site	117.0	4.7	2006–07
A120 Stansted Braintree	Road Open	130.0	15.0	Open July 2004
A2 Bean-Cobham Widening Phase 2	Publish Draft Orders and Environmental Statement	101.0	2.5	—
A2/A282 Dartford Improvement	Secretary of State's decision announced	80.0	2.1	—
A303 Stonehenge	No event-public inquiry already started	223.0	5.8	—
A11 Attleborough Bypass Improvement	Public Inquiry	29.0	3.0	—
All Five ways to Thetford Improvement	Publish Draft Orders and Environmental Statement	60.0	9.1	—
M6 Carlisle to Guardsmill	Publish Draft Orders and Environmental Statement	69.0	26.6	—
A3 Hindhead Improvement	Public Inquiry	236.0	5.1	—
A38 Dobwalls Bypass	Publish Draft Orders and Environmental Statement	36.0	2.5	—
A595 Parton -Lillyhall Improvement	Public Inquiry	25.0	3.2	—
A46 Newark-Widmerpool Improvement	Preferred Route Announcement	186.0	16.9	—
A30 Bodmin Indian Queens	Works price reviewed/ confirmed	69.0	7.2	—
A483 Pant-Llanymynech Bypass	ECI Tenders Invited	41.0	1.6	—
A66 Temple Sowerby	ECI Contract Awarded	23.0	3.1	—
A1 Dishforth-Barton (2 schemes-Dishforth Leeming, Leeming Barton)	No Event-ECI Contract already awarded	325.0	24.5	—
A1 Bramham-Wetherby (including Wetherby Bypass)	Publish Draft Orders and Environmental Statement	62.0	3.8	—
A47 Blofield to North Burlingham	No Event-ECI Contract already awarded	15.0	1.8	—
A66 Greta Bridge to Stephen Bank Dualling	ECI Tenders Invited	9.0	3.0	—
A66 Scotch Corner to Carkin Moor Dualling	ECI Tenders Invited	11.0	3.8	—
A428 Caxton Common to Hardwick Improvement	Secretary of State's decision announced	44.0	4.8	—
M5 J19 to J20 Southbound Climbing Lane (Naish Hill)	Environmental Statement Published	8.0	1.0	—
M5 J19 to J20 Northbound Climbing Lane (Tickenham Hill)	Environmental Statement Published	8.0	0.8	—
A57/A628 Mottram-Hollingworth-Tintwhistle	ECI Contract Awarded	103.0	0.8	—
M1 J6A to J10 Widening	ECI Contract Awarded	241.0	8.2	—

Scheme	Stage reached or 2004–05 key/critical event (as at 1 April 2004)	Latest estimated outturn cost (£m)	Route miles	Estimated dates of completion
M1 J10 to J13 Widening	ECI Contract Awarded	382.0	7.9	—
A1 Morpeth to Felton Dualling	ECI Tenders Invited	84.0	7.8	—
A1 Adderstone to Belford Dualling	ECI Tenders Invited	14.0	1.3	—
A505 Dunstable Northern Bypass (aka M1 -A5 Link Road)	ECI Contract Awarded	48.0	2.8	—
A421 Bedford to M1 Junction 13	Preferred Route Announcement	171.0	7.5	—
A21 Tonbridge Bypass to Pembury Dualling	ECI Contract Awarded	65.0	2.6	—
A590 High and Low Newton Bypass	ECI Tenders Invited	22.0	2.7	—
A30 Garland Cross to Chiverton Cross	Preferred Route Announcement	125.0	8.5	—
A30 Temple to Higher Carblake Improvement	ECI Contract Awarded	41.0	1.5	—
A27 Southerham-Beddingham Improvement	Publish Draft Orders and Environmental Statement	19.0	1.6	—
M1 J21 to J30 Widening	Awaiting TPI Entry (achieved)	1915.0	39.8	—
M25 J1b to J3 Widening	Awaiting TPI Entry (achieved)	66.0	3.1	—
M25 J16 to J23 Widening	Awaiting TPI Entry (achieved)	496.0	17.6	—
M25 J23 to J27 Widening	Awaiting TPI Entry (achieved)	419.0	13.6	—
A23 Handcross to Warninglid Widening	Awaiting TPI Entry (achieved)	41.0	2.1	—
A453 Widening (M1 J24 to A52 Nottingham)	Awaiting TPI Entry (achieved)	89.0	9.7	—
M6 Toll Road	Completed Scheme	•	27.0	—
A2/M2 Cobham to Junction 4 Widening	Completed Scheme	280.0	10.6	—
Total		—	387.6	—

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Government achieved its target of delivering 100 major trunk road junction schemes by 2003. [186169]

Mr. Jamieson: 97 out of 100 small trunk road improvements to tackle safety and congestion, announced in June 2000, have been completed. The remaining three will be completed during 2004–05.

Transport Expenditure

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much public money was spent on transport in each of the last 25 years. [186157]

Mr. Jamieson: Figures for total managed expenditure on transport between 1983–84 and 2002–03 (estimated outturn) are available in Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses published annually by Her Majesty's Treasury. Figures for earlier years are not available on a comparable basis.

Transport Funding (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much Government funding has been allocated for transport improvements in Warrington in each of the past five years. [180082]

Mr. McNulty: Funding for transport improvements allocated to the local authority in each of the last five years is as follows:

£ million

	Improvement	Maintenance
2003–04	2.2	2.8
2002–03	2.2	2.5
2001–02	2	2.4
1999–2000	0.9	1.8

There have been three Government funded major schemes taken forward via Warrington's Local Transport Plan and the previous Transport policies and Programme systems. 1. Urban Traffic Management and Control (DfT funding of £5.195 million 2001–2002-this project has incurred expenditure to date, and is on-going)The following projects have yet to gain full approval from DfT, but have received provisional funding to the maximum cash figures stated; 2. Bridgefoot bypass (£5.895 million provisionally approved DfT funding 2001–2002); 3. Central Bus Interchange (£6.338 million provisionally approved DfT funding 2003/2004).

TREASURY

Aviation Fuel

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he supports the budget proposal from the European Commission for an EU tax on airline fuel. [186176]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the answer he received from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport on 22 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1315W.

National Debt

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of *(a)* national debt and *(b)* debt interest payment was in each of the last 25 years at today's prices. [186101]

John Healey: Figures for public sector net debt and central Government debt interest payments in current prices are available on the Office for National Statistics website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/tsdtables1.asp?vlnk=fsf

Table 1.1 A: Public Sector Finances (series RUTN and RUTO) shows figures for public sector net debt in £ billion and as a percentage of GDP. Table 1.1C: Central Government (series NMFX) shows debt interest payments in £ billions.

Figures for GDP deflators at market prices are available on the HM Treasury website: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/economic_data_and_tools/gdp_deflators/data_gdp_fig.cfm

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183856]

John Healey: The Treasury currently has a communications team consisting of a press office and a publishing and internet branch.

The press office manages the Treasury's and Treasury Ministers' communications with the media. For information on salary costs, I refer the hon. gentleman to the answer by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to the hon. Member for Truro and St. Austell on 30 June 2004, Official Report, column 286W.

The publishing and internet branch manages the Treasury's formal publications of documents and other material, and maintains its public internet site. Total basic salaries for that branch were £268,000 for 2001–02, £314,000 for 2002–03 and £236,000 for 2003–04. Comparable figures for previous years are not available.

Retail Spending/Household Income

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the change in the level of *(a)* retail spending and *(b)* household income has been in each of the last seven years. [186214]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Kenneth Clarke, dated 5 August 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question on the change in the levels of retail spending and household income in each of the last seven years. (186214)

The information available is shown in the table below. Retail spending is measured by the value of retail sales. Household income is measured as the total resources in the combined household and non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) sector account, ie before deduction of tax etc. The accounts for the household and NPISH sectors are currently combined: separate estimates are not available.

Annual percentage change in value of retail sales and Household[1] income UK 1997 to 2003

	Value of retail sales: annual percentage change	*Household income[1]: annual percentage change*
1997	6.3	5.6
1998	3.9	5.3
1999	3.3	5.6
2000	3.6	7.5
2001	5.9	6.0
2002	4.9	3.5
2003	2.4	4.3

[1] Household income of the combined household and non-profit institutions serving households sectors.

Trade Codings

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1484W, what proportion of trade recorded under these codings has been assessed to be *(a)* miscoding and *(b)* illegal importation; and how many prosecutions have resulted. [185674]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise have examined the trade records for code 43031010 since 1 January 2003 and have found that all transactions have arisen as a result of miscoding. A similar analysis in respect of imports and exports in previous years would require examination of the records of the transaction held by the importer or exporter and could be undertaken only at disproportionate cost.

Customs have no information or record of any illegal importation and their assessment is that the low values of trade recorded in the period since 1998 have arisen from either:

(a) further examples of miscoding, or

(b) legitimate imports or exports involving either adult seal skins, non commercial trade or trade in goods that have resulted from traditional hunting by the Inuit people.

No trade has been recorded against codes 43017010, 43021941 or 43023051 since 1998.

There have been no prosecutions since 1998 in respect of breaches of the prohibition established by the Import of Seal Skins Regulations 1996.

Trainee Inspector of Taxes Programme

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated *(a)* advertisement and recruitment costs and *(b)* employment costs, including national insurance, will be for the Inland Revenue's Trainee Inspector of Taxes Programme for July 2004. [185931]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows.

(a) Costs:

Advertising costs:

A variety of media were used to advertise the Inland Revenue's Tax Inspector Recruitment Programme, including a national broad-sheet newspaper and recruitment/diversity web-sites, some of which were sourced free of charge. The total cost of advertising is estimated at £14,000.

Recruitment costs:

The cost of the recruitment campaign is estimated at £314,000. This estimate is based on an expected volume of 10,000 applications. The recruitment campaign started on 19 July 2004 and the final costs cannot yet be confirmed.

(b) Employment costs:

The employment costs, including national insurance are estimated at £4.9 million per annum.

The Inland Revenue is currently implementing a number of changes in order to deliver efficiencies in costs and jobs. These particular jobs are part of a Spend to Save Strategy announced in this year's budget.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Positive Activities Programme

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the Positive Activities Programme; and what the level of funding will be made available for the programme in each year from 2003 to 2006. [185354]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

The Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme was launched in spring 2003 offering diversionary activities aimed at young people most at risk of social exclusion, truancy and committing crime. The programme is being delivered across England from May 2003 to March 2006.

In 2003–04 PAYP funding of £25 million was provided by the Department for Education and Skills, the Big Lottery Fund and the Home Office to deliver a minimum of 22,000 full-time places during all school holiday periods. In addition to the activities, one-to-one support was made available for the most "at risk" young people. Baselines for 2004–05 and 2005–06 have yet to be finalised following this year's Spending Review.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many young people participated in the Positive Activities Programme in 2003. [185355]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

The Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme was launched in spring 2003. At least 75,000 young people participated in PAYP activities during the summer holidays of 2003 with approximately another 40,000 taking part during the October half term and Christmas holidays.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the local education authorities which participated in the Positive Activities Programme in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05. [185356]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

The Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme is a cross-government programme which is administered by the Department for Education and Skills. Responsibility for managing programme delivery in each region is devolved to the nine regional government offices. Delivery plans prepared by each of the regional government offices show that the Positive Activities for Young People programme has operated in every local education authority area in both 2003–04 and 2004–05

DEFENCE

Army Training

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many personnel can be trained at any one time at *(a)* ITR Catterick, *(b)* ATR Pirbright, *(c)* ATR Lichfield and *(d)* ATR Winchester; how many personnel underwent training at each site in each of the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement on Army and infantry recruitment and training. [184838]

Mr. Caplin: The following tables show the training capacity and numbers who underwent training by month during financial year 2003–04 for Army Training Regiment Pirbright (ATR(P)), ATR Lichfield (ATR(L)) and ATR Winchester (ATR(W)) and Infantry Training Centre (ITC) Catterick.

Table 1: Training capacity

Unit	*Training capacity*
ATR Pirbright	1,008
ATR Lichfield	520
ATR Winchester	520
ITC Catterick	2,360

The training capacity detailed for ATR(P), ATR(L) and ATR(W) is limited by the number of training teams that are available at any one time. For example, ATR(W) has an establishment of 15 training teams with a maximum capacity of 40 trainees per training team. However, due to leave and instructor training, the number of training teams that are available for training purposes at any one time is 13. This figure, multiplied by 40, provides the training capacity of 520 for ATR(W).

ITC Catterick combines both Phase 1 (initial) and Phase 2 (trade) training for the Infantry. Since the establishment of the Combined Infantry Training course at ITC Catterick in 2002, infantry training at Catterick cannot be divided into defined stages, as the course is essentially one seamless progression from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

Table 2: Numbers under training by month in FY 2003–04

	Unit			
	ATR(P)	*ATR(L)*	*ATR(W)*	*ITC(C)*
2003				
April	840	411	542	2,069
May	778	369	483	1,925
June	956	245	432	2,017
July	717	209	395	1,889
August	933	349	416	1,787
September	1,025	407	523	1,973
October	780	293	524	2,031
November	708	283	416	2,053
December	972	345	519	1,738
2004				
January	918	281	402	1,994
February	894	251	394	2,100
March	859	274	426	2,020

The figures in Table 2 include those trainees in remedial and rehabilitation training, who are additional to training capacity. Hence, in some months, the figures quoted will exceed the training capacity detailed in Table 1.

Recruitment is buoyant and the Army Training and Recruiting Agency has outperformed against mandated targets over the last two years. Although some battalions are understrength, the general situation across the infantry remains healthy. It is difficult to attain an even manning balance across all regiments. Some regiments benefit from excellent recruitment inflow and a balance has to be made. Where there are shortages elsewhere every effort is made to alleviate the situation.

C-17 Aircraft

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the leased C-17 aircraft; and who bears the cost, under the contract, should an aircraft be lost as a result of pilot error or in combat. [183405]

Mr. Caplin: At the conclusion of the current lease arrangement, we intend to buy the current fleet of four aircraft. We intend to purchase a further aircraft bringing our C-17 fleet up to five aircraft.

In the meantime, should a leased aircraft be lost as a result of pilot error or in combat, the contractual agreement requires that the Ministry of Defence pay the residual value and fulfil the remaining lease payments.

Combat and Operational Clothing

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he took to establish that the tender for combat and operational clothing supplies DC4BESL/1002 Cut and Sew had been conducted in accordance with EU tendering rules. [186202]

Mr. Ingram: All tenders for non-warlike stores are conducted in accordance with the Public Supply Contract Regulations 1995.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the number of jobs that would *(a)* be created in the UK if the contract for combat and operational clothing supplies DC4BESL/1002 Cut and Sew were to be let to a UK company and *(b)* be lost in the UK if the contract was awarded to a firm in China. [186203]

Mr. Ingram: The contract referred to has been awarded to a United Kingdom company creating a small number of quality jobs and it safeguards approximately 40 other jobs. Some new positions have already been advertised in both local and national press, and it is anticipated that further jobs will be created for UK staff during the life of the contract.

No direct contract has been awarded to China and as such its impact has not been measured.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what criteria were set down for shortlisting companies tendering for the combat and operational clothing contract DC4DESL/1002; and whether all the companies on the shortlist met all the criteria. [184363]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* Criteria used, through a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire, were consistent with the Public Supply Contract Regulations 1995; specifically Regulations 14, 15, 16, 17 and 20. All companies selected for the Tender Panel met the criteria.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on security of supply in relation to contract DC4BESL/1002 Cut and Sew from China. [184348]

Mr. Ingram: The production of these garments is considered low risk—the most significant technical aspect is the maintenance of the required Infra Red Reflective (IRR) standard. Not withstanding this, the Prime Contractor has identified controls to ensure performance levels are maintained. The Prime Contractor will also have in place a viable logistic system to maintain security of supply.

Defence Information Infrastructure

Mr. Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what in-house options have been considered for the Defence Information Infrastructure project; and whether a public sector comparator is being explored as part of his Department's approach to IT infrastructures; [183763]

(2) what intelligent customer elements are being explored as part of the possible privatisation of his Department's IT infrastructure; [183764]

(3) what consultation has taken place with the recognised trade unions regarding the privatisation of IT functions in his Department; and what documents have been passed to the trade unions as part of or as a result of this consultation process; [183768]

(4) if he will place in the Library information on the previous contract record of bidders from the Defence Information Infrastructure project; and what account is being taken of these records during the current bidding process. [183769]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Information Infrastructure (DII) programme is not a privatisation of IT infrastructure. Under the terms of the Public Private Partnership arrangement, the MOD will continue to own the infrastructure but the delivery of the service will be the responsibility of the chosen commercial Delivery Partner.

A significant proportion of the Department's IT provision has been outsourced in recent years as part of wider initiatives to make greater use of the private sector in the provision of public services. The Department's policy is that when services already delivered under outsourcing arrangements are re-competed or rationalised, in-house bids should not normally be invited because the associated requirement for substantial reinvestment in management, training and support systems makes it unlikely that an in-house option would represent value for money. Where no in-house bid is invited, an estimate of the costs of a public sector option would normally be made, in order to provide a value for money benchmark.

In the case of the DII project, the Public Sector Comparator (PSC) is currently being developed with the Trades Unions and reflects the "fallback' option that the MOD would pursue if the commercial bids for DII failed. The PSC assumes the continuation of the current mix of in-house and commercial arrangements including some internal efficiencies and a capability uplift. It will be used within the DII Future Main Gate Business Case as a Value for Money comparator against which to assess the commercial bids. The Trades Unions have been briefed on the current scope of the first increment of DII Future and the related PSC. They have been given the opportunity to comment on the robustness of the PSC and associated risks by 30 July 2004. They have also been invited to submit alternative proposals in the context of the PSC.

It has also been agreed that the Trades Unions will be involved in the development of the Intelligent Customer Function (ICF) as it progresses. Work on the definition of the Intelligent Customer Function for DII is being taken forward under three main headings:

The MOD wide responsibilities for the ICF

The responsibilities of the ICF to be undertaken by the Defence Communications Services Agency (DCSA)

The ICF functions to be undertaken by the DII Integrated Project Team.

The elements of the ICF which are currently being explored include:

Customer and Account Management

Business and Financial Management

Service Development and Technical Assurance

Programme Delivery, including Project Assurance and Benefits Management

Commercial, Contract and Supplier Management

Service Assurance

Formal meetings between MOD staff and the Council of Civil Service Unions (CCSU) have been taking place since the beginning of 2003. We have provided the Trades Unions with access to the same information that has been provided to the two remaining bidders for DII Future. Some examples of the information provided include:

The DII Business Prospectus provides a comprehensive description of the intended scope of the programme and was made available to the TUs on 3 April 2003.

A copy of the Procurement Strategy Review Note was made available to the TUs on 3 April. At the request of the CCSU, on 13 February 2004, a copy of comments provided by HM Treasury on the Review Note was also provided.

A copy of the report produced at the end of the Personnel Impact Study was made available to TUs on 24 June 2003.

The current scope of DII(F) Increment 1 for which bids have been invited was provided to the TUs on 18 June 2004.

A copy of the draft Public Sector Comparator (PSC) was passed to the TUs on 28 June 2004 and also access was given to the IPT risk register.

Formal meetings will continue between officials and the Trades Unions according to an agreed timetable of engagement. This includes a workshop held with them on 2 July 2004 when the current scope of Increment 1 and the PSC was briefed to them.

Information relating to the track record of the two remaining bidders for the DII contract will not be placed in the Library of the House. This information is commercially sensitive and I am withholding it under Exemption 13 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. However, track record is one of a number of factors included in the evaluation of bids. The Department's Supplier Relations Group has conducted research of bidding consortium members' performance both in Defence and across Government. In addition, the project has taken up references, by telephone and through visits, from existing customers of the key companies in the bidding consortia. Further reference visits will be conducted during the final phase of the procurement, targeting customers in receipt of a similar volume and range of services.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of the full risk assessment setting out control measures proposed by the Government for the possible privatisation of IT infrastructure; [183082]

(2) how many employees fall within the scope of the Defence Information Infrastructure project, broken down by *(a)* civil servants and *(b)* staff provided by contractor support. [183083]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 July 2004]*: The Defence Information Infrastructure (DII) programme Integrated Project Team (IPT) is currently in negotiation with two potential commercial Delivery Partners (DP) for the provision of Information Systems services for Ministry of Defence.

The DII programme is not a privatisation of IT infrastructure. Under the terms of the proposed Public Private Partnership arrangement, MOD will continue to own the infrastructure but the delivery of support services will be the responsibility of the commercial Delivery Partner.

Risk management is a key feature of the business of any IPT and its associated Senior Responsible Owner (SRO). DII programme risks are managed on an on-going basis through a risk register; each risk has its own mitigation plan. The IPT also manages a joint risk register with each of the two bidders for the DII contract; each is therefore specific to the particular bidder's proposed solution. These registers are, by their nature, commercially sensitive, and cannot therefore be placed in the Library of the House without the on-going competition being prejudiced.

As part of the concept phase of the Smart Procurement process, the Initial Gate Business Case (IGBC) for the DII programme outlined the headline risks identified at that stage of the programme. The IGBC was approved in September 2002; the risks identified at that stage will be placed in the Library of the House. A copy of the DII Business Prospectus has already been placed in the Library. The Business Prospectus details why DII is necessary for MOD and how it will be procured.

The Main Gate Business Case, which is due to be presented to the Investment Approvals Board later this year will provide a current assessment of DII risks and their mitigation plans associated with the procurement. This Business Case will contain commercially sensitive information from the two bidders for the DII contract and therefore cannot be made publicly available.

Over the planned three main increments of the DII programme, it is estimated that up to 1,500 civilian staff fall within the full scope of the project, including both staff supporting current systems and those presently within the IPT. It has been necessary in some cases to supplement the skills of the civilian and military staff employed in the IPT by more specific expertise from the commercial sector.

There are currently 13 contractors occupying established civil service posts within the IPT.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many copies of his Department's Annual Report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183890]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence's Annual Report (and Accounts[1]) is published by The Stationery Office (TSO). The numbers sold by TSO in each year are shown in the table.

[1] 2002–03 and 2003–04 only. Prior to 2002–03, the Annual Report was published separately from the Consolidated Departmental Resource Accounts.

Number of Report copies sold

	Total[1]	*To MOD*[2]
1996–97	1,200	520
1997–98	914	510
1998–99	1,117	600
1999–2000	1,287	800
2000–01	1,126	650
2001–02	1,113	450
2002–03	1,153	650
2003–04	[3]—	[3]—

[1] To date.
[2] At time of publication. (MOD subsequently bought 100 further copies of the 2002–03 Annual Report and Accounts).
[3] Still to publish.

The costs of printing and publishing MOD's Reports are not met by the Department but fall to TSO, with TSO retaining the revenues earned from sales.

Reports going back to 1998–99 are available on: www.mod.uk

Departmental Properties

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of his Department's properties were sold in 2003. [184235]

Mr. Caplin: In 2003 the Ministry of Defence sold over 160 parcels of land and properties.

Detainees (US)

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the trilateral agreement governing the handover of prisoners to US authorities remains in force; and if he will make a statement. [185049]

Mr. Ingram: The arrangement for transferring internees between the United Kingdom, United States and Australia remains in force.

Future Role of Crombie

Rachel Squire: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the completion date for the study on the Future Role of Crombie will be; and what the date will be of the announcement of the outcome of the study. [184464]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The Future Role of Crombie Study was completed in March 2004. No decisions have been made and I am therefore not in a position to provide a definitive date of when an announcement will be made.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185132]

Mr. Caplin: I represent the Ministry of Defence on the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. It has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This information is withheld under Exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Hooding

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1235W, on Iraq, on what basis military commanders concluded that hooding detainees could be harmful. [185974]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* On the basis that hooding (if applied inappropriately) could be harmful.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what judgements by the United Nations Committee Against Torture he has studied on the issue of hooding detainees. [185886]

Mr. Caplin: Several reports by the United Nations Committee Against Torture have criticised the use of hooding in the context of interrogations and torture. I am not aware, however, of any judgements which would affect our view that temporarily obscuring a detainee's vision by blindfolding or hooding may be justified in certain circumstances such as during the arrest and transit of prisoners to prevent them viewing sensitive information.

Interrogation Policy

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the 10 September document entitled Interrogation and Counter-Resistance Policy issued by the Combined Joint Task Force-7 was seen by British *(a)* service personnel, *(b)* officials and *(c)* Ministers. [183521]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 12 July 2004]:* The Combined Joint Task Force-7 document entitled Interrogation and Counter-Resistance Policy has not been seen by Defence Ministers. I am not aware that any British armed forces personnel or Ministry of Defence officials have seen the document.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has examined in relation to civilian casualties allegedly caused by UK forces on 24 June 2003 in Majar-al-Kabi. [177586]

Mr. Ingram: Ministry of Defence ministers received a number of submissions and reports on the tragic events that took place in Majar-Al-Kabir on 24 June 2003, in which six members of the Royal Military Police were killed and a number of British soldiers were wounded.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement about the killing of approximately 30 Iraqi civilians by British soldiers in Amara in May; whether complaints have been received about this; and if he will make a statement. [179411]

Mr. Ingram: During May, United Kingdom Forces were subject to a large number of attacks by armed elements. For example, on 8 May 2004 over 200 separate incidents were reported in which UK forces were engaged. These attacks included small arms fire, rocket-propelled grenades and mortar attacks. As we have previously made clear, although we record every incident in which we believe there has been a fatality, it is not always possible to determine accurately the number of fatalities that occur during a particular incident.

A complaint was reportedly made by a local Iraqi leader following an incident in Al Amarah on 14 May 2004, although he later denied making such an allegation. Photographs have also been passed to us by a National Newspaper, which are now being studied by the Royal Military Police.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 28 June, ref 166938, on Iraq, how many meetings have taken place between the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) representatives and British military staff; what the dates and venues of the meetings were; how many reports have been produced by the ICRC as a result; and if he will make a statement. [182575]

Mr. Ingram: There have been four visits by the International Committee of the Red Cross to the Divisional Temporary Detention facility (DTDF) in Shaibah. These all occurred in 2004: 10–12 February; 1–3 April; 14 May; and 17–19 May.

In addition to these visits there have been four meetings between ICRC representatives and British military staff in 2003: 19–21 February; 28 May; 26 November; and 30 March 2004. These took place in the United Kingdom and Europe.

As well as the interim report produced on 10 February 2004 there have been two working papers produced by the ICRC following their visits to the DTDF in April and May of this year.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's estimate is of the number of Iraqi *(a)* civilian casualties, *(b)* civilian deaths, *(c)* military casualties and *(d)* military deaths during coalition operations in Iraq. [183802]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 641W, to my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. Clarke).

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many qualified medical staff are employed at the British military detention centre in Iraq; what procedures are followed when a prisoner wishes to seek medical advice; and if he will make a statement. [183961]

Mr. Ingram: Medical cover is provided by the military unit responsible for the security of the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility and consists of a Regimental Medical Officer (RMO) and a compliment of Combat Medical Technicians.

Internees seeking medical advice are assessed in the first instance by the RMO. If necessary they are referred to the Field Hospital, manned by approximately 150 qualified medical staff, that is available at the same location.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Iraqi prisoners held by United Kingdom forces in Iraq since the invasion have been released from custody without charge; and if he will make a statement. [183962]

Mr. Ingram: Up to the transition of authority on 28 June, British forces had the authority to intern people for imperative reasons of security in accordance with Article 78 of Geneva Convention IV. Since the 28 June, the authority to intern remains but it is in accordance with UNSCR 1546. In addition, British forces have the authority temporarily to detain people believed to have committed a crime under Iraqi law, who are then handed over to the Iraqi judicial system. It is the Iraqi authorities who are empowered to bring criminal charges.

In total, some 3,000 individuals have been either released as former Prisoners of War or internees judged no longer to pose a threat, or passed to the Iraqi authorities as suspected criminals.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many attacks were made on British forces by Iraqi insurgents *(a)* in the five days leading up to the handover and *(b)* in the five days after the handover of sovereignty. [184274]

Mr. Caplin: During the week leading up to handover (28 June 2004) there were six attacks made on British forces by Iraqi insurgents and in the week after the handover there were nine attacks on British forces.

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of UK forces in Iraq are reserves. [184290]

Mr. Ingram: The precise number of personnel in the gulf fluctuates. As at 2 July approximately 15 per cent. of United Kingdom Forces deployed in Iraq are reservists.

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the cost per week of reinstating the free postal packet scheme to Iraq for the duration of the present deployment; and how such costs are calculated. [184794]

Mr. Ingram: When the Ministry of Defence carried out its reviews of the free postal packet service to Iraq set out in my answer to the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Randall) on 5 May 2004, Official Report, column 1527W, the costs reviewed were calculated per calendar month. Factors involved in the calculation of such costs were: payment to the Royal Mail Group (£88,000), the hire of extra equipment (£12,500) and the cost of civil charter should military transport be unavailable (£3 per kilogram). Based on historical data, a packet ratio of 0.2 kg per serviceman per day was assumed.

The cost of extending the scheme in Iraq would cost approximately £290,000 per calendar month. In my answer to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock) on 5 March 2004, Official Report, column 1155W, I stated that we could not justify continuance of the scheme to Iraq when other operational theatres were not in receipt of the service; therefore, further calculations for the Iraq theatre of operations alone were not made. The cost of extending the scheme to all Service personnel deployed on overseas operations would be approximately £380,000 per calendar month.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what evidence he has studied in relation to the death of Rahim Hanoun Adiou. [185887]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the formal response from my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Armed Forces (Mr. Ingram) to allegations made by Amnesty International, including the death of Rahim Hanoun Adiou, a copy of which was placed in the Library of the House on 2 July 2004.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he received representations warning about the dangers of hooding detainees prior to its prohibition on 26 September 2003. [185907]

Mr. Ingram: Amnesty International's 23 July 2003 Report, "Iraq—Memorandum on concerns relating to law and order", made reference inter alia to the use of "prolonged hooding" by coalition forces and stated that this and other measures would amount to "torture or inhuman treatment". This was consistent with Amnesty's longstanding view that hooding is unacceptable in all circumstances.

Although, hooding has been prohibited by the United Kingdom in the context of interrogations since the 1972 Heath Ruling, we consider that there are circumstances in which the temporary obscuring of a detainees vision is justified. For example, it may be necessary during the arrest and transit of prisoners to prevent them viewing sensitive information. Although the UK armed forces are currently under direction not to hood detainees in any circumstances, the use of hooding has not been ruled out in future conflicts.

As I said in my response to a question from the hon. Member on 15 May 2004, Official Report, column 1235W, the practice of hooding was stopped in Iraq as a result of concerns that the inappropriate use of hooding could be dangerous.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions Major General Geoffrey Miller had with British service personnel during his stay in Iraq between 31 August and 9 September 2003. [185947]

Mr. Caplin: Major General Geoffrey Miller had no discussions with British service personnel during this time.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what involvement British *(a)* service personnel and *(b)* officials had in the drafting of interrogation regulations for Combined Joint Task Force 7. [185948]

Mr. Caplin: None. Interrogation regulations at the Multi National Force and Multi National Corps Headquarters (previously known as the Combined Joint Task Force HQ) were introduced by and for US personnel only.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Iraqi prisoners were held by British military authorities at the Iraq military detention centre on 1 July; and if he will make a statement. [186217]

Mr. Caplin: On 1 July 2004, 41 men were held at the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Iraqi *(a)* men and *(b)* women are held in United Kingdom-run prisoners in Iraq; and how many have been charged with a specific offence. [173998]

Mr. Ingram: Up to the transition of authority on 28 June, British forces had the authority to intern people for imperative reasons of security in accordance with Article 78 of Geneva Convention IV. Since the 28 June, the authority to intern remains but it is in accordance with UNSCR 1546. In addition, British forces have the authority temporarily to detain people believed to have committed a crime under Iraqi law, who are then handed over to the Iraqi judicial system. It is the Iraqi authorities who are empowered to bring criminal charges.

As at 18 July, 25 male internees were held at the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility, and no female internees.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of manuals issued to British armed forces providing guidelines for those given responsibility to interrogate detainees or prisoners of war. [175065]

Mr. Ingram: Guidance for those with responsibility for interrogation of detainees and Prisoners of War is contained within a number of training directives. I am withholding publication of these directives in the Library of the House under Exemption 1a of the Code of Practice for Access to Government Information.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) pursuant to his answer to question 169404, what the names are of the three individuals who died of gunshot wounds; what the name is of the person who died in detention; and how much compensation was paid in each case; [186052]

(2) what the names are of those deceased individuals in Iraq whose families' claims have been rejected; [185935]

(3) what the names are of those deceased individuals in Iraq whose families' claims for compensation are still being considered. [185934]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding the information requested in accordance with Exemption 12 (Privacy of an Individual) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information which relates to unwarranted disclosure to a third party of personal information about any person (including a deceased person) or any other disclosure which would constitute or could facilitate an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has examined in relation to the deaths of *(a)* Ammar Shakir Mahmoods, *(b)* Hussam Salih Owaid, *(c)* Jawad Gadhim Bahidh, *(d)* Ameen Ajman Ismail, *(e)* Ali Gadhim Slamkh, *(f)* Asrad Gadhim Jassim and *(g)* Ahmed Kareen Ali. [177581]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The deaths of all of the individuals referred to in the question have been raised in correspondence by Public Interest Lawyers (PIL) addressed to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 13 July.

There is an ongoing Special Investigations Branch investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Ahmed Kareen Ali (Ahmed Jabbar Kareem Ali). Ministers receive a summary of the status of such investigations.

The death of Ahmed Kareen Ali has also been raised by PIL in judicial review proceedings brought against the Department and by Amnesty International in their letter to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister of 14 May 2004.

The death of Asrad Gadhim Jassim (As'ad Kadhem Jasem) was also raised by Amnesty International.

I placed a copy of our response to this and other correspondence from Amnesty International in the Library of the House of Commons on 2 July 2004.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes he has proposed to the way in which UK forces keep Iraqi prisoners; and if he will make a statement. [172302]

Mr. Ingram: Guidance on prisoner handling is contained in Joint Warfare Publication 1 to 10 (Prisoner of War Handling). It emphasises that prisoners are at all times to be treated in accordance with the relevant Geneva protocols.

We keep the procedures for prisoner handling in Iraq under constant review but there are no amendments currently planned to the Standard Operating Instructions. The only amendment to the SOIs to date was in September 2003 when instructions were issued that all prisoner hooding was to cease.

A number of minor changes have been made to the procedures in place at the UK's Temporary Divisional Detention Facility in Shaibah, including for example adapting the arrangements for internees' laundry and meeting some dietary requirements stemming from religious beliefs.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many persons captured by UK forces in Iraq and subsequently transferred to US control are being held by the United States *(a)* inside and *(b)* outside Iraq; and if he will make a statement on the UK's obligations towards such persons. [172697]

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps the Government has taken in fulfilment of the UK's international obligations to assess the conditions of imprisonment of the prisoners captured by British forces in Iraq and handed to the US. [183784]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 May 2004]:* In Iraq, 341 Prisoners of War were handed over to the United States in April 2003, all but three were subsequently released by the US. Two, classed as high value detainees, have now been arraigned before an Iraqi judge and transferred to Iraqi custody and one was reclassified as a security internee and his case is under consideration by the Central Criminal Court of Iraq. We have also detained around 2,000 security internees since the end of the conflict. Between April 2003 and December 2003, these were held by the US. All but one of those individuals were either returned to United Kingdom custody or released. Under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding we put in place with the US, which covered the transfer of detainees, the US are required to seek permission from the UK to remove from Iraq UK captured persons in their detention. No such requests have been made.

The UK has fulfilled all its obligations towards such individuals in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. Between May and December 2003 almost all UK detainees, both Prisoners of War and security internees, were held by US Forces at Camp Bucca in Southern Iraq. During this period there was a continuous UK presence at the Camp in the shape of a UK Prisoner of War Registration Unit and a Prisoner Monitoring Team. The monitoring team regularly inspected prisoner conditions and monitored family visits and the release of UK prisoners. The majority of early detainees were released during this period. The remainder were transferred to the UK custody with the opening of the UK's Divisional Temporary Detention Facility at Shaibah in December 2003.

The two UK prisoners of war, classed as high value detainees, were held by US forces at a different site. Although the UK did not maintain a permanent presence at the internment facility where they were held, reports were obtained on their conditions.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list those deaths mentioned in the Amnesty International report on civilian deaths in Basra published on 11 May which are or have been the subject of a formal investigation, giving the stage reached by the investigation in each case. [173408]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 20 May 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the formal response from my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Armed Forces (Mr. Ingram) to the allegations made by Amnesty International, a copy of which I placed in the Library of the House on 2 July 2004. The stage reached by the investigations remains as stated in the response.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how often the cases of Iraqi prisoners being held in United Kingdom-run prisons in Iraq are reviewed; and by whom. [173997]

Mr. Caplin: The only such facility run by the United Kingdom in Iraq is the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility in Shaibah. The Divisional Internee Review Committee considers cases at intervals often days, 28 days, three months and six months, and thereafter every three months. The Review Committee consists of Staff Officers from Army and tri-Service Legal and intelligence Branches, Provost Marshall and the

Commanding Officer of DTDF. They make a recommendation to the General Officer Commanding MND(SE), with whom the final decision lies.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what reports he has received about the death of civilians in Amarah, Iraq as a consequence of a UK armed forces helicopter strike; if he will investigate whether *(a)* this strike and *(b)* air strikes generally in areas where civilians live are a proportionate or proper response to a local disturbance including that involving the firing of guns by Iraqi militiamen; and if he will make a statement. [174180]

Mr. Ingram: We are not aware of any allegations of civilian deaths caused by air strikes conducted by United Kingdom helicopters in Al Amarah since the end of major combat operations.

During the warfighting and subsequent phases of Operation Telic, every effort has been made to minimise the impact of military operations on the Iraqi civilian population. For UK air operations, the targeting process has a hierarchical approvals system and includes stringent controls. At each level, UK Commanders, with legal advisors present, applied the relevant articles of the 1977 Geneva Protocol 1 to the Geneva Conventions (1949) which applies to targeting. In each case when attacks were approved, the UK Commander will have determined that legal requirements of necessity and distinction were met, and that estimated civilian casualties or damage were not excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage that the attack was expected to produce.

Future Joint Combat Aircraft

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the requirement for the Future Joint Combat Aircraft is dependent on the procurement of 50–60,000 tonne aircraft carriers; and what effect changes to the displacement of the future carriers would have on the requirement for the number of Joint Combat Aircraft. [182388]

Mr. Caplin: The physical size of any aircraft carrier will limit the maximum number of aircraft that can operate from it. The Department has not sought to fix the dimensions of the aircraft carriers during the assessment phase. The design of the ships will continue to evolve as we seek to balance the overall performance, time and cost parameters of this complex project as part of normal assessment phase activity. Decisions on the capability to be provided by CVF, including the number of aircraft capable of being deployed, will be taken at the Main Gate investment point.

Military Companies

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many approvals were given to armed forces personnel to take up appointments with military companies in each year from 1995, broken down by rank of personnel. [184732]

Mr. Caplin: The rules on acceptance of appointments by Crown servants (the "Business Appointment Rules") require all officers in the armed forces, in certain circumstances, to apply for permission before taking up an appointment with an outside organisation.

Due to a technical problem, complete information on the number of applications made by officers in the armed forces to join military (defence-related) companies since 1995 is not currently available. The information set out in the table covers only the period from 1 January 1999 to the end of June 2004. I shall write to the hon. Member with the remaining details as soon as they become available.

	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Navy						
Admiral	2	0	0	3	2	3
Vice Admiral	0	2	0	4	0	0
Rear Admiral	3	6	3	3	3	1
Commodore	2	2	4	2	8	2
Captain	2	0	3	2	1	0
Commander	9	5	1	10	5	5
Lt. Command	7	6	10	8	17	1
Lieutenant	1	1	3	2	1	0
Army						
General	1	3	3	2	1	0
Lt. General	4	10	0	0	0	1
Major General	5	1	9	3	1	1
Brigadier	7	7	4	5	4	4
Colonel	1	0	6	1	3	5
Lt. Colonel	4	19	6	7	3	2
Major	4	3	10	3	4	6
Captain	1	1	4	0	0	2
Lieutenant	0	0	2	0	1	0
RAF						
Air Chief Marshall	0	9	1	1	1	0
Air Marshal	3	0	8	2	2	0
Air Vice-Marshall	1	13	6	7	5	2
Air Commodore	8	4	8	3	7	3
Group Captain	5	6	3	7	10	5
Wing Commander	24	7	10	22	16	10
Squadron Leader	9	11	7	8	8	2
Flt. Lieutenant	5	2	6	2	3	3

It is not known how many appointments were taken up.

Mr. Rhadi Numa

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Mr. Rhadi Numa suffered *(a)* physical and *(b)* mental duress prior to his heart attack. [186219]

Mr. Ingram: The Special Investigation Branch of the Royal Military Police concluded that Mr. Rhadi Numa had not suffered any form of mistreatment while in military custody.

Naval Dockyards (Radiation Monitoring)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures are in place for the secondary monitoring of radiation at naval dockyards. [186112]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave on 16 June 2004, Official Report, columns 938–939W, to the hon. Member for Mid Bedfordshire (Mr. Sayeed) and on 10 June 2004, Official Report, column 599W to the hon. Member for Moray (Angus Robertson). The measures, as described, are in place at the Naval Bases and Devonport Royal Dockyard, which is privately owned.

Parliamentary Questions

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will write to the hon. Member for East Carmarthen and Dinefwr pursuant to his answer to question ref. 136924. [186026]

Mr. Ingram: I wrote to the hon. Member on 7 April 2004 and a copy of my reply was placed in the Library of the House.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what public safeguards his Department builds into its *(a)* private finance initiative and *(b)* public private partnership contracts to prevent the private sector partner from taking excess profits by way of re-financing schemes. [184664]

Mr. Ingram: Since November 2000, it has been the Ministry of Defence's policy, in common with other Government Departments, that all Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts and those Public Private Partnership contracts involving the use of private finance, must contain legally binding conditions whereby any gains from refinancing are shared with the MOD on an equal basis. For contracts signed before November 2000 this right is obtained under a code of conduct agreed with industry.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what contractual steps his Department plans to take to prevent *(a)* private finance initiative and *(b)* public private partnership partners from selling on their stakeholding. [184665]

Mr. Caplin: In common with other government departments, the Ministry of Defence does not seek to restrict unnecessarily the shareholders in Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Public Private Partnerships (PPP) projects from transferring or selling their equity stakes to another commercial entity. Such restrictions would constrain the availability of capital for such projects and therefore adversely affect value for money. Exceptions to this can be made during the construction/introduction to service phase when some restrictions may be placed on sales or transfers of equity from shareholders who are also key subcontractors, as these might have an adverse impact on the success of the project. Additionally, provisions are usually included in MOD PFI and PPP contracts which place an obligation on the service provider and its shareholders to obtain the MOD's consent to any sale or transfer. This is to prevent any transfer that might be prejudicial to the national interest, e.g. for reasons of national security.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many personnel are being treated for post traumatic stress disorder after serving in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [176804]

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many British troops who have served in Iraq have been found to be suffering from post traumatic stress disorder; [183194]

(2) what estimate he has made of the percentage of troops who have returned from Iraq who are suffering from mental health problems. [183195]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer Tuesday 8 June 2004]:* Over the period January 2003 to February 2004, the latest dates for which figures are available, 461 military personnel who served in Iraq were recorded as having experienced mental health problems. This represents 0.7 per cent. of those who had returned from deployment to Iraq at that time. Of these, 52 personnel were codified, under the International Codification of Disease system, as having Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Prisons

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women who have been held in British-run military and civilian prisons have been released during the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [177241]

Mr. Ingram: The only such facility run by the UK in Iraq is the detention facility in Shaibah, which opened in December 2003. Since then 274 men and one woman have been released.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total value of private finance initiative contracts used by his Department was in 2003. [184237]

Mr. Ingram: The total capital value of private finance initiative contracts that were live during 2003 was £3,828 million.

The payments made by the Ministry of Defence during the financial year 2002–03 in respect of private finance initiative transactions was £542 million. Further

information is available in the MOD's Annual Report and Accounts 2002–03 which is published on the MOD's website www.mod.uk or from HMSO.

RAF Menwith Hill

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many visits to RAF Menwith Hill were made by US personnel not resident or working on the base during 2002–03. [185896]

Mr. Ingram: During 2002–03 there were many visits to RAF Menwith Hill by US personnel. These ranged from VIP visits to short term visits associated specifically with work on various aspects of the Menwith Hill mission. The exact number of visits is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether requests for visits to RAF Menwith Hill are determined by his Department; and what discussions take place with the US authorities before the response to individual requests is determined. [185897]

Mr. Ingram: Her Majesty's Government retains control over the use of facilities at RAF Menwith Hill. Therefore any decision on who can and cannot visit RAF Menwith Hill, as well as other United States Visiting Force (USVF) bases, rests with the Government.

All requests by MPs to visit RAF Menwith Hill are referred to Defence Ministers. Due to national security considerations, visits to RAF Menwith Hill are restricted to those with an official oversight function such as Government Ministers and the members of the all-party Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC). US authorities have no part in this decision making process.

Working visits to the base by military and civilian staff are approved locally by the RAF Station Commander.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what rules of engagement *(a)* the American National Guard and *(b)* the US security police personnel apply concerning peaceful protesters found at RAF bases where they are stationed. [185936]

Mr. Caplin: It is not our practice to comment on UK Rules of Engagement or those of our US allies and the information is therefore withheld under Exemption 1 (Defence, Security and International Relations) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what procedures have been agreed between the US visiting forces and personnel and the Ministry of Defence Police Agency to deal with peaceful protesters at RAF Menwith Hill. [185937]

Mr. Ingram: Peaceful protesters detected at RAF Menwith Hill are dealt with by Ministry of Defence Police using their powers according to their statutory office of Constable.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many RAF apprentices are *(a)* on secondment and *(b)* in training at RAF Menwith Hill; what the nature is of that training; and who is funding the training. [185939]

Mr. Caplin: The RAF apprentice scheme ceased in 1993.

Retirement Age

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186091]

Mr. Caplin: In the Ministry of Defence and its Agencies over half of the civilian workforce has the option to retire any time between 60 and 65. The remainder, which encompasses most of those in management, professional and specialist grades, are normally required to retire at age 60. Extensions beyond normal retirement age are exceptional and for business reasons only, however, as detailed in the Civil Service Management Code, the maximum age at which staff must retire is 70.

There is no age limit set beyond which applications will not be considered. Applications for employment take account of whether the individual has the necessary competencies and skills required for the vacancy. The Department will also consider whether the successful applicant will provide a suitable return on the cost of employing and training the individual before they retire.

Royal Air Force

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the irreducible manpower level is that needs to be maintained by the Royal Air Force such that an independent operational capability can continue for the UK. [184596]

Mr. Ingram: The RAF's requirement for trained manpower is dependant on a number of factors including changing commitments, both at home and abroad, the types of operations we may have to take in the foreseeable future and the introduction of new aircraft types and equipment. I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Hoon) on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–70, which set out the future manpower requirements of the armed forces.

Royal Navy (Drug Enforcement)

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the role of the Royal Navy in the Caribbean and the deployment of HMS Monmouth in the fight against international drug trafficking. [185285]

Mr. Ingram: A Royal Navy ship, together with a royal fleet auxiliary support tanker, is allocated to the Atlantic Patrol Task (North) (APT(N)). The APT(N) duty ship provides a tangible presence in the Caribbean area of responsibility including throughout the hurricane season (May to November). For the remainder of the year they remain within 14 days sailing. APT(N) provides security to United Kingdom overseas territories including support to humanitarian operations and disaster relief. APT(N) also makes a major contribution as one element of HMG's broader counter-drugs activity and promotes UK interests in the region, supporting defence relations and military training assistance and the wider defence diplomacy effort through a series of high-profile port visits.

After six months as APT(N) ship, five of which were within the Caribbean AOR, HMS Monmouth handed over duties to HMS Richmond on 12 July and is currently en route home. During her deployment HMS Monmouth made two successful interdictions of suspected drug smugglers using "go fast" boats. While the contraband was jettisoned by the smugglers before being apprehended, it is thought that 150–200 kg of cocaine was removed from circulation in each operation.

Saudi Armed Forces Project

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the whole-time equivalent staffing of the Saudi Armed Forces Project Office in his Department was over the past five years; what secondments to and from the Office have taken place in that period; and to which agencies or enterprises. [185170]

Mr. Ingram: The number of full-time staff employed on 31 March of each of the past five years was as follows:

	Number
2000	173
2001	185
2002	180
2003	180
2004	166

There were no secondments to or from the Saudi Armed Forces Project Office during this period.

Seyntex

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the performance of Seyntex in relation to his Department's contracts for Battlefield Support Section. [186204]

Mr. Ingram: The Battlefield Support Section of the Engineer Systems Support Integrated Project Team has placed a total of four contracts with Seyntex. The company has performed satisfactorily, aside from one incident where some tents were rejected following routine quality control checks. Corrective action was taken by the company and, as far as we are aware, no defective tents entered service.

Sonar 2087

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what *(a)* research and *(b)* evaluation his Department has carried out on the likely impacts on marine wildlife of the trials of Sonar 2087 in the North West Approaches of the UK; [185200]

(2) how detailed environmental reports from the trials of Sonar 2087 will be used better to protect cetaceans; [185219]

(3) what plans he has to prepare a report on the environmental observations resulting from the trials of Sonar 2087; and if he will make a statement. [185175]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has a continuing programme of research into the effects of active sonar generally. This work is intended to inform Environmental Impact Assessments on marine environments in which sonars might be used by the Royal Navy, rather than in the specific context of United Kingdom territorial waters.

The environmental data gathered during the recent trial of Sonar 2087 in the UK's North West Approaches are being analysed and evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the monitoring and mitigation methods that were put in place and whether any changes are necessary for future trials and/or training activity. We plan to publish a report. I will place a copy in the Library of The House.

Suez Canal Zone Clasps

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Suez Canal Zone clasps have been awarded to people who served in the Zone with the Royal Signals; and whether applications for the clasps first submitted in November 2003 are being dealt with. [185613]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Gentlemen to the answer I gave to the House on 19 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1–3, to my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, North (Mr. Allen).

Tarik S. Mahmud

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Tarik S. Mahmud was *(a)* a prisoner of war and *(b)* a civilian arrested during combat. [179028]

Mr. Caplin: Tarik S. Mahmud was detained by the United Kingdom forces in April 2003. At the time of his detention it was not known whether he was a Prisoner of War or a security internee. In accordance with Article 5 of Geneva Convention III his status would have to be officially determined and recorded but he died before this could be undertaken.

Textile Contracts

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what percentage of departmental contracts over £250,000 for textile items went to *(a)* UK companies manufacturing (i) inside and (ii) outside the UK and *(b)* EU companies manufacturing in the EU in the latest year for which figures are available. [183780]

Mr. Caplin: During the period of the last twelve months there have been 21 clothing contracts let over the value of £250,000. This breaks down as follows:

(a) UK Manufacturer	17
of which:	
(i) Inside UK percentage	68
(ii) Outside UK percentage	32

(b) EU Manufacturer	4
of which:	
(i) Inside EU percentage	17.5
(ii) Outside EU percentage	82.5

Theatre Missiles

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what theatre missile defence capacity UK forces *(a)* have available now and *(b)* plan to have available; and over what timescale. [185167]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 9 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1403–04W. We expect to receive the report on the MOD's three year research programme into Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence soon. The UK is continuing to address the risks posed by ballistic missiles and to remain abreast of the technologies available to counter them. We are active members of the NATO Missile Defence Project Group which, with the encouragement of the Istanbul Summit discussions, is currently planning the first stages of work under the NATO Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence programme. Decisions on the extent of UK involvement in this important research have yet to be taken and release of the NATO Staff Requirement for this capability to NATO industries has just been agreed.

Timber (Sustainable Sources)

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what timbers will be used in the pre-fabricated barracks to be built at *(a)* Aldershot and *(b)* Salisbury Plain; and what steps will be taken to ensure that timber used at the barracks will come from (i) legal and (ii) sustainable sources. [184948]

Mr. Caplin: Although it is too early in the design development process to say what specific type of timbers will be used, any new buildings in Aldershot or Salisbury Plain constructed under the Allenby/Connaught Project will adhere to Sustainable Development principles and Environmental Management Systems. This will include assessment of accommodation in accordance with the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM).

Welsh Regiments

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to change the number of Welsh regiments; and if he will make a statement. [183265]

Mr. Caplin: The Defence White Paper published last December established the policy context for shaping the future structure of our armed forces. For the Army, it outlined the vision of a more balanced force that is flexible, rapidly deployable and sustainable for the variety of operational tasks that we envisage it undertaking.

Against this policy guidance, we have been working through the detailed implications for the Army's force structure. We anticipate being in a position to make announcements about the conclusions of this work later in the year.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Data Protection

Harry Cohen: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when he expects the legislation on the offence concerning Enforced Subject Access in the Data Protection Act 1998 to come into force. [185959]

Mr. Leslie: Section 56 of the Data Protection Act 1998, which gives effect to the enforced subject access provisions, will be brought into force when the arrangements for the issue of certificates of criminal conviction under Part V of the Police Act 1997 are fully in place.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations he has received from the European Commission on Directive 95/46/EC and the Data Protection Act 1998. [185961]

Mr. Leslie: The European Commission has completed its initial consideration of the way in which all Member States have implemented the Data Protection Directive. The Commission has communicated its views on the UK's implementation to the Government. These views are now being considered and will be the subject of further discussion with the Commission.

Asylum Appeals

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many of the appeals in asylum cases for which legal aid had been provided failed in each year since 1997; and for what reasons. [185610]

Mr. Lammy: Information on asylum appeal outcomes from 1997 is published in the Home Office annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom. Copies are available in the Library of the House. Information on asylum appeal outcomes since 2002 is published quarterly.

Before January 2000 public funding was not available for representation at immigration and asylum appeals. We are currently establishing systems to record how many of the applications funded by legal aid are successful. The reasons for the dismissal of an appeal are not recorded centrally.

Community Legal Service Budget

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much of the

Community Legal Service budget for 2004–05 is designated to each area of activity, expressed *(a)* as a proportion and *(b)* in monetary value. [185944]

Mr. Leslie: The following table shows the amount, in resource terms, that the Community Legal Service has been designated by the Treasury for 2004–05, split by civil and immigration work.

CLS Budget	*Resource (£ million)*	*Percentage*
Civil representation	593.62	79.40
Immigration	153.62	20.60
Total	747.24	100.00

Data Sharing

Harry Cohen: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs, if he will publish a data-sharing bill; and how his data-sharing policy takes account of *(a)* the proposed identity card and *(b)* the population register being established by the Registrar General. [185962]

Mr. Leslie: The Government have no plans to publish a general data-sharing bill. The Government's overall approach to data sharing is set out in the document "Public Sector Data Sharing: Guidance on the Law", which was published by my Department in November 2003. The proposed identity card scheme and the Registrar General's proposals for a possible population register are fully compatible with the framework set out in that document.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many copies of the Department's and its predecessor Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183840]

Mr. Leslie: The information is set out in the table as follows. Costs of printing and publication are met directly by the publisher, TSO (The Stationery Office Limited) and do not fall to DCA. In return the Publisher retains the revenues which they earn from sales and which are aimed at ensuring recovery of their costs. The Department's Annual Report is also available on the Department's website free of charge at www.dca.gov.uk/department/report2004/dca2004.pdf. Web visits to the report since April 2004 number approximately 1,022.

	Quantity printed	*Quantity sold*	*(a) Publication costs[1] (£)*	*(b) Sales revenue*
1997	The Stationery Office advise that statistics are no longer available.			
1998	[2,3]—	990	13,500	[2]—
1999	[2]—	1,045	8,715	[2]—
2000	[2]—	932	14,615	[2]—
2001	[2]—	1,079	12,100	[2]—
2002	[2]—	1,726	28,800	[2]—
2003	[2]—	1,576	20,460	[2]—
2004	[2]—	[3]1,010	35,220	[2]—

[1] Cost for design, photography, typesetting and web conversion. Does not include cost to purchase copies from TSO.
[2] Not available from TSO.
[3] Commercial-in-confidence to TSO.
[4] Based on sales profile from previous years TSO expects to sell a further 100 copies in 2004.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185912]

Mr. Leslie: My Department and its agencies currently have a total of 559 road vehicles within its fleet.

The provision of vehicles for ministers and the judiciary is through the use of The Government Car and Dispatch Agency, who will provide a response separately.

Within each of the last five years, the number of personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by my Department are recorded as follows:

1999–2000—9
2000–01—12
2001–02—5
2002–03—11
2003–04—5

My Department's road safety policy is currently covered by the general duty of care within the Department's main Health and Safety policy. [185912]

Duty Solicitor Scheme

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will identify the *(a)* cost and *(b)* number of hours claimed for under the duty solicitor scheme in (i) police stations and (ii) magistrates' courts in each year since 1997. [185929]

Mr. Lammy: The table shows the cost under the duty solicitor scheme of work carried out in police stations and magistrates' courts. The LSC records the total costs claimed and then reviews the number of hours on audit. It is not possible to calculate the number of hours from the figures because different combinations of rates are claimed.

£ million

	Police station duty solicitor scheme	*Magistrates' court duty solicitor scheme*
1997–98	100	15.22
1998–99	105.11	16.18
1999–2000	109.07	25.39
2000–01	117.34	[1]48.78

£ million

	Police station duty solicitor scheme	Magistrates' court duty solicitor scheme
2001–02	[2]154.39	27.86
2002–03	168.76	24.21
2003–04	175.51	23.68

[1] From November 1999 the duty solicitor payment system was also used to make payments to solicitors attending Early First Hearings and Early Administrative Hearings, resulting in sharp increases in both the number and average cost of claims paid. However, when the LSC introduced contracting in 2001 it split this work out from the court duty solicitor role, therefore the costs decreased.

[2] From the introduction of contracting in April 2001, claims were consolidated so that the police station claims also included all other pre-charge work, not just advice and assistance at the police station.

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many cases against the Department, the agencies for which it is responsible and its predecessor organisations have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181461]

Mr. Lammy *[pursuant to his reply, 12 July 2004, Official Report, c. 972W]:* I listed in my previous answer the total number of cases in respect of each type issued since 1997. This answer failed to list the numbers of cases by year. The breakdown of those cases by type and year is shown in the following table.

	(a) Equal pay	*(b) Sex discrimination*	*(c) Race discrimination*	*(d) Disability discrimination*	*(e) Unfair dismissal*	*Total*
1997	—	—	2	—	1	3
1998	—	—	1	2	5	8
1999	—	9	1	8	8	26
2000	—	2	2	4	2	10
2001	—	2	4	2	5	13
2002	—	20	4	2	8	34
2003	1	—	1	3	7	12
2004	—	1	—	1	5	7
Total	1	34	15	22	41	113

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185131]

Mr. Leslie: Lord Filkin is the Department for Constitutional Affairs Green Minister. In this role, Lord Filkin oversees work on sustainability within my Department and is also a member of the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers.

My Department is committed to continue working with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on sustainable development and on achieving sustainability in all aspects of its work. To that end, it continues to progress action and respond positively to targets published by DEFRA against the strands of the "Framework for Sustainable Development in the Government Estate". As Green Minister, Lord Filkin oversees this work.

My Department focuses its activities to meet targets set out by DEFRA. My Department has also continued with its programme of energy works, aimed at reducing emissions and energy use, and has set up electricity supplies so that it receives over 10 per cent. from renewable sources. A pilot of Environmental Management Systems has been established at key sites, and consideration will be given to extending this to other locations in the coming year. During the year my Department's Court Standards and Design Guide has been updated so that it better reflects our sustainability requirements by, for example, providing guidance on biodiversity and the need to aim for an "Excellent" BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) rating on all new court buildings. Lord Filkin has also overseen the development of a staff training programme that will increase awareness within the Department of sustainability issues.

Looking more widely, my Department has a commitment to achieve sustainability in the delivery of its business through achieving its Public Service Agreement targets. These include ensuring effective delivery of justice, ensuring a fair and effective system of civil law, reducing social exclusion and increasing customer choice in legal services.

Legal Aid

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many firms have indicated to the Government in each of the last three calendar years that they plan to stop doing legal aid work. [185941]

Mr. Lammy: The question cannot be answered in the terms specified, as the information is not held centrally.

However information relating to firms which have had their contracts withdrawn since 2000 was provided in a previous parliamentary question answered on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 375W.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will break down the cost of providing legal aid in immigration cases in each year since 1997 by *(a)* purpose for which aid was sought and *(b)* stage of process at which the application was made. [185945]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission is not able to provide the information in the format requested, as it does not differentiate between immigration and asylum cases.

The total cost of providing legal aid for immigration and asylum matters in England and Wales for each financial year since 1997–98 was as follows:

[1]£ million

	Total cost
1997–98	35.2
1998–99	53.3
1999–2000	61.4
2000–01	81.1
2001–02	129.4
2002–03	176.2
2003–04	200.5

[1] Net cash

Records do not enable us to identify the point in the process at which funding was granted.

Policies (Environmental Impacts)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185098]

Mr. Leslie: It is not possible to give figures for the number of new policy proposals or significant changes in policy that were produced in the two periods in question without incurring disproportionate cost.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) was required for all policy proposals or significant changes in policy produced in 2002–03 and 2003–04, which were likely to have a direct or indirect impact on business, charities and the voluntary sector. In accordance with Cabinet Office guidance, the RIA covered the full range of potential impacts on stakeholders—including environmental impacts where relevant.

Press Officers

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much his Department spent on press officers in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available, broken down by grade. [185823]

Mr. Leslie: The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) was created in June 2003. Figures are available for the period June 2003 to March 2004 only.

£

Grade	Numbers	Total salaries[1]
Span 9 (G6)	1	35,994
Span 8 (G7)	2	64,325
Span 7 (S10)	4	134,418
Span 6 (10)	8	190,966

[1] June 2003 to March 2004

These figures do not include the Director and Deputy Director of Communications, who speak to the media but on a far more infrequent basis than press officers.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Burma

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether his Department has completed its review of the feasibility of funding aid for internally displaced persons in Burma; what consultations he has undertaken with ethnic relief teams which operate within the conflict zones of Burma in order to obtain their input into the review; and what assistance he will be providing for organisations whose levels of accountability are not yet to the standards required by his Department so that they can improve their accountability in order to be eligible for UK funding. [185564]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: A review of DFID's role in meeting the needs of poor Burmese people on the Thai-Burma border is underway. Re-examining DFID's policy on providing cross-border assistance from Thailand to Burma was one part of the Mission's scope. A team recently visited the border as part of this work. During this Mission, the team met a large number of international agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations working on the border including some that provide programmes across the borders in Burma. I shall write to you with more information once the overall review has been completed.

Chad

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the state of supplies in refugee camps in Chad; when this assessment was last revised; and if he will make a statement. [186233]

Hilary Benn: The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimate that there are currently 180,000 refugees in Chad. This figure comprises 140,000 in nine displaced persons camps in Chad and 40,000 near the border. UNHCR are co-ordinating the aid efforts of UN agencies and non-governmental organisations on the ground in Chad and supplies are being delivered by the World Food Programme (WFP) and NGOs. In the month of July, the WFP estimates that 1,889 tonnes of food was distributed to 134,000 refugees. The WFP report that they have one tonne of dehydrated milk and nine tonnes of High Energy Biscuits in reserve. The UN published an update on current funding for Chad on 27 July. This report states that, since September 2003, the international community has allocated £47 million to Chad, of which the UK has contributed £3 million (£2 million to UNHCR, £1 million to WFP). However, it also estimates that an additional £22 million is required.

With the onset of the rains food, shelter and sanitation are the primary concerns. A UK assessment mission last visited Chad in April 2004. A further DFID/FCO Sudan Unit mission to Chad is planned for next week (w/c 2 August). They will liaise with the UNHCR to assess the current needs of the displaced persons in Chad and to review the relief operations so far. This mission will also consider further allocations of UK humanitarian assistance.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent by *(a)* the Overseas Development Administration in 1996–97 and *(b)* the Department in the last year for which figures are available on (i) head-hunters and recruitment consultants and (ii) management consultants. [185565]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In 2003–04 the Department spent £53,840 on a recruitment consultant to assist with our recruitment procedures. There was no similar expenditure in 1996–97 and no expenditure on head-hunters in either year.

DFID's departmental expenditure on overall consultancy services is made available in "Statistics on International Development", Table 12. A copy of this publication is available in the Library of the House. We do not keep a central record of management consultants in particular and this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent *(a)* by the Overseas Development Administration in 1996–97 and *(b)* by the Department in the latest accounting period for which figures are available on (i) mobile phones, (ii) hospitality, (iii) taxis and (iv) international travel. [185566]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: *(a)* Data for expenditure by the Overseas Development Administration by budget category for 1996–97 is not readily available and could not be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

(b) Data for the latest accounting period of 2002–03 as set out by budget category is as follows:

2002–03	*£000*
Entertainment	82
Domestic and overseas travel inc. taxis	2,645

All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published Departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in Government Accounting.

Figures for travel reflect all domestic and overseas travel, including expenditure on taxis. All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules contained in DFID's staff handbook, which reflects the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

Recorded expenditure on mobile phones for 2002–03 is not readily available and could not be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186081]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID staff below the Senior Civil Service can retire at age 60. However, they can also choose to work on until age 65 subject to their continued capability and satisfactory service. The normal retirement age for Senior Civil Servants is 60. But, DFID has the flexibility to retain members of the Senior Civil Service beyond age 60 if it is judged to be in the public interest and are satisfied about the fitness and efficiency of the individual to carry out his or her duties. Members of the Senior Appointments Selection Committee (SASC) Group retire at age 60 and DFID must obtain approval from the Cabinet Office before retaining staff in the SASC Group beyond this age.

DFID welcomes job applications from people of all ages. However, applicants are expected to be able to give DFID several years' service, or complete a substantial amount of any fixed term appointment, before retirement. There is no upper age limit for consultants. Consultants have to be suitably qualified, experienced and in a suitable physical condition to ensure that they can comply with all of their obligations under the contract.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185124]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In the past year, in my capacity as Green Minister, I have carried out the following:

Agreed clearance of the Sustainable Development in Government report (SDiG) (02–03), noting that DFID was in the forefront of progress on achieving SDiG targets and objectives and giving a commitment to ensuring further progress.

Written to Elliot Morley (Defra) on the following issues:

The incorporation into the SDiG Framework of a target relating to Combined Heat and Power systems;

Detailed response about how DFID is approaching the Sustainable Development agenda in policy-making.

The Government response to the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee AC report "Greening Government 2003.

DFID participation in the UN expert meeting on social issues in public procurement taking place in May.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development for what reason five of the planned guidance notes on the programmes designed to tackle HIV/AIDS have not yet been published by his Department. [185549]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: A large amount of information and guidance on HIV and AIDS is produced by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), other international bodies, other donors and researchers. The task is to ensure our staff are guided by the best possible information which already exists. DFID has therefore been developing an extensive web portal that will enable us to bring together a comprehensive and up to date range of information, for the use of DFID teams globally. This will be available to all UK staff in DFID, FCO and other government

departments as well as our key partners in developing country governments and NGOs. It will be launched in August.

DFID has been working with experts to develop new internal guidance on a range of areas. The areas where there is the greatest need—notably treatment and care—are also the most hotly debated issues among experts. In order to ensure a balanced response DFID has worked hard to articulate the most appropriate, evidence-based policy. Inevitably this has taken time and has been adapted as new initiatives evolve (such as the UNAIDS and WHO "3x5" target). DFID is therefore delighted that over the last few weeks the Department has published four new strategy and position papers: "Taking Action: The UK's Strategy for Tackling HIV and AIDS in the Developing World", "HIV and AIDS Treatment and Care Policy", "Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights—a position paper", and "Increasing Access To Essential Medicines in the Developing World".

Natural Resource Governance

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assessment his Department has made of the importance of natural resource governance in developing countries; when this assessment was last revised; and if he will make a statement; [186229]

(2) what his Department's policy is on the promotion of issues of natural resource governance; when this policy was initially drawn up; when it was last revised; and if he will make a statement; [186230]

(3) what assessment his Department has made of the relevance of natural resource governance to armed conflicts in *(a)* Africa and *(b)* South America; and if he will make a statement. [186232]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) recognises that many of the poorest countries and the poorest people are highly dependent on natural resources for economic development and livelihoods. However, powerful groups sometimes deny poor people such access and revenues from natural resources—both renewable and non-renewable—have often fuelled conflict, corruption and exacerbated poverty. How natural resources are governed can fundamentally affect the contribution they make towards poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The Prime Minister launched the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, September 2002. Its aim is to improve governance and accountability in countries with a high reliance on oil, gas and minerals by increasing transparency of payments by companies to governments, and transparency of revenues received by those governments. EITI is now being implemented in Nigeria, Azerbaijan, Ghana and the Kyrgyz Republic, with discussions taking place on implementation in a number of other countries including several in Africa and South America.

DFID's assessment of the importance of natural resource governance in developing countries is carried out on a country-by-country basis, usually through poverty reduction strategies. DFID has supported work on natural resource governance in Cambodia, Cameroon, Ghana, Indonesia and a number of other countries through the Governance Learning Group.

Some recent examples of governance programmes supported by DFID in the renewable natural resource sector include:

support to regional forest law enforcement and governance (FLEG) processes in East Asia and Africa that help build awareness of governance problems, in particular illegal logging, and generate commitment to tackle them;

an active role within the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) process. On 19 July the College of Commissioners adopted a package of proposals that includes a draft Regulation to control imports of illegally harvested timber into the single market;

support to Global Witness to analyse and publish trends concerning the governance of natural resource extraction—in particular the forestry sector—in the Democratic Republic of Congo;

support to the Overseas Development Institute to examine governance and poverty impacts of the illegal timber trade in Central America, with the aim of catalysing institutional and policy change by building awareness, dialogue and 'coalitions for change' among political institutions, government agencies, donors and civil society; and

pathways for Environmental Action in Kenya (PEAK), a programme to enable local communities to better understand their rights and economic opportunities under new environment legislation.

On the question of natural resource governance and armed conflict, responsibilities fall across Whitehall. DFID, the Foreign Office and Ministry of Defence collaborate on African conflict issues through a joint strategy called the Africa Conflict Pool. This has considered a range of natural resource and conflict issues within its work drawing on academic literature, the work of groups such as Global Witness and the work of various United Nations bodies.

Overseas Aid

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will break down by recipient country aid given by the UK in each of the last 10 years *(a)* in total and *(b)* as a percentage of total expenditure. [186133]

Hilary Benn: I have arranged for copies of a document entitled "Bilateral Aid by Country (Total Gross Public Expenditure)" to be placed in the Libraries of the House. This includes details of the aid given by the UK to each recipient country in each of the last 10 years up until 2002–03, the last full year for which we have final figures. It also provides details of the percentage of total bilateral UK aid for the relevant year.

The UK also provides contributions to multilateral organisations from both DFID and the Government as a whole. By definition, this expenditure cannot be broken down by country as the UK contribution is pooled with those of other donors.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the overseas aid budget expressed at today's prices was in each of the last 25 years; and what the projected budget is as a result of the Spending Review. [186135]

Hilary Benn: Expenditure on DFID programmes for the years 1978–79 to 2002–03, expressed in constant 2002–03 prices, is set out in the following table:

£ million (constant 2002–03 prices)

	Total DFID programmes
1978–79	2,811
1979–80	2,629
1980–81	2,675
1981–82	2,495
1982–83	2,361
1983–84	2,411
1984–85	2,431
1985–86	2,360
1986–87	2,386
1987–88	2,308
1988–89	2,437
1989–90	2,515
1990–91	2,426
1991–92	2,614
1992–93	2,745
1993–94	2,780
1994–95	2,878
1995–96	2,756
1996–97	2,510
1997–98	2,342
1998–99	2,610
1999–2000	2,783
2000–01	2,946
2001–02	3,002
2002–03	3,313

Source:
DFID's annual statistical report Statistics on International Development 1998–99 to 2002–03.

As a result of Spending Review 2002 DFID's Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit rose from £3.596 billion in 2003–04 to £4.529 billion in 2005–06. This represented over 8 per cent. annual real growth for the Spending Review period.

Spending Review 2004 provided another excellent settlement which demonstrated the Government's continuing commitment to tackling global poverty and the United Nation's 0.7 per cent. oda/GNI target. DFID's Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit will rise to £5.028 billion in 2006–07 and £5.323 billion in 2007–08. This represents 9.2 annual average real growth for the period of the Spending Review.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* monetary aid and *(b)* aid in kind his Department has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to (A) the Philippines, (B) Romania and (C) Ukraine (1) in each financial year since 1997–98 and (2) in each month since January 2003; what new programmes his Department has (x) initiated and *(y)* funded in each country since January 2003; and if he will make a statement. [185716]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The following table shows what has been delivered to the Philippines, Romania and Ukraine in terms of aid in kind and monetary aid from 1997–98 to 2003–04 (latest figures). DFID does not keep monthly records of pledges or expenditures specifically in terms of aid-in-kind or monetary aid; DFID also does not keep records of how much has been pledged specifically in terms of aid in kind or monetary aid.

Bilateral aid by country

	Monetary aid	*Technical co-operation*	*Aid and trade provision*	*Grants and other aid-in-kind*	*Humanitarian assistance*[1]	*DFID debt relief*[2]
Philippines						
1997–98	—	353	3,393	621	140	—
1998–99	—	267	656	619	—	—
1999–2000	—	157	44	406	—	—
2000–01	—	—	241	545	250	—
2001–02[3]	3,692	64	163	228	—	—
2002–03	631	67	158	321	—	—
2003–04[4]	1,471	55	135	382	—	—
Romania						
1997–98	—	5,481	—	196	32	—
1998–99	—	4,036	—	104	—	—
1999–2000	—	3,489	—	249	—	—
2000–01	—	3,180	—	258	—	—
2001–02[3]	—	5,301	—	95	—	—
2002–03	—	5,798	—	300	80	—
2003–04[4]	—	4,503	—	90	—	—
Ukraine						
1997–98	—	8,535	—	588	—	—
1998–99	—	8,111	—	502	—	—
1999–2000	—	7,856	—	586	—	—
2000–01	—	9,033	—	197	100	—
2001–02[3]	—	8,652	—	225	—	—

Bilateral aid by country

	Monetary aid	*Technical co-operation*	*Aid and trade provision*	*Grants and other aid-in-kind*	*Humanitarian assistance*[1]	*DFID debt relief*[2]
2002–03	—	7,684	—	204	2	—
2003–04[4]	—	6,295	—	166	—	—

[1] Humanitarian assistance comprises food aid and other humanitarian assistance.
[2] This comprises both interest and principal foregone under Retrospective Terms Adjustment. Amounts reported are repayments which would have fallen.
[3] 2001–02 is a unique year in that total DFID expenditure is understated by around £140 million due to move to resource accounting. See glossary for details.
[4] The figures for 2003–04 are provisional.

Since 2003 DFID has committed a further £111,647 to support civil society organisations in the Philippines.

The following are new programmes initiated and funded in Romania since January 2003; all are extensions of existing activities in Romania.

	£000
Social and Healthcare Linkages—To assist local authorities in the equitable and sustainable delivery and development of social and health care services	200
Social Development Scheme Fund—To support social development, build social capital and contribute to poverty alleviation in the communities most affected by mining industry restructuring	200
Social Development Strategy for Romanian Mining Regions—to support the "National Strategy for Mining Industry" through providing a social development strategy.	84
Social Mitigation Strengthening Cohesion and Lesson Learning—To enhance the capacity of the National Agency for Mining through strengthening cohesion and lesson learning within the mining sector Social Mitigation Project	76
Advisory support to the National Agency for Civil Servants (NACS)—To improve the Government's management of its civil servants by assisting the agency to clarify its role and function	134
Assistance to National Agency for Civil Servants—Human resource Planning, Establishment Control and Pay Bill Modelling—to assist NACS gather and analyse the data required to formulate a Human Resource Plan, to determine the number and level of public positions and to formulate pay proposals for 2004.	30
Technical Assistance to the General Secretariat of the Government for building a coherent Policy Making and an Accountable Administration—to assist the Unit for Policy Planning and General Secretariat in the design of institutional procedures of policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation.	65
Public Admin Reform Strategy Adviser—The establishment of a strategic framework which clearly sets out Government public administration reform actions, and identifies the role of the EC, World Bank and other international organisations.	100
Support to the National Co-ordinator and Romanian Commission for Poverty Prevention and Social Inclusion (CASPIS)—To strengthen understanding and strategic approach to poverty reduction, including support to the CASPIS Technical Secretariat, line ministries and at local level.	90
Adviser on Anti-Poverty Strategies to CASPIS—to enhance capacity within CASPIS to adopt a strategic approach to poverty reduction policies and to promote the implementation of poverty reduction plans.	95
Strategic Planning Support to the Romania Social Development Fund—(RSDF) to develop the sustainable capacity to measurably contribute towards national and/or local poverty alleviation and social inclusion plans.	90
High Level Group for Romania Children Co-ordinator—To promote child rights and protection and the prevention of child abuse and neglect using an holistic approach in the broader context of child health and development.	42

The following are new programmes initiated and funded in Ukraine since January 2003.

	£ million
Democratising Ukraine Project	1.5
Lviv Economic and Social Development Project	1.46
Ukraine Trade Policy Project	0.99
World Bank Ukraine Social Investment Fund (DFID Technical Assistance Input)	0.3
World Bank Public Administration Reform Programme (DFID TA Input)	0.3
Support to Ministry of Education and Sciences (Part of UN global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS in Ukraine)	0.035
HIV/AIDS Small Project Support	0.025

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Brent Council Properties

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what has been the cost to the London borough of Brent of vouchers given to tenants for refurbishment of Brent homes in each year since the scheme has been in operation; and for how many properties the vouchers were given each year. [186299]

Keith Hill: The London borough of Brent does not provide vouchers to tenants for the refurbishment of Brent owned homes. Vouchers for the decoration of council owned properties are issued in two instances:

1. Void property—assistance can be given to a tenant moving into a new property.

2. Decoration following Repair—in cases where we have damaged decorations whilst carrying out repairs.

This scheme has been running since the late 1970s. Information on the costs of maintaining properties prior to 2001–02 is not available.

The cost of the scheme and the numbers of properties refurbished over the last three years are as follows:

2001–02: 553 properties at a cost of £54,450

2002–03: 648 properties at a cost of £62,900

2003–04: 591 properties at a cost of £52,700.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of refurbishing and redecorating Brent council-owned homes was in each of the 10 years before the voucher scheme was introduced; and how many properties were refurbished and redecorated in each year. [186300]

Keith Hill: London Borough of Brent have advised that no records are held that could provide that information.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* renovation and *(b)* maintenance projects on buildings (i) owned and (ii) rented by his Department were undertaken in each of the last five years; and what the associated costs were of each. [163957]

Phil Hope *[pursuant to the reply, 4 May 2004, Official Report, c. 1433W]:* The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established in May 2002. Since that date the following renovation and maintenance projects have been undertaken at the properties (i) owned and (ii) rented by the office. All figures are exclusive of VAT.

£

	2002–03		2003–04	
	Renovation	*Maintenance*	*Renovation*	*Maintenance*
(i) Owned				
Burlington House	0	83,400	0	55,000
QEIICC	29,000	139,418	1,853,300	3,127,511
Fire Service College	230,257	108,097	956,008	182,151
Government Office Network	0	0	0	0
(ii) Rented				
ODPM—HQ				
Eland House	1,777,879	0	655,862	79,174
Ashdown House	0	0	70,343	570,220
Portland House	311,062	0	0	0
PINS	0	0	0	109,316
Fire Service Improvement—Marchington	0	42,416	13,318	52,766
Valuation Tribunal	42,822	255,204	115,166	193,059
Government Office Network	101,496	214,000	803,820	256,311
Rent Service	976,000	89,500	118,000	218,500

With regard to the maintenance figures, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister records an item of work as a project if it exceeds £15,000. Work of lower value is funded from bulk maintenance. The number of projects has prevented detailing each, as this could have been provided only at disproportionate cost.

The figures provided are gross expenditure and do not reflect receipts from other building occupants. Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

Departmental Costs

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department spent on *(a)* refurbishment and *(b)* office furniture in the last year for which figures are available. [185777]

Phil Hope: For information in respect of refurbishment, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given today in respect of parliamentary question 180362.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect data on its expenditure on office furniture.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* running costs and *(b)* total expenditure of (i) the Greater London Authority, (ii) each of the Government offices for the regions, (iii) the regional observatories and regional intelligence groups and (iv) the regional housing boards was in each year since each was established. [185009]

Phil Hope: The Greater London Authority's net expenditure on services (excluding reserve transfers) since its establishment in May 2000 is as follows:

	£ million
2000–01	[1]20.5
2001–02	32.9
2002–03	45.5
2003–04	[2]50.1
2004–05	[3]63.3

[1] Part year only.

[2] Provisional outturn.

[3] Budget.

Information about how much of this expenditure is specifically for running costs are not held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The running costs for each Government Office for the period 1995-/96 until 2003–04, and their budgets for the current year, are detailed in the following table. The Government Offices now carry out activity on behalf of 10 Government Departments compared with four Departments in 1995–96. In 2002–03 they managed or influenced around £9 billion of Government expenditure broken down by region as follows: North East—£664 million; North West—£1,430 million; Yorkshire and the Humber—£1,036 million; West Midlands—£1,285 million; East Midlands—£428 million; East of England—£349 million; South West—£499 million; South East—£876 million; and London—£2,592 million.

Regional observatories obtain their resources from a number of different sources and information about their running costs and expenditure are not held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Regional Housing Boards' running costs are funded from the budgets of the core Board members: Government Offices, Regional Chambers/Assemblies, Regional Development Agencies, the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships. Information about their running costs are not held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Government Office administrative running costs

£000

Government Office	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*
North East	8,842.76	8,687.15	8,616.75	8,618.84	8,312.05
North West	9,983.71	9,839.09	9,442.59	13,690.13	13,048.58
Merseyside	4,753.84	4,349.95	4,199.53	12.24	—
Total NW/M	14,737.55	14,189.04	13,642.12	13,702.37	13,048.58
Yorks and Humber	9,060.51	8,765.04	8,475.01	8,683.92	8,888.68
West Midlands	10,435.73	10,040.37	9,757.79	9,474.35	9,330.15
East Midlands	7,116.85	6,616.67	6,436.24	6,754.39	6,951.28
East	6,122.84	6,168.97	6,270.62	6,269.43	7,005.47
South West	7,574.14	7,140.74	6,825.73	6,985.03	7,796.87
South East	8,331.06	8,406.18	8,544.99	8,561.40	8,658.61
London	11,106.26	14,106.47	13,458.82	13,238.12	13,715.79
Total	83,327.70	84,120.63	82,028.07	82,287.85	83,707.48

Government Office	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*[1]
North East	8,197.33	9,002.29	9,954.46	12,164.59	14,771.21
North West	13,651.03	15,344.87	15,523.52	16,744.59	18,111.38
Merseyside	—	—	—	—	—
Total NW/M	13,651.03	15,344.87	15,523.52	16,744.59	18,111.38
Yorks and Humber	9,357.48	10,036.85	10,943.77	12,344.06	13,352.37
West Midlands	9,960.76	10,295.51	10,662.85	13,378.54	14,035.18
East Midlands	7,335.77	8,244.80	8,713.24	10,955.39	11,461.01
East	7,542.48	8,631.95	9,355.85	12,607.17	13,534.69
South West	8,711.38	10,666.90	11,860.77	13,858.05	14,398.06
South East	9,477.26	10,326.44	10,874.74	14,105.96	14,402.24
London	13,860.98	13,161.20	14,038.84	16,649.56	18,141.31
Total	88,094.47	95,710.81	101,928.04	122,807.89	132,207.45

[1] Allocations for 2004–05.

Note:
GO-North West and GO-Merseyside merged during 1998–99.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department spent on replacing light bulbs in the last year for which figures are available. [185774]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect data on this.

Departmental Mobile Phones

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many mobile phones owned by his Department have been reported lost or stolen since 2001. [185797]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002. The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Refurbishment Costs

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department and its predecessors spent on refurbishment of its buildings in each year since May 1997, broken down by building. [180362]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established in May 2002. Since that date the following has been spent on refurbishment. All figures are exclusive of VAT.

£

	2002-03	2003-04
Portland House	311,062	0
Eland House	1,777,879	655,862
Ashdown House	0	70,343
QEII Conference Centre	29,000	1,853,300
Fire Service College	230,257	956,008
Government Office North West—Sunley Tower	44,110	0
Government Office South East—Bridge House	44,000	490,000
Government Office London—Riverwalk House	8,500	97,000
Government Office West Midlands—Paradise Circus	4,886	23,820
Government Office East Midlands—The Belgrave Centre	0	193,000
Fire Service Improvement—Marchington	0	13,318
Valuation Tribunal Office Network	42,822	115,166
Rent Service Office Network	976,000	118,000

The figures provided, which exclude VAT, are gross expenditure and do not reflect receipts from other building occupants.

Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government Offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

The Rent Service became an Executive Agency of the Department for Work and Pensions on 1 April 2004, but was part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in the period in question.

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186082]

Phil Hope: The normal retirement age in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its agencies is 60. Staff below the senior civil service may choose to continue in service until 65. Senior civil servants may exceptionally be invited to continue in service after 60 and other staff after 65.

There is no set age limit beyond which staff will not be recruited.

Empty Houses

Mr. Webb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for how many empty houses his Department is responsible; and if he will make a statement. [182142]

Keith Hill: The Fire Service College, an Executive Agency of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, owns 39 residential properties of which one is empty but is expected to be occupied by a member of staff on secondment by the end of July 2004.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185133]

Phil Hope: As the Green Minister in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, I am a member of ENV, the Cabinet Committee on the Environment, and ENV(G), the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. I have also considered issues surrounding the ad hoc Ministerial Group on Climate Change and the Sustainable Building Task Group. However, it has been established practice under successive governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees.

I am a member of the Sustainable Development Task Force, and have attended its regular meetings. In February, I presented a paper, "Sustainable Communities", to the task force, which set out the many ways in which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's overarching aim of creating sustainable communities contributes to sustainable development.

I also represent the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the Ministerial Group for the Implementation of the Energy White Paper. I presented a paper to this group in October on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's contribution to this agenda, including energy efficiency and renewable energy.

I am also the lead Minister on the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill.

Homelessness

David Davis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless people there were in the East Riding of Yorkshire in each of the past five years. [181590]

Phil Hope: Information collected about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is in respect of households, rather than persons. A summary of information reported by East Riding of Yorkshire district council about the number of households

accepted under homelessness legislation as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, in each year since 1999–2000, is as follows.

East Riding of Yorkshire DC homeless household acceptances

	Number
1999–2000	305
2000–01	289
2001–02	361
2002–03	516
2003–04	459

Source:
ODPM P1E homelessness returns (quarterly)

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister by what proportion the number of statutory homelessness acceptances changed between 1 May 1997 and 31 March 2004. [182904]

Phil Hope: Information about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is collected quarterly. Estimates of the number of households accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need show an increase of 34 per cent. between 1997–98 (102,430) and 2003–04 (137,000).

Local Government Finance

Chris Ruane: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much central Government funding was provided for local government in each of the last 25 years, at today's prices. [186158]

Mr. Raynsford: The amount of central Government funding provided for local government from 1981–82 to 2004–05, at 2003–04 prices, are shown as follows.

Central Government funding

	£ billion
1981–82	26.336
1982–83	25.280
1983–84	24.788
1984–85	24.411
1985–86	22.729
1986–87	22.468
1987–88	22.655
1988–89	21.973
1989–90	20.962
1990–91	33.660
1991–92	42.175
1992–93	43.799
1993–94	42.657
1994–95	43.438
1995–96	42.614
1996–97	42.480
1997–98	41.566
1998–99	42.595
1999–2000	44.130
2000–01	47.084
2001–02	49.525
2002–03	50.647
2003–04[1]	53.135
2004–05[1]	57.094

[1] Budget figures.

Notes:
1. Central Government funding consists of: 1981–82 to 1989–90: Aggregate exchequer grant 1990–91 onwards: revenue support grants, specific and special grants within AEF, community charge grant (1991–92), teachers pay award additional grant (1992–93), SSA reduction grant (1994–95 to 2001–02), police grant (1995–96 onwards), Central Support Protection grant (1999–2000 to 2001–02), General GLA grant (2000–01 onwards), and distributable amount from non-domestic pool (1990–91 onwards).
2. Funding at 2003–04 prices have been calculated using Her Majesty's Treasury's GDP Deflator.

Ministerial Travel Costs

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in the Department in the last year for which figures are available. [184527]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not separately identify costs of air travel to different parts of the United Kingdom by officials and this information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The total cost of air travel to Northern Ireland by Ministers in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was £903 in 2003–04.

Parish Councils

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out the powers and responsibilities of parish councils. [180513]

Mr. Raynsford: Pursuant to my answer of 29 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 228W, in the following table are revised lists of parish council's main statutory functions.

Powers and duties of parish councils

Function	Powers and duties	Statutory provisions
Access land	Power to enforce bye-laws made by another authority	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, s. 17
Allotments	Duty to provide allotments. Power to improve and adapt land for allotments, and to let grazing rights	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, ss. 23, 26 and 42
Baths and washhouses	Powers relating to provision of public baths, washhouses and bathing huts	Public Health Act 1936, ss. 221–223 and 225–227
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	Power to acquire and maintain Power to provide Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries	Open Spaces Act 1906, Ss 9 and 10; Local Government Act 1972, s. 214; Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970, s. 1 Local Government Act 1972, s. 214(6)
Bus shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, s. 4

Powers and duties of parish councils

Function	*Powers and duties*	*Statutory provisions*
Bye-laws	Power to make bye-laws in regard to pleasure grounds	Public Health Act 1875, s. 164
		Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s. 57(7)
	Cycle parks	Public Health Act 1936, s. 223
	Baths and washhouses	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss. 15 and 12
	Open spaces and burial grounds	Public Health Act 1936, s. 198
	Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s. 87
	Public Conveniences	
Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s. 2
Closed churchyards	Powers as to maintenance	Local Government Act 1972, s. 215
Commons	Power for parish council to contribute to expense relating to scheme for the regulation and management of a common	Commons Act 1899, s. 5
Common pastures	Powers in relation to providing common pasture	Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908, s. 34
Conference facilities	Power to provide and encourage the use of facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s. 144
Community centres	Power to provide and equip buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or recreational objectives	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s. 19
Crime prevention	Powers to install and maintain equipment and establish and maintain a scheme for detection or prevention of crime	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s. 31
Drainage	Power to deal with ponds and ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s. 260
Entertainment and the Arts	Provision of entertainment and support of the arts	Local Government Act 1972, s. 145
Financial assistance	Duty to require information	Local Government Act 1872, s. 137A
General powers	Power to incur expenditure for certain purposes	Local Government Act 1972, s. 137
Gifts	Power to accept	Local Government Act 1972, s. 139
Highways	Power to maintain footpaths and bridle-ways	Highways Act 1980, ss. 43, 50
	Power to light roads and public places	Parish Councils Act 1957, s. 3;
	Provision of litter bins	Highways Act 1980, s. 301
	Powers to provide parking places for bicycles and motor-cycles, and other vehicles	Litter Act 1983, ss. 5,6
		Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, ss. 57, 63
	Power to enter into agreement as to dedication and widening	Highways Act 1980, ss. 30, 72
		Parish Councils Act 1957, s. 1
	Power to provide roadside seats and shelters	Highways Act 1980, ss. 47, 116
	Consent of parish council required for ending maintenance of highway at public expense, or for stopping up or diversion of highway	Highways Act 1980, s. 130
		Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s. 72
		Highways Act 1980, s. 96
	Power to complain to highway authority as to unlawful stopping up or obstruction of highway or unlawful encroachment on roadside wastes	
	Power to provide traffic signs and other objects or devices warning of danger	
	Power to plant trees and lay out grass verges etc. and to maintain them	
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1961, s. 11
Land	Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of	Local Government Act 1972, ss. 124, 126, 127
	Power to accept gifts of land	Local Government Act 1972, s. 139
Litter	Provision of receptacles	Litter Act 1983, ss. 5,6
Lotteries	Powers to promote	Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976, s. 7
Mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Powers to provide mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s. 198
Open spaces	Power to acquire land and maintain	Public Health Act 1875, s. 164
		Open Spaces Act 1906, ss. 9 and 10
Parish documents	Powers to direct as to their custody	Local Government Act 1972, s. 226
Public buildings and village hall	Power to provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972, s. 133
Public conveniences	Powers relating to provision of public conveniences	Public Health Act 1936, s. 87
Recreation	Power to acquire land for or to provide public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them.	(*see* Local Government Act 1972, Sched. 14 para. 27)
		Public Health Act 1875, s. 164
	Power to provide gymnasiums, playing fields, holiday camps	Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 s. 44
		Open Spaces Act 1906, ss. 9 and 10
	Provision of boating pools	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s. 19
		Public Health Act 1961, s. 54
Town and country planning	Right to be notified of planning applications	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched. 1, para. 8
Tourism	Power to encourage visitors and provide conference and other facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s. 144
Traffic calming	Powers to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes	Highways Act 1980, s.274A

Powers and duties of parish councils

Function	*Powers and duties*	*Statutory provisions*
Transport	Powers in relation to car-sharing schemes, taxi fare concessions and information about transport	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s. 26, 28 and 29
	Powers to make grants for bus services	Transport Act 1985, s. 106A
War memorials	Power to maintain, repair, protect and alter war memorials	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s.1; as extended by Local Government Act 1948, s. 133
Water Supply	Power to utilise well, spring or stream and to provide facilities for obtaining water from them	Public Health Act 1936, s. 125

Policies (Environmental Impacts)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185096]

Keith Hill: The number of consultations on new policy proposals were:

(a) 2002–03—24 (only from 29 May 2002 when the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established);

(b) 2003–04—32.

All policy proposals are accompanied by a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) where applicable, and this assessment includes consideration of environmental impacts. From April 2004 the importance of the assessment of environmental impacts has been more strongly emphasised within the RIA process.

Theft

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the equivalent monetary cost of theft has been to *(a)* his Department in each year since it was established, *(b)* the executive agencies affiliated to his Department in each year since his Department was established and *(c)* the Government Offices of the Regions in each year since 1997. [185781]

Phil Hope: Losses due to theft in each financial year since the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created are as follows:

£

Financial year	*Office of the Deputy Prime Minister*	*Executive agencies*	*Regional Coordination Units/ Government Office*
2002–03	1,901	41,579	1,000
2003–04	6,350	7,581	12,350
2004–05	0	0	9,800

Assets have been valued at cost, net book value or replacement cost depending on the circumstances of the individual case. Recoveries from perpetrators have been netted off. Some incidents are still under investigation and final values may change.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Address Preference Service

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* residential and *(b)* commercial addresses have been registered under the address preference service in each year since it has been operational. [186241]

Mr. Timms: The address preference service is the operational concern of Royal Mail Group and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Advertising

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money was spent on advertising and promotional literature for her Department's initiatives, broken down by year since 1997. [183808]

Ms Hewitt: For expenditure on advertising by my Department through COI from 1997–98 to 2000–01, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Twickenham on 20 November 2001, *Official Report*, column 162W. Advertising expenditure for 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 was £6,610,240, £13,741,906 and £4,547,749 respectively. Figures include advertising by the Small Business Service and exclude VAT.

Figures relating specifically to promotional literature are not held centrally and could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Biomass Energy Industry

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how she intends to protect existing and well established wood-based industries from power stations whose raw material is the same wood residues. [185842]

Mr. Timms: The Woodfuel Resource Study published earlier this year found that 10 per cent. of potential resource in small roundwood and sawmill product, used by woodpanel industries, remains unused after needs of existing industries have been taken into account.

I understand my officials will be meeting with the Forestry Commission and the Wood Panel Industries Federation to discuss the Federation's concerns shortly. I met representatives of the Federation to discuss their concerns on 23 October 2003.

Brazil

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the trade barriers are to imported Brazilian products entering the United Kingdom. [184185]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: In terms of Brazil-specific measures for which this Department has responsibility, there is an anti-dumping duty of 32 per cent. imposed by the European Community on imports of malleable tube or pipe fittings originating in Brazil.

Business Start-ups

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many technology business start-ups there were in each year since 1995. [185332]

Nigel Griffiths: DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations in technology industries are shown as follows for the period 1995 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in Autumn 2004.

UK VAT registrations: 1995–2002

	Technology industries
1995	17,315
1996	20,410
1997	26,740
1998	30,600
1999	22,220
2000	23,755
2001	19,180
2002	15,860

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures:
VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002;
Small Business Service, www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations and de-registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1995. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Call Centres

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what research her Department has conducted into the security implications of call centres being outsourced to other countries; and if she will make a statement; [185456]

(2) what representations have been made to her Department by representatives of British industry regarding security concerns which have arisen from outsourcing call centres from the UK. [185455]

Ms Hewitt: Companies wanting to transfer personal data from the UK to other countries must comply with the Data Protection Act's requirements, including its eight rules of good information handling known as the Data Protection Principles.

Where a company overseas is processing personal data under contract to a company in the UK, the UK Company, as controller of the data, retains full responsibility for the actions of the second company. This situation applies whether the processing is being carried out in the UK or abroad.

Responsibility for administering and enforcing the Act lies with the Information Commissioner, Richard Thomas, who carries out these duties independently of the Government. Any directly affected person who believes that one of the Act's requirements has been broken can ask the Commissioner to assess whether this is the case. If he concludes that there has been a significant breach, it is open to him to take enforcement action against the organisation concerned. To date, the Information Commissioner has not received any substantive complaints that the Act has been breached as a result of the offshoring of call centre work.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has commissioned on the effects of the Common Agricultural Policy on non-European Union trade, with particular reference to less-developed countries. [184046]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The DTI has not commissioned its own research into the effects of the Common Agricultural Policy on non-European Union trade. However, our view, based on the ample research on others such as the World Bank and the OECD, is clearly set out in the recent White Paper on Trade and Investment and in the Economics Paper which accompanied it.

Departmental Accountancy Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry who the Finance Director of *(a)* the Department, *(b)* UK Trade and Investments Service, *(c)* Postal Services Commission, *(d)* Ofgem, *(e)* Office of Fair Trading and *(f)* Export Credits Guarantee Department is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183454]

Ms Hewitt: The Finance Director for the Department of Trade and Industry is David Evans, and he is a Doctor of Philosophy. He does not hold a CCAB qualification. There has not been a qualified audit opinion to the Department's resource and other accounts in the last five years.

The Finance Director for UK Trade and Investments Service is Susan Haird. She has an MA in Economics and Modern History and does not hold a CCAB qualification. There have been no qualifications to the resource accounts in the last five years. The appropriation account for 2000–01 received an excess vote qualification.

The Finance Director of the Export Credit Guarantees Department is Ian Dickson. He is a qualified accountant and is a member of the following accountancy bodies: Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland; Chartered Institute of Management Accountants; and the Association of Corporate Treasurers. There have been no qualifications to the resource or other accounts in the last five years.

The Postal Services Commission, Ofgem and the Office of Fair Trading have elected to respond to the Member directly.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many copies of her Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183888]

Ms Hewitt: The cost incurred by the Department for producing the Departmental Reports is limited to the design and artwork, and, since 1999, the costs incurred in placing an electronic version of the report on the Departmental website. Other costs of printing and publication are met directly by the publisher, TSO (The Stationery Office Limited), which recoups these costs through sales. TSO uses its commercial judgement as to the number of copies printed.

Total sales revenue is impacted by the number of copies sold at a discount, and is a commercial matter for TSO, but TSO has confirmed that the total numbers of copies sold are:

Year	*Number Sold*
1997	not avail.
1998	1,346
1999	1,219
2000	1,244
2001	1,145
2002	1,085
2003	1,000
2004	765[1]

[1] to date (mid July)

The number of hard copies ordered is reducing as recipients are being encouraged to use the web-based electronic version of the Report.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent by her Department on public relations consultants in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185275]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* Figures relating to past and current expenditure on public relations consultants by my Department are not held centrally and could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total cost of printing departmental headed notepaper was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185380]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The information is as follows:

(a) The total costs of printing departmental headed notepaper in 1996–97 is unavailable.

(b) The total costs of printing departmental headed notepaper in 2003–04 was £29,848.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work related road safety. [185923]

Ms Hewitt: The DTI currently has nine fleet vehicles.

There have not been any personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department within the last five years.

The lease car company is responsible for ensuring the vehicle is roadworthy. The driver is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is maintained and suitable insurance is in place.

Chief Executives of the DTI Agencies will be writing to you direct in response to your question.

Letter from Claire Clancy to Mr. Kidney, dated 3 August 2004:

I am responding to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

Companies House operates one company vehicle which is a van.

We have had no personal injury accidents involving the vehicle during the last five years.

We do not have a separate road safety policy. When on company business this is addressed within the overall Health & Safety Policy, and where legislation has been introduced as in the use of mobile phones. This information is provided and instructions given to all employees.

Letter from Ron Marchant to Mr. Kidney, dated 3 August, 2004:

I am replying to this parliamentary question, tabled on 20 July concerning how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety.

The Patent Office van is our only leased vehicle and there has been no personal injury accidents over the last five years. The Office has not got a specific policy for managing work-related road safety. However, the PO van is equipped with a hands free mobile, is regularly serviced and drivers must have a valid clean driving licence.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Kidney, dated 3 August, 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to your question to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2003/3950) asking how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety.

The only part of The Insolvency Service that operates any road vehicles is Redundancy Payments, which currently has four leased motor vehicles used by visiting officers. There have been no reported personal injuries involving vehicles in the last five years. We require all vehicles to be maintained in a good state and to be serviced regularly. All journeys must be notified in advance and officers must not drive their vehicles when tired or for excessive hours. Finally, all accidents, whether involving personal injury or not, must be reported.

Letter from Dr. J. W. Llewellyn to Mr. Kidney, dated 3 August, 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your three questions regarding road vehicles and safety.

1. Road vehicles operated by the Agency.

The National Weights & Measures Laboratory operates two official vehicles.

2. Personal injury accidents involving Agency vehicles within the past 5 years.

None

3. The Agency's policy for managing work-related road safety.

NWML produced its own policy on managing work-related road safety. A copy of this has been placed in the Library.

E-mail Preference Service

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if the Government will introduce an e-mail preference service; and if she will make a statement. [186240]

Mr. Timms: The Government introduced the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations in December 2003, which cover, among other things, the regulation of unsolicited commercial e-mails. The Government have no plans to introduce an e-mail preference service.

The Government have not ruled out extending the "opt-in" right to corporate subscribers. However, as the regulations have only been in force for seven months, it is too early to assess how the new provisions are working in practice, and what areas, if any, might need to be reviewed.

Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate has powers to investigate the in-house employment agency of the national health service. [183223]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Employment Agency Standards (EAS) Inspectorate enforces the provisions of the Employment Agency Act 1973 (the Act) and the associated Regulations. The Act regulates the conduct of employment agencies and employment businesses.

Section 9 of the Act sets out the powers of the EAS Inspectorate to enter any relevant business premises to inspect any records or to require any person on the premises to provide all such information as may be required to ascertain whether the provisions of the Act are being complied with.

The Act does not apply to the Crown or those bodies that are listed in section 13(7) of the Act. The in-house employment agency of the national health service, NHS Professionals, is not part of the Crown or listed as an exempt body in the Act.

EU Emissions Trading

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what formal assessment she has made of the *(a)* effect on the competiveness of UK industry, *(b)* the cost to UK consumers and *(c)* the incentives for UK industry to cut carbon emissions of the proposals for allocating national allowances under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme recently approved by the EU Commission. [185504]

Mr. Timms: The Department has undertaken extensive analysis of the implications of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme for UK industry and consumers. A paper on the implications for UK competitiveness is available at: www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/euetsimplications .pdf

Work on the implications of the scheme for electricity prices was undertaken for the Department by ILEX Energy Consulting and is available at www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/ilex_report.pdf. ILEX are currently expanding this work, including to give some consideration to the implications of the National Allocation Plans from individual member states.

At a carbon price of €5 per tonne of carbon dioxide the Department estimates that electricity prices to industry might increase by around 6 per cent. and prices to the domestic consumer by around 3 per cent. A carbon price of €5 is estimated to lead to a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions of around 1MtC in 2010. A carbon price of €10 may lead to more than double this level of reduction. These results are sensitive to assumed fossil fuel prices and the fuel mix in generation in 2010.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185127]

Mr. Timms: I am DTI's Green Minister and in this role I am a member of the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. However, it has been established practice under successive governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees.

My ministerial responsibilities include, amongst others, Energy, Sustainable Development and Corporate Social Responsibility and these overlapped with my work as Green Minister in the financial year 2003–04.

Important pieces of work with which I have been involved in the past year include the publication of a UK Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production in conjunction with Defra, the setting up of an academy for corporate social responsibility, and action on implementation of the Energy White Paper.

High Technology Jobs

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to minimise the export of high technology jobs to *(a)* Eastern Europe and *(b)* Asia. [185490]

Ms Hewitt: The Government want to keep as many jobs in this country as possible and we will act to ensure that the conditions remain favourable for this. The UK has a skilled workforce, a strong and stable economy, and a flexible and dynamic business environment, all of which will ensure that we continue to attract and retain investment and high quality jobs.

Late Bill Payments

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the late payment of bills in the UK. [185489]

Nigel Griffiths: This Government have always recognised that late payment of debts can have serious effects on the cash flow of smaller companies, which is why we had a manifesto commitment to introduce a Late Payment Act to allow small businesses to:

claim interest on late payment from other business or public sector bodies;

allow creditors to claim a fixed sum of compensation to cover debt recovery costs should late payment happen.

The Government also established the Better Payment Practice Group whose website lists the payment record of companies.

The package of measures has had a positive effect on payment times. The Grant Thornton European Business Survey showed that the average time taken in the UK to settle accounts in 1997 was 49 days. By 2002 this had fallen to 41 days. By comparison, the average settlement time in our European neighbours was 50 days. A recent survey by the REL Consultancy Group looked at average days payable outstanding (DPO) and concluded that UK companies' payment performance is 33.6 days against 42.4 days for Europe as a whole.

Because of concerns that suppliers would not utilise the legislation for fear of reprisals or boycotts, I have also undertaken as Minister to write, in cases where invoices are not disputed, on behalf of small businesses to the managing directors of companies to convey their complaint and seek an explanation and appropriate action. I urge all Members of Parliament to do the same on behalf of constituents.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people in Hyndburn have benefited from the national minimum wage. [181302]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Hyndburn. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in October 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the number of homeworkers being paid below the national minimum wage. [182415]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI's full regulatory impact assessment on "Regulations to Introduce Fair Piece Rates for Output Workers, including Homeworkers", published in February 2004, estimated that employers of around 70,000 home workers have been in breach of the minimum wage regulations. As a result of the 2004 amendment introducing the new system of fair piece rates, the DTI estimates that a total of around 110,000 home workers stand to benefit in October 2004 as a result of both extended coverage of the minimum wage and greater compliance.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of people in employment she estimates are in receipt of the national minimum wage. [183111]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in October 2003, the DTI estimates that between 1.0 million (4.0 per cent. of those in employment) and 1.2 million UK workers (4.8 per cent. of those in employment) were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

Nirex

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects to announce her decision on the future of Nirex. [186053]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, provided a written ministerial statement to the House on the future of Nirex on 21 July 2004.

Policy (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185103]

Mr. Timms: In most instances, environmental screening and appraisal are undertaken as an integral part of the policy-making process, and separate records are not currently maintained. Nor are separate records maintained of the number of new policy proposals or significant changes in policy requiring Regulatory Impact Assessments made each year.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) would have been required for all departmental policy proposals in 2002–03 and 2003–04 which were likely to have a direct or indirect impact (whether benefits or cost) on business, charities and the voluntary sector. In accordance with Cabinet Office guidance, the RIA should have covered the full range of potential impacts on all stakeholders—including environmental impacts where relevant.

Post Offices

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices in Leicester, South have disabled access. [186265]

Mr. Timms: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Regional Development Agencies

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what budget has been set for each regional development agency as a result of the spending review. [186160]

Jacqui Smith: The Spending Review 2004 White Paper (published on 12 July 2004) states the total Single Programme budget for England's RDAs (2005–06: £2,163 million, 2006–07: £2,244 million, 2007–08: £2,297 million). The budget for each RDA for the years 2005–08 will be set later this year.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what regulatory impact assessments have been carried out on the EU directives that came into force over the past 12 months; [185540]

(2) what regulatory impact assessments *(a)* have been and *(b)* will be made for those EU directives which will come into force over the next 12 months. [185538]

Mr. Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

In August 1998, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced that no proposal for regulation which has an impact on business, charities or the voluntary sector should be considered by Ministers without a regulatory impact assessment (RIA) being carried out. Where EU Directives impose significant costs on business, charities and the voluntary sector, RIAs are carried out to gain collective ministerial agreement for a negotiating line and RIAs accompany the explanatory memorandum produced for parliamentary scrutiny. Departments will then refocus the RIA when determining the options for implementing the directives.

In May 2004, I presented a Command Paper to Parliament, listing all the final regulatory impact assessments completed by Departments during the period 1 July-31 December 2003.

Research and Development

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department spent on science research and development in each of the last 25 years; and what the projected budgets are as a result of the spending review. [186137]

Ms Hewitt: The following table sets out science budget expenditure since 1987–88, including projected spend following the 2004 spending review. Responsibility for administration of the science budget transferred from the Cabinet Office to the Department of Trade and Industry in 1995. Figures prior to 1987–88 are not available on a consistent basis.

	Science budget (£ million)
1987–88	650
1988–89	697
1989–90	803
1990–91	890
1991–92	915
1992–93	1,051
1993–94	1,163
1994–95	1,223
1995–96	1,295
1996–97	1,312
1997–98	1,331
1998–99	1,334
1999–2000	1,394
2000–01	1,514
2001–02	1,707
2002–03	2,032
2003–04[1]	2,366
2004–05[2]	2,575
2005–06[2]	2,913
2006–07[2]	3,067
2007–08[2]	3,282

[1] Provisional
[2] Plan

Note:
The accounting treatment of expenditure has changed over the period. Figures to 2000–01 are on a cash basis. Figures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 are on the RAB stage 1 basis, i.e. including timing adjustments. Figures for 2003–04 onwards are on a full resource budgeting basis, net of depreciation.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 30 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 282W, on research and development, what further assessment she has made, following the publication of the Spending Review 2004, of *(a)* the effectiveness and *(b)* future dates of the competition for the Grant for Research and Development. [186141]

Nigel Griffiths: Assessments under the current competition are expected to be concluded in September and I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 30 June.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 382W, on research and development, how many applicants have received funding; what the total value is of the funding allocated; and how much funding remains to be allocated for the grant for research and development for the current fiscal year. [186162]

Nigel Griffiths: In the first quarter of the current financial year 134 applicants were offered Grants for Research and Development worth £11.5 million. A planned £24.5 million remains to be allocated.

Overall spend on programmes to improve UK innovation performance and accelerate business exploitation of science and technologies is planned to increase from £377 million in 2004–05 to over £387 million in 2005–06.

Sellafield Site Remediation Strategy

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding has been *(a)* provided and *(b)* guaranteed to enable the acceleration of previous programmes within the Sellafield Site Remediation Strategy as referred to in the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate's quarterly report for Q1 2004. [186116]

Mr. Timms: The Energy Act 2004 provides for the establishment of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA). The NDA will be established in October and become operational in April 2005. The Treasury White Paper dated 12 July on the outcome of the 2004 spending review provided in respect of my Department that the NDA will have an annual budget

of approximately £2 billion, comprised of central government grant and income from its commercial activities.

The NDA will determine the allocation of funding to its 20 sites—including Sellafield—following discussions with key stakeholders such as the regulators. The NDA will consult on its proposed first annual work plan in the autumn. Acceleration of work will be possible under the proposed contract for Sellafield with the British Nuclear Group, depending on the company's performance.

Small Businesses (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support has been offered to small businesses in Tamworth constituency in each year since 1997. [185835]

Nigel Griffiths: Between 1997 and 2000 support to small businesses in Tamworth was provided by Staffordshire Training and Enterprise Council and subsequently it has been provided by the Business Link Operator for Staffordshire, Staffordshire Business Support Limited.

The total number of businesses advised or helped by Staffordshire Business Support Limited since April 2000 is 1,552. Specific support has included business start-up advice to 118 enterprises with workforce development, Investors in People, international trade, marketing and financial advice also being provided. Of the total enterprises assisted, 111 were female run and 35 were ethnic minority run enterprises.

Within the Tamworth constituency, businesses have been eligible for help from the Small Firms Loan Guarantee Scheme, the SMART Award and the Enterprise Grant Scheme. Since 1997, the SMART Award and its successor, the Research and Development Scheme, awarded grants totalling £480,000 to four enterprises and the Enterprise Grant scheme has enabled a further six enterprises to receive grants totalling £130,350.

Solar PV Major Demonstration Programme

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new companies have been accredited under her Department's Solar PV Major Demonstration Programme since its launch. [185986]

Mr. Timms: 41 different organisations have been accredited so far since the start of the programme, and all retain their accreditation.

Grid connected:

19 have provisional accreditation

21 have full accreditation.

Off-grid:

10 have provisional accreditation

3 have full accreditation.

Spending Review

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will identify the *(a)* top priority programmes and *(b)* lower value business support administered by her Department referred to in the 2004 Spending Review, page 141. [185028]

Ms Hewitt: My Department provides a range of solutions to help business overcome barriers to success and improve productivity. A set of nine broad, cross-sectoral business support products has replaced the previous complex array of schemes.

Significant increases in funding for science and innovation reflect the priority accorded to maximising the potential of the UK's science base and translating this into innovation by business. Five of the nine business support products are specifically designed to help business to succeed through innovation.

Telecommunications

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on measures taken by the EU to open up the telecommunications industry across Europe; if she will estimate the impact of such policies on the price of *(a)* telephone calls and *(b)* internet access; and if she will estimate (i) the average change in costs per household and (ii) the total value of such changes for each region in the UK as a result of such measures in the last year for which figures are available. [185326]

Mr. Timms: I welcome the measures which opened up the telecommunications industry across Europe, which created opportunities for British companies to contribute in newly liberalised markets across Europe. The impact of these measures on prices is a matter for the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as independent regulator. Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member on that point. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Terrorism

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to offer emergency assistance and advice to *(a)* industry and *(b)* small businesses in the event of a terrorist attack. [185469]

Ms Hewitt: My Department works closely with those businesses which form part of the critical national infrastructure and for which it has lead responsibility to ensure those businesses are resilient to terrorist attack and have robust business continuity plans in place in response to a range of disruptive challenges.

My Department also works with business more generally to ensure it has access to advice and guidance on preparing for and responding to a terrorist incident, and has established business sector business continuity champions.

Unsolicited Faxes/Telephone Calls

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry where money received from fines for making unsolicited telephone calls and faxes is paid. [186236]

Mr. Timms: If a company or individual were to contravene an enforcement notice issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and were to be successfully prosecuted in a magistrates court and

subjected to a fine, the fine would be paid to the local Magistrates Court Committee (MCC) and would then be forwarded to HM Treasury.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what costs to *(a)* industry and *(b)* consumers she estimates to have been incurred each year since 1999 as a result of unsolicited (i) telephone calls and (ii) faxes. [186237]

Mr. Timms: The Government do not have an estimate of the cost to industry and consumers of receiving unsolicited telephone calls and faxes. The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) scheme for consumers started as an industry-led voluntary scheme until EU regulations required that member states introduce a statutory provision for consumer registration.

In deciding to extend the right of consumers to register with the TPS to corporate subscribers at the end of 2003, the Government produced a regulatory impact assessment, which concluded that the benefits of having the option to register outweighed the additional cost to marketing businesses for cleaning up their telephone lists.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the maximum penalty is for *(a)* sending unsolicited faxes and *(b)* making unsolicited telephone calls; and how many times it has been incurred in each year since 1999. [186238]

Mr. Timms: The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has responsibility for enforcing the rules on unsolicited marketing including the sending of unsolicited marketing faxes to numbers registered on the Fax Preference Service (FPS) and making unsolicited marketing calls to numbers registered on the Telephone Preference Service (TPS). The ICO has issued formal enforcement notices against more than a dozen companies and individuals in respect of unsolicited marketing faxes.

A company or individual that contravenes an enforcement notice commits a criminal offence and, upon successful prosecution, could be subject to a fine of up to £5,000 in a magistrates court. As the ICO has no evidence that the companies and individuals against whom notices have been issued warrant prosecution, to date no fines have been imposed in respect of contravention of these rules.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many prosecutions there have been in each year since 1999 for *(a)* sending unsolicited faxes and *(b)* making unsolicited telephone calls; [186239]

(2) how much money has been raised in each year since 1999 from fines resulting from prosecution of persons making unsolicited telephone and fax calls. [186248]

Mr. Timms: The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has responsibility for enforcing the rules on unsolicited marketing including the sending of unsolicited marketing faxes to numbers registered on the Fax Preference Service (FPS) and making unsolicited marketing calls to numbers registered on the Telephone Preference Service (TPS). The ICO has issued formal enforcement notices against more than a dozen companies and individuals in respect of unsolicited marketing faxes.

A company or individual that contravenes an enforcement notice commits a criminal offence and, upon successful prosecution, could be subject to a fine of up to £5,000 in a magistrates court. As the ICO has no evidence that the companies and individuals against whom notices have been issued warrant prosecution, to date no fines have been imposed in respect of contravention of these rules.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* individual and *(b)* business numbers have been registered under (i) the telephone and (ii) fax preference schemes in each year since they have each been operational. [186242]

Mr. Timms: The table shows the total number of telephone numbers registered under the TPS since 2001. Corporate registration to the TPS began on 25 June 2004, since when there have been 48,183 corporate registrations.

	Number registered
2001	1,737,028
2002	2,535,094
2003	3,908,440
2004	5,214,737

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adoption Cases

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what consideration is being given in the review of children's cases in the area of the *(a)* Cumbria County Council, *(b)* Durham County Council, *(c)* Northumberland County Council, *(d)* Sunderland City Council, *(e)* South Tyneside Council, *(f)* North Tyneside Council, *(g)* North Yorkshire County Council, *(h)* Newcastle City Council, *(i)* Hartlepool Council, *(j)* York City Council, *(k)* Gateshead Borough Council, *(l)* Darlington Unitary Authority, *(m)* Middlesbrough Borough Council, *(n)* Stockton Council and *(o)* Redcar and Cleveland Council following the judgement in R *v* Cannings to what a child should be told about why it was removed from its birth parents, in cases where (i) evidence about Munchhausen's syndrome by proxy, (ii) evidence about factitious disorder by proxy and (iii) other evidence from (A) Professor Meadow and (B) Dr Southall may have played a role in the child's removal but the authority's judgment is that the best interests of the child are in the status quo. [179921]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Information about individual cases in the named local authority areas is not held centrally.

Existing guidance says that:

"Every young person needs to develop a secure sense of identity and all those with parental or caring responsibilities have a duty to offer encouragement and support in this task. All children—whether living at home or not—are entitled to expect information about their personal and family history and need to understand their past as well as their present situation."

Obviously in practice the imparting of information of this nature is difficult and anyone undertaking this task, for example adopters, foster carers, birth parents or indeed professionals, may need support to be able to help the child to understand their life history in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.

Advertising

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183846]

Mr. Miliband: Financial data for 1997 salary details could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many copies of his Department's and predecessor Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication cost and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183879]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The following were the number of copies issued by TSO (The Stationery Office Ltd.) for the years 1998–2004. The number of copies supplied to DfES/DfEE for their own use is also provided for your information—please note these are in addition to the copies TSO have issued.

Edition	*Copies issued by TSO*	*Copies supplied to DfES/DfEE*
1998	894	2,110
1999	669	2,189
2000	632	2,516
2001	641	1,004
2002	514	765
2003	471	654
2004	336	650

Costs of printing and publication are met directly by the publisher, TSO and do not fall to government.

In return the publisher retains the revenues which they earn from sales and which are aimed at ensuring recovery of their costs.

Bullying

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action the Department is taking to reduce incidences of bullying in Staffordshire schools. [185830]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We attach a high priority to helping schools prevent and combat bullying: it is a serious problem which puts the emotional well-being and educational achievement of pupils at risk. Our guidance pack "Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence", the anti-bullying Charter for Action and the anti-bullying website www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying offer detailed advice on preventing and addressing bullying.

In November 2003 I launched our anti-bullying Charter for schools, which schools are now signing. It is accompanied by a summary of effective practice to help schools review and enhance their anti-bullying policies. The Charter was launched at the first of the Make The Difference series of regional conferences. The programme of conferences began in November 2003 and culminated with a final event on 14 June. These conferences, the West Midlands one of which was well attended by Staffordshire head teachers, offered an opportunity for schools and other partners to share good practice on this issue and to learn at first hand about what has worked elsewhere. Details of the conferences can be accessed online at www.teachernet.gov.uk/antibullying. Our new public information film, 'Tell Someone', also encourages children and young people to tell someone if they are being bullied.

Last week, we announced funding of £570,000 for the Anti Bullying Alliance; an umbrella group of over 50 voluntary sector organisations, professional associations and leading local authorities. The Alliance will work to support schools in addressing bullying behaviour and lead on preparations for the first national anti-bullying week in November. Schools in Staffordshire will have access to an anti-bullying coordinator based in the West Midlands region, and working with the National Strategies, who can provide practical help, advice and support in tackling all forms of bullying in schools.

Child Care

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places were available in each of the last 25 years, broken down by local authority area, and listed in descending order according to the biggest percentage increase in such places over the last seven years. [186106]

Margaret Hodge: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 25 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1528W, when I stated that statistics have only been collected by Local Authorities (LAs) since 1999 following the introduction of the National Childcare Strategy for England.

Details of the places created by LA across England since 1999 were provided in the table attached to the previous question. The actual stock number of childcare places available each year was only made available with the first publication of Ofsted statistics in March 2003.

The following table provides details of registered places across England available in March 2003 compared to March 2004, broken down by LA and showing the percentage change in descending order.

LA Name	*Ofsted March 2003 Data*	*Ofsted March 2004 Data*	*Net Growth 2003–04*	*Percentage Increase*
South Tyneside	1,934	3,746	1,811	94
Halton	1,960	3,164	1,204	61
North Tyneside	2,776	4,067	1,291	46
Torbay	1,691	2,385	695	41
City of London	308	430	122	40
NE Lincolnshire	1,578	2,199	621	39

LA Name	Ofsted March 2003 Data	Ofsted March 2004 Data	Net Growth 2003–04	Percentage Increase
Luton	2,286	3,184	899	39
Southampton	3,755	5,220	1,466	39
Cumbria	6,121	8,456	2,334	38
Thurrock	1861	2,565	704	38
Hartlepool	1,474	2,007	533	36
Blackburn with Darwen	2,714	3,693	979	36
Oldham	4,542	6,148	1,606	35
Southend-On-Sea	2,342	3,166	824	35
Redcar and Cleveland	1,903	2,560	657	35
Suffolk	8,504	1,1430	2,926	34
Haringey	2,493	3,330	838	34
Bournemouth	2,514	3,311	797	32
Newham	3,886	5,078	1,191	31
Stockton on Tees	2,810	3,607	797	28
Barnsley	2,367	3,038	671	28
Doncaster	3,478	4,423	945	27
Reading	3,656	4,614	958	26
Norfolk	10,674	13,435	2,761	26
Sefton	3,573	4,472	899	25
Tower Hamlets	2,688	3,343	655	24
Lambeth	4,551	5,641	1,091	24
Wakefield	3,466	4,260	794	23
East Sussex	8,190	10,040	1,850	23
Walsall	3,885	4,757	872	22
Peterborough	4,554	5,569	1,015	22
North Somerset	3,084	3,766	682	22
Cornwall	6,984	8,520	1,536	22
Lewisham	4,683	5,712	1,029	22
Liverpool	7,396	9,006	1,611	22
Wigan	5,528	6,681	1,153	21
Rutland	787	951	164	21
St Helens	2,534	3,045	511	20
Plymouth	4,656	5,567	911	20
North Lincolnshire	2,028	2,420	391	19
Merton	3,821	4,554	733	19
Hackney	2,908	3,455	547	19
Havering	2,445	2,904	459	19
Bradford	7,837	9,251	1,414	18
Bolton	5,856	6,901	1,045	18
Sheffield	9,732	11,460	1,729	18
Rotherham	3,297	3,875	578	18
Salford	4,589	5,392	803	17
Knowsley	2,763	3,239	476	17
Lancashire	2,2538	2,6391	3854	17
Harrow	2,905	3,397	492	17
Kingston Upon Thames	2,932	3,428	496	17
Redbridge	3,538	4,129	591	17
Swindon	4,406	5,133	727	16
Hampshire	2,7288	3,1769	4481	16
Southwark	6,156	7,162	1,005	16
Hertfordshire	2,3256	26,983	3727	16
Brent	4,281	4,955	674	16
Northamptonshire	12,813	14,827	2015	16
Sunderland	3,155	3,645	490	16
Bexley	2,981	3,440	458	15
Staffordshire	18,482	21,321	2,839	15
North Yorkshire	11,793	13,593	1,800	15
Warrington	6,233	7,176	942	15
Tameside	4,564	5 252	688	15
Nottinghamshire	15,819	18,180	2,362	15
Kingston Upon Hull	3,515	4,035	520	15
Sutton	3,108	3,568	460	15
Sandwell	4,276	4,907	630	15
Bromley	5,008	5,737	729	15
Windsor and Maidenhead	3,817	4,370	553	14
Medway Towns	5,122	5,856	733	14
Leicestershire	12,125	13,857	1,732	14
Rochdale	4,957	5,662	705	14
Manchester	9,723	11,101	1,378	14
Lincolnshire	12,129	13,828	1,699	14
Gateshead	3,343	3,806	464	14
Greenwich	4,485	5,097	612	14
Kent	24,589	27,943	3,354	14
Worcestershire	12,739	14,451	1,712	13

LA Name	Ofsted March 2003 Data	Ofsted March 2004 Data	Net Growth 2003-04	Percentage Increase
Ealing	5,795	6,574	778	13
Northumberland	5,636	6,391	755	13
Stoke-on-Trent	4,544	5,150	607	13
Newcastle Upon Tyne	4,710	5,338	629	13
Calderdale	4,862	5,493	632	13
Durham	7,078	7,998	920	13
Barking and Dagenham	1,987	2,244	257	13
Portsmouth	4,432	5,002	570	13
Poole	2,216	2,501	285	13
Oxfordshire	16,221	18,276	2055	13
Shropshire	6,118	6,893	775	13
Bristol	8,024	9,026	1002	12
Darlington	2,371	2,666	295	12
Coventry	6,437	7,203	766	12
East Riding of Yorkshire	5,818	6,510	691	12
Wandsworth	7,338	8,209	871	12
Cambridgeshire	13,509	15,106	1597	12
Bedfordshire	7,840	8,766	926	12
West Sussex	13,865	15,491	1626	12
Kirklees	7,585	8,466	881	12
Derby	5,510	6,149	639	12
Trafford	6,693	7,459	766	11
Hammersmith and Fulham	2,835	3,158	323	11
Birmingham	2,2378	24,927	2,549	11
Milton Keynes	5,874	6,536	662	11
Blackpool	3,091	3,435	344	11
Buckinghamshire	11,043	12,254	1,211	11
Croydon	7,299	8,046	747	10
Hounslow	3,311	3,637	326	10
Richmond-Upon-Thames	4,354	4,777	423	10
Warwickshire	11,931	13,086	1,155	10
Bury	5,797	6,348	551	10
Stockport	6,322	6,915	592	9
Cheshire	17,026	18,605	1,579	9
South Gloucester	5,070	5,540	470	9
Enfield	4,275	4,670	395	9
Brighton and Hove	5,276	5,758	482	9
Herefordshire	4,126	4,498	371	9
Kensington and Chelsea	3,023	3,289	266	9
Bracknell Forest	3,312	3592	280	8
Dorset	5,894	6,372	478	8
Somerset	9,846	10,635	789	8
Derbyshire	11,828	12,773	945	8
Nottingham	6,234	6,725	491	8
Dudley	4,528	4,880	351	8
Wirral	6,403	6,888	485	8
Isle of Wight	3,159	3,385	226	7
Waltham Forest	5,189	5,555	366	7
Surrey	26,021	27,856	1,835	7
Westminster	3,093	3,00	208	7
Wiltshire	10,871	11,500	629	6
Islington	4,325	4,567	241	6
Essex	21,064	22,213	1,150	5
Devon	13,694	14,425	730	5
Camden	4,486	4,719	234	5
Hillingdon	4,971	5,226	255	5
Wolverhampton	4,317	4,522	205	5
Barnet	6,371	6,666	296	5
Telford and Wrekin	4,540	4,733	193	4
Bath and North East Somerset	3,223	3,346	123	4
Leeds	15,776	16,178	402	3
Leicester City	5,886	6028	142	2
Gloucestershire	14,174	14,358	184	1
York	4,149	4186	37	1
Solihull	5,644	5,672	28	0
Wokingham	5,112	5,100	13	0
Middlesbrough	3,129	2,983	146	5
Slough	2,187	2,080	108	5
West Berkshire	5,055	4,687	368	7
Isles Of Scilly	187	111	76	41
Totals:	96,7821	1,102,686	1,348,64	

Children's Homes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* announced and *(b)* unannounced inspections of children's homes have taken place in the past year; how many homes have been inspected; and what percentage of the total this represents. [185523]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: A total of 3,663 inspections of registered children's homes were carried out by the Commission for Social Care Inspection during the year ending 31 March 2004, of which 1,862 were announced and 1,801 were unannounced. Information on the number of registered children's homes inspected is available only at disproportionate cost.

Class Sizes

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size in Leicester, South for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools was in each year since 1997. [186260]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The requested information is given in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: Average size of classes taught by one teacher[2]—Position in January each year 1997 to 2004 (Provisional v2)

	Leicester South Parliamentary Constituency[3]					
	Primary			*Secondary*		
	Number of pupils	*Number of classes*	*Average class size*	*Number of pupils*	*Number of classes*	*Average class size*
1997	8,760	320	27.0	3,680	150	24.2
1998	8,750	310	28.0	3,880	160	24.3
1999	8,410	310	27.1	3,910	160	24.0
2000	8,190	310	26.9	3,960	160	24.6
2001	8,490	320	26.3	3,920	160	24.7
2002	8,890	340	26.4	4,070	160	25.3
2003	8,720	330	26.3	4,050	160	24.8
2004[4]	8,560	320	26.4	4,060	160	25.4

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Classes as taught during the one selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.
[3] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
[4] Provisional.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Course Cancellation

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list higher education institutions in England which have cancelled *(a)* undergraduate and *(b)* postgraduate courses for academic years (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05; which courses were affected; what the reasons for the course cancellation were in each case; how many students were affected in each case; and if he will make a statement. [185810]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: Decisions on courses are a matter for individual HE Institutions: information on course closures is not held centrally.

Data Protection Act

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether he intends to make *(a)* the pupil identification number and *(b)* the identifier used in relation to children in the Children Bill a general identifier as defined under the Data Protection Act 1998; and if he will make a statement. [185955]

Margaret Hodge: There are no current plans to make the pupil identification number a general identifier. A unique identifying number will be important for the successful operation of the databases for which provision is made in the Children Bill. Feasibility work is underway to identify the best source of such a unique identifying number. This will include advice as to whether the number will need to operate as a general identifier as described in the Data Protection Act 1998.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in what way the provisions of the Children Bill in relation to the security of personal information held in the child database about children extend the security afforded under the Seventh Principle of the Data Protection Act 1998; and if he will make a statement. [185956]

Margaret Hodge: The databases to be established and operated under clause 9 of the Children Bill will operate in accordance with all eight principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. The seventh data protection principle concerns appropriate technical and organisational measures against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data. Detailed arrangements for how such measures should operate for databases will be set out in regulations, guidance and directions to be made under clause 9 of the Children Bill.

Dentistry

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to make academic dentistry more attractive to dental graduates. [181641]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have been asked to reply.

On 16 July, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, announced that we are to provide 170 additional training places for undergraduates in dentistry from October 2005. The increase will be supported by capital investment of £80 million over the next four years and

additional revenue funds reaching £29 million by 2010–11. Not only will this expansion increase the pool of dentists from which trainees are drawn, but, by improving the environment in dental schools and teaching hospitals, it will make academic dentistry a more attractive career.

Departmental Administration Costs

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total administration costs were in his Department in financial years *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* 1997–98. [186077]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* Details of the Department's gross running costs for 1996–97 and 1997–98 are contained in Table 5.5 of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2000–01 (Cm 4601). These figures are on a cash basis and include the former Employment Service and Ofsted. From Public Expenditure Analyses 2001–02 (Cm 5101), departments' administrative expenditure was reported on a resource basis, as administration costs.

Copies of Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses are in the Library of the House and are on HM Treasury's public website (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk).

Departmental Staff

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money his Department expects to save as a result of the job cuts in his Department announced in the 2004 spending review. [184740]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* The spending review announcement included a reduction of 1,460 posts in DfES. These will be achieved by April 2008 and equate to a steady state paybill reduction for the Department of £38 million at today's prices.

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186080]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Within my Department all staff below the Senior Civil Service can choose when they retire between age 60 up to a maximum retirement age of 65. This is subject to satisfying normal fitness and efficiency requirements. Staff in the Senior Civil Service normally retire at age 60.

My Department has no maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered.

Departmental Staffing

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people were employed in the Department *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* at the latest date for which information is available, broken down by job title; if he will list the job functions performed by those holding each job title; and for how many people the primary function was (i) human resource or personnel functions, (ii) finance and accounting functions, (iii) information technology functions and (iv) other support, back office or administrative functions (A) in 1997 and (B) at the latest date for which information is available. [183459]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 14 July 2004]:* As at 1 July 2004, 4,440 people were employed in my Department. The numbers employed in the functions listed were:

(i) 239 (5 per cent.) in human resources;

(ii) 67 (1.5 per cent.) in finance and accounting;

(iii) 248 (6 per cent.) in information technology, and

(iv) 359 (8 per cent.) in other support, back office or administrative functions.

By 2008, we have plans in place to reduce these to:

(i) 145 in human resources;

(ii) 51 in finance and accounting;

(iii) 183 in information technology, and

(iv) 299 in other support, back office or administrative functions.

On 1 April 1997, 33,662 people were employed in the former Department for Education and Employment, of whom 29,181 were in the Employment Service Agency. My Department does not hold numbers by the listed functions as at this date.

A breakdown of people by job title and job function could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Education (Islington)

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been made available in each year since 1997 and for projected future years for education in schools within the area of the London Borough of Islington; whether these amounts include those sums made directly to headteachers of both primary and secondary schools; and whether it is possible to provide a breakdown of overall funding on a school-by-school basis. [184722]

Mr. Miliband: The Department does not produce projected figures for future years. The available information about funding in Islington local education authority is contained in the following tables.

Total funding available in cash terms in Islington LEA for all pupils

£ million

	Aged 3–10	*Aged 11–15*
1997–98	45.2	30.9
1998–99	48.7	32.7
1999–2000	54.2	34.8
2000–01	60.6	40.8
2001–02	66.1	44.2
2002–03	70	46.6
2003–04	75.9	51
2004–05	79.5	54.3

Notes:

1. The funding and budget figures quoted are derived from different sources and are not directly comparable.
2. The funding figures in the table are not available by sector as this is not how allocations are made to LEAs.

3. Therefore, these figures are not those sums given directly to headteachers, but the funding allocated to LEAs in terms of Education Formula Spending for pupils fading into age groups 3–10 and 11–15.
4. Figures reflect education Standard Spending Assessment/ Education Formula Spending settlement (all sub-blocks), plus all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to EFS pupils aged 3–10 and 11–15.
5. Figures exclude Education Maintenance Allowance and grants not allocated at LEA level and the pensions transfer to EFS and Learning and Skills Council for 2003–04 and 2004–05.
6. The pupil numbers used are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC 3-year-olds maintained pupils and estimated 3–4 year olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
7. 1997–98 figures for LEAs subject to Local Government Reorganisation in that year have been estimated, pro-rata to their post LGR figures.
8. 2003–04 and 2004–05 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.
9. Figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million.

School listing for Islington of budget shares and associated grants

DfES Name	*DfES No.*	*Total 2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Kate Greenaway Nursery School	1033	0	0	0	0	377,858
Margaret McMillan Nursery School	1009	0	0	0	0	1,040,846
North Islington Nursery School	1047	0	0	0	0	703,945
Ambler Primary School	2015	995,310	1,120,719	1,237,659	1,274,033	1,245,702
Angel Primary School; London	2465	543,534	666,531	250,127	0	0
Ashmount Infant School; London	2824	591,887	770,978	0	0	0
Ashmount Junior School; London	2809	692,514	670,109	0	0	0
Ashmount Primary School	2809	0	0	1,468,030	1,457,811	1,496,775
Blessed Sacrament RC Primary School	3643	520,048	611,603	645,987	695,558	771,513
Canonbury Primary School	2854	994,990	1,137,350	1,191,548	1,295,612	1,376,684
Charles Lamb Primary School	2101	829,623	965,568	906,531	933,343	408,066
Christ The King RC Primary School	3633	944,318	1,034,891	1,112,168	1,178,104	1,243,244
Clerkenwell Parochial CofE Primary School	3334	469,642	536,329	573,617	630,887	682,464
Copenhagen Primary School	2128	695,012	778,110	857,819	973,782	1,070,168
Drayton Park Primary School	2166	746,184	848,389	909,990	963,340	1,005,869
Duncombe Primary School	2170	1,076,611	1,206,824	1,231,173	1,358,844	1,478,242
Ecclesbourne Primary School	2182	781,328	868,265	889,593	976,998	433,864
Gillespie Primary School	2251	575,878	674,856	705,181	782,496	814,461
Grafton Primary School	2261	1,014,306	1,207,937	1,333,587	1,413,558	1,534,664
Hanover Primary School	2279	829,884	970,579	1,007,333	1,063,684	1,116,036
Hargrave Park Primary School	2282	670,347	762,922	855,261	973,713	1,011,515
Highbury Quadrant Primary School	2805	998,423	1,162,262	1,193,423	1,397,746	1,507,592
Hugh Myddelton Primary School	2855	917,372	1,116,773	1,170,871	1,327,444	1,387,188
Hungerford Primary School	2851	1,010,859	1,176,175	1,252,418	1,361,158	1,480,384
Laycock Primary School	2379	1,287,921	1,483,837	1,531,912	1,687,623	1,752,438
Montem Primary School	2852	1,002,968	1,210,872	1,275,293	1,389,797	1,570,442
Moorfields Primary School	2427	517,252	625,370	629,682	638,876	613,507
Moreland Primary School	2429	932,397	1,159,768	1,176,843	1,252,281	1,289,439
Newington Green Primary School	2853	1,143,937	1,481,897	1,517,929	1,599,536	1,678,116
Pakeman Primary School	2455	840,048	971,302	1,009,815	1,058,619	1,149,505
Poole's Park Primary School	2856	1,004,530	1,146,327	1,259,264	1,269,317	1,390,364
Prior Weston Primary School	2850	485,279	575,945	624,300	629,147	703,505
Robert Blair Primary School	2515	929,482	1,106,939	1,137,627	1,303,000	1,345,681
Rotherfield Primary School	2857	922,050	1,131,396	1,184,146	1,271,272	1,345,653
Sacred Heart RC Primary School	3384	802,901	943,801	964,172	1,048,697	1,106,671
New North Community Primary School	3644	0	0	0	0	1,065,149
St. Andrew's (Barnsbury) Church of England Primary School	3606	487,011	568,887	563,315	569,910	613,363
St. Joan of Arc RC Primary School	3631	891,265	978,131	1,048,204	1,126,637	1,206,333
St. John Evangelist RC Primary School	3456	644,013	744,031	777,359	881,047	947,364
St. John's Highbury Vale CofE Primary School	3471	471,856	540,870	565,493	622,702	653,895
St. John's Upper Holloway CofE Primary School	3465	527,312	587,339	651,024	729,365	757,715
St. Joseph's RC Primary School	3483	920,600	1,054,484	1,082,791	1,221,004	1,326,312
St. Jude and St. Paul's CofE Primary School	3488	495,873	629,958	637,381	716,420	747,208
St. Luke's CofE Primary School	3495	572,173	681,402	717,949	789,041	866,036
St. Mark's CofE Primary School	3501	499,461	559,465	586,538	677,676	726,810
St. Mary Magdalene CofE Primary School	3514	487,144	584,355	593,223	633,477	731,409
St. Mary's CofE Primary School	3527	484,467	567,242	621,487	672,762	655,684
St. Peter and St. Paul RC Primary School	3575	528,293	603,380	686,064	710,765	753,132
Thornhill Primary School	2596	997,464	1,075,593	1,146,367	1,246,177	1,313,166
Tufnell Park Primary School	2803	777,477	852,065	877,152	943,266	1,029,665
Vittoria Primary School	2624	593,451	710,067	762,901	797,925	856,065
William Tyndale Primary School	2643	969,134	1,094,702	1,167,090	1,261,887	1,367,017
Winton Primary School	2646	829,500	961,531	1,052,739	1,145,047	1,209,967
Yerbury Primary School	2666	1,037,989	1,105,535	1,195,047	1,290,095	1,357,835
Central Foundation Boys' School	4614	2,592,103	2,950,964	3,059,376	3,164,221	3,586,448
Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Language College	4324	3,690,136	4,473,966	4,806,966	5,169,635	5,581,970
Highbury Fields School	4307	2,627,092	2,927,122	3,207,707	3,408,890	3,737,783
Highbury Grove School	4108	3,905,761	4,710,794	4,856,181	5,109,266	5,572,322
Holloway School	4112	2,187,818	2,381,100	2,553,172	3,104,795	3,745,773
Islington Arts and Media School	4325	2,412,546	2,775,933	3,192,542	3,546,206	4,412,300
Islington Green School	4211	3,491,276	4,043,208	4,219,462	4,52[illegible]252	4,749,200

School listing for Islington of budget shares and associated grants

DfES Name	*DfES No.*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
						Total
Mount Carmel RC Technology College for Girls	4704	2,084,650	2,417,423	2,663,835	2,738,208	3,069,604
St. Aloysius R.C College	4651	2,889,422	3,377,542	3,580,144	3,670,923	3,848,747
Richard Cloudesley PH School	7030	823,920	906,143	956,347	1,242,464	1,330,829
Samuel Rhodes MLD School	7146	795,851	880,617	942,796	1,094,550	1,183,007
The Bridge School	7031	0	0	0	2,593,956	2,872,661
Harborough AUT School; London	7158	738,342	807,257	854,634	0	0
Rosemary SLD School; London	7170	1,263,956	1,365,122	1,454,244	0	0
Total allocated	—	67,484,191	78,040,852	82,182,829	88,610,845	98,007,167
Unallocated	—	4,915,592	3,372,366	4,330,300	3,890,007	1,750,172
Total	—	72,399,783	81,413,218	86,513,129	92,500,852	99,757,339

Notes:
1. The funding and budget figures quoted are derived from different sources and are not directly comparable.
2. The total funding figure for 2000–01 comprises the following grants: Budget share (excludes SSG), Standards Fund Devolved (includes EiC grant).
3. The total funding figure for 2001–02 comprises the following grants: Budget share (excludes SSG), Standards Fund Devolved (includes EiC grant).
4. The total funding figure for 2002–03 comprises the following grants: Budget share (excludes SSG), Standards Fund Devolved (includes EiC grant).
5. The total funding figure for 2003–04 comprises the following grants: Budget share (excludes SSG), Standards Fund Devolved (includes EiC grant), School Standards Grant.
6. The total funding figure for 2004–05 comprises the following grants: Budget share (excludes SSG), Standards Fund Devolved (includes EiC grant), School Standards Grant, Devolved EiC Grant.
7. Data are as reported through the Section 52 statements and do not capture all grant funding. Data for budget 2003–04 and 2004–05 are likely to change.
8. Table 2 of the section 52 statements records the amounts of grants allocated to schools and the amount unallocated at the point at which the section 52 return was compiled. In budget 2004–05, Table 1 indicates that Islington had allocated £463,000 for "support for schools in financial difficulty" and £300,000 for "advance of transitional grant" but this was not broken down to school level on Table 2.
9. All data are as reported by LEAs as at 20 July on the Section 52 budget statements and does not capture all grant funding.

Education Funding

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* lowest, *(b)* average and *(c)* highest per pupil funding was for each local education authority in England in each of the last 25 years, listed in descending order according to the highest average per pupil spend for the most recent year available. [186104]

Mr. Miliband: Funding for education is provided by the Government to each local education authority. Figures on the total revenue funding per pupil by local education authority are available from 1997–98 onwards. The following table shows the lowest and highest funding per pupil and the national average for each year. Figures are all in real terms.

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
National average	2,900	2,950	3,080	3,330
Lowest (£)	2,530	2,640	2,750	2,940
Lowest LEA	Dudley	South Gloucestershire	Swindon	South Gloucestershire
Highest (£)	4,550	4,580	4,800	5,160
Highest LEA	Lambeth	Lambeth	Tower Hamlets	Tower Hamlets

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
National average	3,490	3,580	3,710	3,840
Lowest (£)	3,040	3,140	3,260	3,370
Lowest LEA	South Gloucestershire	South Gloucestershire	Leicestershire	Leicestershire
Highest (£)	5,450	5,620	5,820	6,000
Highest LEA	Tower Hamlets	Tower Hamlets	Tower Hamlets	Tower Hamlets

2004–05 and 2003–04 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited. Updates will be available in the autumn.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much capital investment there has been in education, at today's prices, in each local education authority in each of the last 25 years. [186105]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will provide a breakdown of achievement at each Key Stage in 2003 by ethnicity subdivided into those *(a)* in receipt of and *(b)* not in receipt of free school meals. [185805]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: The information requested has been placed in the House Library.

Ethnic Minority Students

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of *(a)* full-time undergraduate students, *(b)* post-graduate students and *(c)* full-time students taking higher degrees through taught courses were from ethnic minority backgrounds (i) in 1997 and (ii) in the most recent period for which figures are available. [183411]

Alan Johnson: The latest available figures are shown in the table.

Proportion of HE students from ethnic minorities[1] UK HE institutions

Percentage

	1996/97	*2002/03*[2]
Full-time undergraduates	15	20
All postgraduates	15	22
Full-time taught postgraduates	26	34

[1] Based on those students who provided details of their ethnicity.
[2] A new classification of ethnicity was introduced in 2001/02. The figures for 2002/03 include students recorded as "mixed white/ethnic" who were not separately identified in 1996/97.

Full- and Part-time Students

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students pursuing a higher degree through taught courses were *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) 2002–03; and if he will make a statement. [183412]

Alan Johnson: The figures are shown in the table.

Students on postgraduate taught courses[1] UK HE institutions

	1996/97	*2002/03*
Full-time	71,400	137,900
Part-time	152,300	193,900
Total	223,700	331,800

[1] Covers students on taught Masters, taught Doctorates and other postgraduate taught courses

Gap Year

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students are expected to take a gap year in 2004–05. [183641]

Alan Johnson: Information for 2004/05 is not yet available. The latest available information from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) shows that 26,400 students who obtained a place on a full-time undergraduate course in autumn 2003, deferred entry to 2004. This figure will not however include students who take a gap year before they apply to UCAS.

Green Minister

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the activities of the Green Minister in the Department in financial year 2003–04. [185123]

Mr. Miliband: The Secretary of State for Education and Skills, is DfES's Green Minister and in this role is a member of the Ministerial Committees of Green Ministers. However, it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees.

This Department leads on education for sustainable development, and to promote this and raise public awareness and understanding of sustainable development, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State launched the Sustainable Development action plan for Education and Skills on 23 September 2003. This plan commits this Department to work with our partner organisations and other Government Departments to ensure that sustainable development is an integral part of education and in skills development of this country and its economy.

Higher Education

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of people from the constituency of Rochdale have participated in higher education in each year since 1997; and what percentage are of South Asian descent. [183535]

Alan Johnson: Participation rates are not calculated by the Department for each parliamentary constituency. The available information covering students domiciled in Rochdale constituency who are enrolled on a higher education course is given in the table. Enrolments by those of South Asian descent are not held centrally. The available information covers those of Asian descent.

Number[1] of HE enrolments at UK HE institutions by students domiciled in Rochdale constituency and the percentage of Asian[2] descent

		Of which:	
Academic year	*HE students from Rochdale*	*Number with known ethnicity*	*Percentage Asian descent*
1997/98	1,880	1,640	26
1998/99	1,935	1,695	27
1999/2000	2,155	1,925	28
2000/01	2,205	1,995	29
2001/02[3]	2,435	2,210	30
2002/03	2,570	2,395	32

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 0 or 5.
[2] "Asian" includes the ethnic categories "Asian or Asian British—Indian, Asian or Asian British—Bangladeshi", "Asian or Asian British—Pakistani", Chinese/Other Ethnic Background—Chinese', "Other Asian Background" and for 2001/02 onwards, "Mixed—White and Asian".
[3] In 2001/02 a more detailed ethnicity categorisation was introduced by HESA which included new codes for those of mixed ethnicity. Prior to 2001/02 we do not know if those in the category "Mixed—White and Asian" would have classed themselves in the "white" category or in one of the Asian categories. Thus, figures for 2001/02 onwards may not be directly comparable with those for earlier years.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average participation rate in higher education is of each parliamentary constituency; and what the average level of participation in higher education is of those of South Asian descent. [183536]

Alan Johnson: Higher Education participation rates are not calculated by the Department at constituency level.

Information on HE participation by ethnic group is published in Table A1 of the publication "Why the Difference? A Closer Look at Higher Education Minority Ethnic Students and Graduates", copies of which can be downloaded from: http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/pubs/report.php?id = rr552

Holiday Playschemes

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the average weekly cost in each region of a place on a holiday playscheme; and if he will make a statement on holiday playscheme provision. [185358]

Margaret Hodge: The Government does not collect data on the cost of holiday playschemes.

Job Losses (Civil Servants)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisors. [185471]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I have given to my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, on 20 July 2004, *Official report*, column 90W.

Ministerial Travel

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in the Department in the latest year for which figures are available. [184531]

Mr. Miliband: Information relating to travel within the UK for both Ministers and officials is not held centrally and hence could be supplied only at disproportionate cost. However, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for 2003–04 is currently being assembled and will be published shortly. All ministerial and civil service travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code, Travel by Ministers, and Civil Service Management Code, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Nursery Education

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria are used for admission to neighbourhood nurseries which are oversubscribed. [185524]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Neighbourhood nurseries are intended to provide child care and early education places for children under five in the most disadvantaged areas of the country. Providers that have set up a neighbourhood nursery are required to ensure that they give priority to children and families who live within the target area. It is for individual providers to establish their own admissions policy and determine how they will deal with oversubscription. However, in doing so they must meet this requirement. We expect providers and the local authority to monitor the position on an annual basis.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how the nursery education grant budget was spent in 2003–04. [185735]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested. From April 2003, local authorities (LAs) no longer received funds through the Nursery Education Grant. Funds were consolidated within the under-fives sub-block of the Education Formula Spending Share (EFSS)—their main education budget. It is for individual LAs in consultation with local partners to determine how overall resources should be used.

All LAs received sufficient funding to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to provide free nursery education for three and four year olds. The overall EFSS under fives sub-block in 2003–04 was worth some £2.6 billion.

Out-of-school Clubs

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many out of school clubs are operating in England; and how many places are available at these clubs for children aged *(a)* five to 10 years and *(b)* 11 years and over. [185359]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide the data in the form requested. In March 2004 there were 9,200 registered out of school childcare clubs[1] offering 326,700 places for children aged five to seven years. At the same time there were more than 2,600 unregistered out of school childcare clubs[1] offering more than 89,300 places. These are mainly for children aged over seven, but also include breakfast clubs of less than two hours, which may cater for younger children and do not need to be registered.

The Government's objective is that all schools should offer a programme of out of school hours study support. For 2004–05, all local education authorities and schools have received Government funding through the School Development Grant to support such activities. This is in addition to funding to support the creation of new childcare places made available as part of the General Sure Start Grant for 2004–06. It is for local authorities and schools to determine what provision will best meet the needs of the young people in the area.

[1] These figures include holiday play schemes.

Policies (Environmental Impacts)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced by his Department in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how

many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185107]

Mr. Miliband: The Department for Education and Skills produces a Regulatory Impact Assessment where a proposed policy is likely to have an impact on business, charities and the voluntary sector. The Regulatory Impact Assessment includes an environmental impact appraisal where this is deemed appropriate. In 2002–03, 2003–04, none of the Department's Regulatory Impact Assessments have included an environmental assessment.

Pre-school Education

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much, at today's prices, was spent on education of children aged under three years in each of the last 10 years. [186016]

Margaret Hodge: This information is not available centrally. All funding for under fives has been consolidated within the Education Formula Spending Share (EFSS)—the main source of funding for local authorities and schools. The resources are unhypothecated and it is for individual local authorities to determine funding priorities in the light of local needs and circumstances. In doing so, they must meet their statutory obligation to provide free part-time early education for three and four year olds. In 2003–04 overall funding in the EFSS under fives sub-block was worth some £2.6 billion.

My right hon. Friend the Chancellor announced in the context of SR 2004, proposals to provide free early education and care for more disadvantaged children through running pilots to reach 12,000 two year olds in disadvantaged areas. Details have yet to be finalised, although we are clear that any offer to two year olds should be underpinned by the widely welcomed 'Birth to three matters: A framework to support children in their earliest years'.

Primary Education (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average *(a)* infant and *(b)* primary school class size was in Tamworth constituency in each year since 1992. [185831]

Mr. Miliband: The requested information at constituency level is available from 1997 and is given in the table.

Maintained primary schools[1] average size of classes taught by one teacher[2] position in January each year 1997 to 2004 (provisional v2) Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency[3]

	Key stage one			*Primary*		
	Number of pupils	*Number of classes*	*Average class size*	*Number of pupils*	*Number of classes*	*Average class size*
1997	3,510	130	26.4	8,670	320	27.5
1998	3,550	140	25.5	8,600	320	26.9
1999	3,500	140	25.5	8,330	310	27.1
2000	3,370	130	25.5	8,300	310	27.0
2001	3,150	130	23.8	8,100	310	25.9
2002	3,200	140	23.3	8,020	320	25.2
2003[4]	2,970	120	24.0	7,580	300	25.4
2004[4,5]	3,020	120	24.5	7,570	300	25.4

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed
[2] Classes as taught during the one selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.
[3] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
[4] Includes reception classes.
[5] Provisional
Source:
Annual schools census

Private Children's Homes (Inspections)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his Department's target is for the percentage of *(a)* announced and *(b)* unannounced inspections of private children's homes which should be undertaken by the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate. [185526]

Margaret Hodge: The frequency of inspections for children's homes regulated by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is set out in The Commission for Social Care Inspection (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) Regulations. The Regulations require CSCI to inspect children's homes a minimum of twice in a 12 month period. Each of these inspections may be unannounced, however, general practice by CSCI Inspectors is to perform one announced inspection and one unannounced inspection in a 12 month period. These are minimum requirements and do not preclude CSCI visiting any number of times if there is cause for concern.

Regional Employment and Skills

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent on the *(a)* Regional Skills Partnerships and *(b)* Regional Employment and Skills forums since their inception. [185773]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: No additional central funding has been made available for either Regional Skills Partnerships or Regional Employment and Skills Forums.

The creation of *(a)* effective Regional Skills Partnerships and *(b)* Regional Employment and Skills Forums was funded from within the existing budgets of partner organisations.

School Choices

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in *(a)* Adur,

(b) Worthing and *(c)* West Sussex failed to get into the school of their first choice in each year since 1997; and how many of those subsequently appealed in each of those years. [185784]

Mr. Miliband: Information on the number of pupils admitted to their first choice school is not collected centrally.

Admission appeal data are not available at parliamentary constituency level. A table giving admission appeal information for all local education authority areas has been placed in the House of Commons Library (*Official Report* column 1430W on 23 June 2004). Final figures from 1997/98 to 2001/02 have been provided. Further details on the latest 2002/03 (provisional) figures on admission appeals by local education authority can be found on http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgatewav/DB/SFR/s00047Q/index.shtml.

School Furniture

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* assessment his Department has made and *(b)* guidance he has issued on the ergonomics of school furniture. [186145]

Mr. Miliband: In 2001 my Department oversaw and part-funded the largest data collection of children's sizes since the 1950's, and contributed to a European Standard on School Furniture (due at the end of this year) to allow children to be better "fitted" to several furniture size marks. An interactive website is being prepared which will enable specifiers to accurately determine the size of furniture that a child should be using. Published in 2000, my Department's Furniture and Equipment Guide has detailed section on design quality with ergonomic considerations for various types of adjustable furniture. The Department is represented on relevant BSI committees and works closely with, amongst others the British Educational Supplies Association, the furniture Industry Research Association and the Design Council on furniture issues.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research his Department has commissioned into the impact on children's long term health of poorly designed school furniture. [186146]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department has neither undertaken nor commissioned research into the effects on children's health of poorly designed furniture, but is aware of a number of studies carried out by others on issues such back pain. We are advised that the main cause of such problems is often the use of inappropriately sized furniture rather than poor design.

School Staff (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* education support staff there were in Tamworth constituency in each year since 1992. [185832]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the full-time equivalent number of regular teachers and support staff employed in maintained sector schools in Tamworth constituency for each year from 1997 to 2003, the latest year available. Data are not available at constituency level prior to 1997.

	Teachers	*Support staff*[1]
2003	780	380
2002	780	350
2001	760	330
2000	750	280
1999	750	270
1998	750	250
1997	760	230

[1] Includes teaching assistants, administrative staff, technicians, medical and other child care and education support staff.

Source:
Annual School Census

School Teachers (Retirement)

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effects of the Government's proposals in the Pensions Bill on the future retirement of school teachers. [186289]

Mr. Miliband: In line with proposals in the Pensions Bill, the normal pension age in the Teachers' Pension Scheme will be increased to 65. This will apply to new entrants from 2006 and to the future service of existing teachers from 2013. Teachers will, however, still be able to retire at, before or after age 60 as they do now. Where pension benefits are drawn earlier than the normal pension age, they will be reduced to reflect the fact that the benefits will be in payment for longer.

We are also looking at ways of offering teachers more flexibility in the way they manage the transition from work to retirement as well as examining the scope for increasing the options for teachers who wish to build up higher pension benefits by paying additional contributions during their working life.

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment has been made by his Department of the changes that will take place in the terms and conditions of the Teacher's Pensions Scheme with the introduction of the Government's new pension proposals; and if he will make a statement. [186290]

Mr. Miliband: As part of a package of changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) relating to the increase in the normal pension age (NPA) from 60 to 65, consideration is being given to a number of changes that will improve scheme benefits, increase flexibility and offer greater retirement options for teachers. Suggestions for change to the TPS are included on the TeacherNet website www.teachernet.gov.uk/pensions which will form the basis of a consultation planned to take place during the Autumn term 2004. One of the priorities that has been recognised is the introduction of pension benefits for unmarried partners. It is expected that the introduction of NPA of 65 will enable this improvement to be introduced without an increase in the contribution to the TPS made by individual teachers.

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions his Department has had with teachers' unions on the impact of the Government's pension proposals; and if he will make a statement. [186291]

Mr. Miliband: Teachers' Unions, are fully and actively involved in the review of the Teachers' Pension Scheme through their membership of the Teachers'

Superannuation Working Party (TSWP) and its sub-group, the Teachers' Pensions Review Group (TPRG), that is taking forward the detailed work on the scheme review. The TPRG has met on five separate occasions during 2004 and the TSWP met on 13 October 2003 and 29 June 2004. Further meetings will take place with the teacher unions throughout the remainder of the scheme review.

Student Debt

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate his Department has made of the amount of debt a student graduating in *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 2005 and *(c)* 2006 will have. [183643]

Alan Johnson: Information on the total amount of debt on leaving higher education, including private sector debt, is not collected annually, although we do estimate it in successive student income and expenditure surveys. It will depend on a wide range of factors, including: whether an individual takes out a Government student loan; how much student loan they are eligible for; how many years they spend in HE over which to amass their debt; whether they take out any commercial debt or build up overdrafts; and whether they have any loans from family or friends. The latest 2002/3 Student Income and Expenditure Survey showed that students graduating in 2003 anticipated leaving with an average total debt of £8,666. During the passage of the Higher Education Act through Parliament we estimated that this might rise to an average debt of about £15,000, once students paying variable fees have graduated. The 2004/5 Student Income and Expenditure Survey—which is expected to report in early 2005—will provide an estimate of total debt on leaving HE for those graduating in 2004.

Individuals with government student loans leaving higher education in 2004—whether on course completion or withdrawal—will enter repayment status in April 2005. The average income-contingent student loan debt to government, for full-time students entering repayment status in April 2005, is estimated at around £7,700. Estimates for those entering repayment in April 2006 and 2007 are, respectively, around £8,000 and £9,000. Figures are reported in nominal prices including inflation.

Sure Start

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the budget cuts recently announced for Sure Start were cuts previously announced for the 2004–05 budget; if he will make a statement on how the cuts will be made; and what impact assessment his Department has made of the effect of the cuts on the Sure Start programme. [181300]

Margaret Hodge: The Government remain strongly committed to Sure Start. The 2004 spending review settlement is £1,167 million, £1,483 million and £1,667 million for 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08 respectively.

In addition the Government are streamlining the administration of the programme in order to concentrate resources on the front line. The Sure Start Unit's administrative budget has been reduced by approximately 5 per cent. on a broadly like for like basis between 2003–04 and 2004–05. Programme budgets have not been reduced.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 13 July 2004, to question reference 182841, on Sure Start, how many children are receiving services from the Sure Start centre at King's Heath, Northampton. [184773]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Pursuant to the previous question answered on 13 July, which asked "how many children in Northampton North have received services from a Sure Start centre". The Sure Start centre in King's Heath is one of two satellite centres developed by the Northampton Sure Start local programme. The programme operates out of its main building, the Camrose Centre, and has developed two satellite centres at Kings Heath and St. James. The Kings Heath satellite delivers a range of Sure Start services, including a medical service and "need to know" shop, which gives a range of advice on areas such as benefits, housing and other statutory services.

Monitoring figures are collected only for the Sure Start Local Programme as a whole. We are not able to give a separate breakdown of figures for the two satellite centres. Sure Start Northampton (Camrose Centre) has a register of 685 children who access its services. In March 2004 155 (23 per cent.) children under four years living in the catchment area had accessed services. The annual average of children seen is 19 per cent.

These figures include the St. James and Kings Heath centres.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much of the 2003–04 budget for Sure Start was allocated to *(a)* capital expenditure, *(b)* internal management costs, *(c)* running costs for children's centres, *(d)* health within children's centres and *(e)* nursery education in Sure Start. [185720]

Margaret Hodge: In 2003–04, £116 million was spent on Sure Start capital programmes. Over this period total administration expenditure was £13 million.

Funding for children's centres was due to start on 1 April 2004. However, £3.2 million of revenue funding was brought forward to allow local authorities to make an early start with development in 2003–04.

Children's centre health services are integrated with other services and are mainly paid for by Primary Care Trusts. It is not possible to provide a separate figure for health expenditure in children's centres.

The information on nursery education is not available in the form requested. From April 2003, Nursery Education Grant was consolidated within the under-fives sub-block of the Education Formula Spending Share (EFSS)—local authorities' main education budget. It is for individual LAs in consultation with local partners to determine how overall resources should be used.

All LAs received sufficient funding to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to provide free nursery education for three and four-year-olds. The overall EFSS under fives sub-block in 2003–04 was £2.6 billion.

University Students/Results

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research his Department has commissioned on changes in results achieved on university courses over the last 10 years. [185198]

Alan Johnson: Information on the degree classifications of newly qualified graduates has been collected and published annually since 1994/95 by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) at www.hesa.ac.uk. The latest figures show that, in 2002/03, 55 per cent. of graduates gained a first class or upper second class degree, compared to 47 per cent. in 1994/95.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students were offered university places for 2003–04; how many students took up places at universities in 2003–04; and how many students dropped out during the academic year 2003–04. [183640]

Alan Johnson: Details of the offers made to students are matters for individual institutions and are not held centrally. The latest information from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) shows that 646,000 students began undergraduate courses in English institutions in autumn 2003/04. Information on the non-completion rates of these students is not yet available, but the latest figures from HEFCE (based on students entering in 2000/01) indicate that 16 per cent. of full-time first degree students in the UK did not complete their studies.

WORK AND PENSIONS

BACS

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress his Department has made to manage the changeover from the Bank Automated Clearing System to the new BACSTEL-IP system for electronic payments. [164322]

Mr. Pond: The Department is not part of the current programme to move to the new BACSTEL-IP method of transmitting data for benefit payments. DWP has a full and active liaison in place with its sponsor bank and BACS Ltd., to change over to another new system within a longer timeframe.

Employment Records

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will bring forward legislation to permit employees to gain access to records of their employment stored by employers in unstructured manual form; and if he will make a statement. [185899]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

Individuals' right of access to their employment and other records is regulated by the Data Protection Act 1998, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We have no plans to extend the application of the 1998 Act to unstructured manual personnel records.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Dog Excrement

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many tonnes of dog excrement is estimated to have been collected by local authorities from public byways and spaces in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by authority; [185900]

(2) what the estimated cost to local authorities of collecting dog excrement from public byways and spaces was in the latest period for which figures are available; and what percentage of local council budgets this figure represents; [185901]

(3) how many personnel she estimates are employed by local authorities *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time in the collection of dog excrement from public byways and spaces; [185902]

(4) what she estimates the cost of employing personnel in *(a)* cleaning up and *(b)* recycling dog excrement from public byways and spaces was in each year for which figures are available, broken down by local authority. [185903]

Alun Michael: The Government does not collect consolidated figures on how much each local authority spends on collecting dog excrement but the ENCAMS report on local environmental quality showed that there was a reduction in dog fouling in 2003 compared to 2002.

Agriculture

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of agriculture *(a)* gross value and *(b)* gross profitability for each year for the last 10 years for which records are available, broken down by (i) region and (ii) agricultural sector. [184760]

Alun Michael: We do not have data for gross value and gross profitability by region and agricultural sector. We do, however, have data for total farm output (a reflection of gross value) and net farm income. The trends shown by net farm income could reasonably be expected to reflect those shown by gross profitability.

Total farm output and net farm income in England are shown by region and by farm type in the tables.

Table 1: Total output and net farm income by regions in England—All farm types

£ per farm

	England: North *All farm types*		*England: East* *All farm types*		*England: West* *All farm types*	
	Total farm output	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*
1993–94	126,000	25,700	160,200	25,300	116,400	20,600
1994–95	131,000	29,000	175,200	33,300	124,300	23,400
1995–96	148,000	36,600	201,000	46,800	142,800	29,800

Table 1: Total output and net farm income by regions in England—All farm types

£ per farm

	England: North		*England: East*		*England: West*	
	All farm types		*All farm types*		*All farm types*	
	Total farm output	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*
1996–97	147,800	29,800	197,900	36,600	138,500	22,600
1997–98	125,700	13,600	171,400	16,300	124,900	11,300
1998–99	115,800	8,300	167,300	13,200	116,900	8,900
1999–2000	118,300	8,700	169,100	9,600	110,700	5,600
2000–01	121,400	12,500	168,200	11,400	115,400	6,100
2001–02	131,900	16,500	195,700	12,000	133,700	13,200
2002–03	141,500	18,500	199,100	16,900	136,200	14,400

Table 2: Total farm output and net farm income by farm type in England

£ per farm

	England					
	Dairy		*LFA cattle and sheep*		*Lowland cattle and sheep*	
	Total farm output	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*
1993–94	142,100	34,900	67,600	16,700	69,400	8,600
1994–95	146,200	30,300	64,200	14,400	58,700	7,200
1995–96	163,800	36,200	75,700	18,100	69,600	9,300
1996–97	163,400	30,400	77,500	18,800	66,700	7,400
1997–98	145,800	19,800	70,800	12,000	54,400	900
1998–99	127,300	11,700	63,500	5,700	55,400	700
1999–2000	134,100	9,400	61,700	5,300	57,200	400
2000–01	141,700	14,000	65,400	5,800	56,000	-400
2001–02	174,000	30,700	63,200	7,900	66,500	0
2002–03	156,400	18,300	78,700	18,000	75,000	5,800

£ per farm

	England					
	Horticulture		*Cereals*		*General cropping*	
	Total farm output	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*
1993–94	173,100	20,200	126,000	22,800	200,000	36,000
1994–95	195,400	27,400	135,400	30,400	224,600	56,000
1995–96	190,300	24,600	155,700	46,600	258,500	67,300
1996–97	192,900	27,700	159,000	40,700	234,400	36,500
1997–98	195,000	21,300	132,500	14,400	213,000	19,500
1998–99	206,100	22,700	120,600	7,700	231,400	32,100
1999–2000	203,300	19,500	123,900	11,700	207,200	8,000
2000–01	227,200	21,900	125,000	6,200	220,500	18,400
2001–02	261,300	31,800	136,000	4,100	237,300	17,900
2002–03	255,400	34,100	149,000	12,100	233,600	14,500

£ per farm

	England					
	Pigs and poultry		*Mixed*		*All farm types*	
	Total farm output	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*	*Total farm output*	*Net farm income*
1993–94	233,800	8,700	172,800	23,400	135,900	23,800
1994–95	276,300	22,900	188,000	31,300	146,100	28,800
1995–96	332,600	53,800	225,000	48,400	166,500	38,200
1996–97	352,000	49,800	220,200	37,000	163,100	29,800
1997–98	290,700	16,300	191,200	8,100	142,900	13,800
1998–99	244,700	-13,600	177,500	2,100	135,700	10,400
1999–2000	275,400	-4,400	175,000	5,500	135,000	8,000
2000–01	269,500	32,600	170,600	7,500	137,300	9,900
2001–02	277,300	21,500	166,500	5,400	157,500	13,600
2002–03	317,300	49,500	167,900	13,300	162,100	16,400

Source: Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farm and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business.

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Mr. Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outcome was of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 19 July; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [185932]

Margaret Beckett: I represented the United Kingdom at a meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Brussels on 19 July 2004.

The new Dutch Presidency presented its work programme for the next six months. Key themes will be sustainable agriculture and its public responsibilities, and initiatives to reduce the administrative burden on the industry.

The Presidency and Commission presented plans for greater member state co-operation on agricultural research in order to maximise value for the money spent. The UK Government strongly supports this initiative.

The Commission reported on negotiations with Russia to renew certification arrangements covering animal and animal product imports from the EU. The negotiations are currently deadlocked and the Presidency indicated that it was planning an intervention at political level in an attempt to unblock them.

Member states were asked whether their views had changed with regard to a Commission proposal to authorise the marketing of a variety of GM maize which had failed to get qualified majority support in the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. The UK has supported this approval on the basis of the safety assessments carried out and our position remained unchanged. Member states failed to give the proposal majority support, but if the Council fails to act within three months the Commission will have the authority to proceed with its approval.

The Commission presented its proposal for a European Fisheries Fund to replace the existing Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG). The main focus will be to eliminate excess fishing capacity and use structural measures to reinforce stock recovery plans.

The Council held a public debate on the Commission's new proposals for changes to the Rural Development Regulation. I stressed the need for more flexibility and better value, for a greater transfer of resources from Pillar 1 to Pillar 2 of the Common Agricultural Policy, for more emphasis on environmental schemes and for a fairer allocation of rural development resources. There will now be detailed negotiation at official level which will extend over a number of months.

The Council also debated a new Commission communication on its preferred option for reform of the CAP sugar regime. The proposal calls for significant cuts in EU price support with a further review of the regime in 2008. I gave a general welcome to the proposals as a step in the right direction, while urging a swifter end to quotas and emphasising the need to address urgently the impacts on those developing countries which currently enjoy preferential access to the EU market. Again, the proposal will now be remitted for detailed consideration at official level.

The Council was asked to vote on proposals to change the import tariffs for rice which the Commission has been negotiating with India, Pakistan, Thailand and the United States. The Commission had failed to get agreement with the last two countries which felt that the proposals increased tariffs to a degree that breached WTO rules. While welcoming the agreement with India and Pakistan, I voted against the proposal on the grounds that the Commission was seeking to implement the changes on a basis which was contested by some of the parties and that they should instead continue negotiations. The Council, however, voted by qualified majority to adopt the proposal although a number of those voting in favour urged the Commission to continue negotiating with the United States and Thailand with a view to reaching an agreed conclusion.

The Presidency urged the Commission to come forward soon with proposals to address the illegal timber trade. I endorsed this call.

In an informal exchange of views after the Council had ended, the Commission updated Ministers on the latest developments in the current round of WTO negotiations. I supported the Commission's efforts towards securing a framework agreement at the WTO General Council on 27 and 28 July.

Animal Welfare Bill

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she intends to publish the Animal Welfare Bill; and whether it will be a draft bill for pre-legislative scrutiny. [182278]

Mr. Bradshaw: The draft Animal Welfare Bill was published on 14 July 2004 and will be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by the EFRA Select Committee.

Auction Marts

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the role of auction marts in rural life; and if she will make a statement. [186096]

Alun Michael: Auction markets play an important role in the marketing of farm animals, particularly between the different stages of production. As part of the wider rural development agenda, we are alert to the opportunities for business diversification in livestock auction markets. Processing and Marketing Grants and the Rural Enterprise Scheme have been used to develop the role of auction markets, such as at the Craven Cattle Market in Skipton.

We also provide funds to the Red Meat Industry Forum which is working on ways of helping industry improve the competitiveness of red meat supply chains. This work includes auction markets.

Biodiversity

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what action

the Government is taking to promote a biodiversity indicator for Europe to measure progress towards halting biodiversity decline by 2010; [186130]

(2) whether the Government intends to make representations to the European Commission to include a biodiversity indicator on the shortlist of indicators presented in its synthesis report to the 2005 EU Spring Summit. [186131]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has worked with the Commission, other Member States and stakeholders to agree a set of fifteen headline indicators to be used to measure progress towards the target of halting biodiversity loss in Europe by 2010. At the Council meeting in June, European Environment Ministers welcomed these proposals and urged the Commission to develop, test and finalise this set by 2006. Officials and experts from the UK are now engaged in a process led by the European Environment Agency to develop and test these indicators using the data which are currently available. The Government has advocated that one of the fifteen headline indicators should be used to represent biodiversity in the list of structural indicators reported to the Spring Council of Ministers.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the robustness of the Pan-European Common Bird Index as an indicator of biodiversity; and whether she will promote this index as the biodiversity indicator for Europe. [186132]

Mr. Bradshaw: My officials, and statutory advisors, will review the suitability of indicators proposed by the Commission with regard to their scientific validity, relevance to the 2010 biodiversity target and public appeal. Provisional versions of a Pan-European Common Bird Index seen by officials appear to offer strong potential and present a similar picture for Europe as the UK farmland bird index.

Biofuels

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on tax on biofuels; and if she will make a statement. [185212]

Mr. Morley: The Department is in regular contact with Treasury Ministers to discuss a whole range of matters related to energy and environmental policy. In addition, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, meets regularly with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a wide range of matters that affect the business of the Department. As with all tax matters, decisions on tax incentives rest with the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of whether reported incidence of bovine TB in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003 offer a secure statistical baseline against which differences in incidence in 2004 may be measured. [184694]

Mr. Bradshaw: TB testing was all but suspended during the foot and mouth disease (FMD) outbreak in 2001 and did not fully recover to pre-FMD levels until February 2002. The effect of this suspension of testing on the underlying trends in TB incidence for 2001 and subsequent years is hard to gauge, for the following reasons:

- The TB testing effort in 2002 was initially aimed at high-risk herds.
- Disease would have had more time to spread in herds where normally it might have been detected more quickly.
- Restocking of herds after FMD led to the disease being spread to areas it had not been found for some time.
- The level of testing in 2002 and 2003 required to clear the backlog was much higher than normal (the backlog was reduced to pre-FMD level by spring 2003).

The trends seen in TB herd incidence and number of reactors slaughtered in 2001 and 2002 should, therefore, be treated with caution and are probably not comparable with those of earlier years. TB incidence rates and testing patterns for 2003 and 2004 appear to have settled down enough to make valid comparisons with pre-FMD trends.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the average costs to UK dairy farmers of providing biosecurity to ensure complete separation of cattle and badgers. [184808]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has not carried out an assessment of the cost of complete separation. These will vary significantly from farm to farm. Improving biosecurity provides a range of benefits for many diseases. The measures that are taken should be based on a risk assessment approach and the costs of any specific measure balanced against its likely benefits. Complete separation of wildlife and farmed livestock may not be either practical or cost effective, but farmers should consider what measures they can take to reduce the interaction of wildlife with their animals.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidelines her Department *(a)* issues and *(b)* plans to issue to secure full biosecurity of grazing pastures in order to ensure complete separation of cattle and badgers. [184809]

Mr. Bradshaw: Complete biosecurity is seldom possible where wildlife is concerned, but farmers are advised to minimise contact between their cattle and wildlife. Currently advice is issued to farmers in the form of the booklet "TB in cattle: reducing the risk." Advice to individual farms that suffer a TB breakdown will normally be offered by a Veterinary Officer of the State Veterinary Service.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidelines her Department issues on when it is appropriate to carry out a survey to establish the adequacy of biosecurity measures on a working farm. [184810]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are no specific Departmental guidelines setting out advice on the conduct of surveys to establish the adequacy of biosecurity measures on a working farm.

The Department has published advice on biosecurity—Better Biosecurity Provides Peace of Mind, Healthy Stock and a More Viable Business, and through the Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock for specific species, which while primarily concerned with welfare, also provide guidance on biosecurity issues. These Codes support the statutory requirements under the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2000, that animals shall be cared for by a sufficient number of staff who possess the appropriate ability, knowledge and professional competence. The Codes give clear recommendations on biosecurity measures and the need for written health and welfare plans, prepared with the farmer's veterinary surgeon and, where necessary, other technical advisers. Farm assurance schemes may require evidence of such health and welfare plans when auditing farms.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the effects on badger population levels should the farming community succeed in securing complete biosecurity of their farms and crops and excluding badgers from these areas. [184811]

Mr. Bradshaw: While no formal assessments have been made, research currently under way at the Central Science Laboratory suggests that badgers exploit growing crops (mainly cereals) close to or at maturity, especially during extended dry periods. Also, they may feed on poorly-stored farm feeds at all times of the year, but particularly during extended dry periods. These represent times when the badgers' natural food sources are of very limited availability and when badger mortality may otherwise be higher.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the change in incidence of bovine TB in cattle is when compared against a baseline of incidence in 1999. [184812]

Mr. Bradshaw: The incidence of TB in cattle herds in Great Britain in 1999, measured as the percentage of tests on unrestricted herds resulting in a confirmed breakdown, was 2.3 per cent. In 2003, the (provisional) incidence was 3.5 per cent. In absolute terms, this represents an increase in herd incidence for Great Britain of 1.2 percentage points.

Source:

National Statistics

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what studies her Department has undertaken of the extent to which the level of bovine TB in cattle reported on the Somerset levels is attributable to the population density of badgers in the same area. [184813]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are no data on the relationship between badger population density and the incidence of TB in cattle, nor are there any published data on the density of badger populations at a county scale. The National Badger Survey reports on estimated badger numbers at a regional level (eg the south-west). Although there are certainly areas of Somerset that are not ideal badger country, it is not possible to categorically state that badger density in Somerset is significantly lower than elsewhere in the south-west.

Since 1997 until earlier this year, investigation of the prevalence of TB in wild badgers has been restricted to the Randomised Badger Culling Trial and the Road Traffic Accident survey of badgers found dead in seven counties (Somerset is not one of the counties selected for this survey). The trial will provide some information on badger numbers within the triplet areas, which could be related to cattle herd breakdown rates. However, badger density estimates may not be very reliable even in trial areas (they would be based on trapping returns and field survey information). This year, an additional limited survey of badgers found dead in Cumbria is being undertaken.

Part of the recent consultation on Defra's proposed short term strategy incorporated surveillance of badgers found dead in emerging TB hotspots (the concept of an emerging hotspot is explained in Chapter 5.3 of the consultation document "Preparing for a new GB strategy on bovine tuberculosis" which was published in February 2004).

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to receive results from the Irish trials into Bovine TB. [185195]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra officials are in regular contact with officials from the Republic of Ireland, and they have undertaken to inform me as soon as a publication date is known.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of deer as a potential source of infection for bovine TB. [185609]

Mr. Bradshaw: A recently published report by the Central Science Laboratory funded by Defra confirmed the presence of *Mycobacterium bovis* (the causative organism for bovine tuberculosis) in a number of wildlife species. Bovine TB was found in five out of the six deer species in Great Britain, including, for the first time, muntjac deer.

The report adds to the body of evidence on TB in wildlife, but it is not clear what level of risk deer pose as a potential source of bovine TB infection in cattle. Defra is currently considering what future research is required in this area.

BSE

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which countries have identified cases of BSE. [184234]

Mr. Bradshaw: In addition to the United Kingdom, the following countries have identified cases of BSE:

Austria
Belgium
Canada
Czech Republic
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Ireland

Israel
Italy
Japan
Liechtenstein
Luxembourg
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Switzerland
USA.

Cage and Aviary Birds

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 5 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 437W, on cage and aviary birds, what measures her Department takes to ensure that the Pet Animals Act 1951 is enforced at exhibitions of cage and aviary birds where sales take place; and if she will make a statement. [183290]

Mr. Bradshaw: Local authorities are responsible for enforcing the Pet Animals Act 1951 and how it should be applied to events where the selling of cage and aviary birds takes place.

Captive Birds and Animals

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy to propose legislation to ban the sale of captive birds and animals at fairs and exhibitions; and if she will make a statement. [183444]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government have no plans to introduce legislation to specifically prohibit the selling of animals at fairs and exhibitions.

CITES Permits

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many permits for the *(a)* export and *(b)* re-export of species listed in Appendix II to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) have been (i) approved and issued by UK authorities and (ii) received by UK authorities from other CITES member states since January 2001. [185889]

Mr. Morley: The number of CITES permits for Appendix II listed species issued by UK the Management Authority since January 2001 were as follows:

17,418 exports;

76,74 re-exports.

The Management Authority does not record the number of export permits issued by other CITES member states for Appendix II specimens imported into the UK. However, the number of Appendix II import permits issued by the UK Management Authority for the period in question was 30489.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many permits for the *(a)* export and *(b)* import of species listed in Appendix I to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) have been (i) approved and issued by UK authorities and (ii) received by UK authorities from other CITES member states since January 2001. [185890]

Mr. Morley: The number of CITES permits for Appendix I listed species issued by the UK Management Authority since January 2001 were as follows:

4,126 imports;

1,930 exports;

11,897 re-exports.

There is a corresponding permit issued by the exporting country for each Appendix I specimen imported into the UK.

Climate Change

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make a statement on the UK Climate Change Programme targets. [185449]

Mr. Morley: The UK remains on course to achieve its Kyoto target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2008–12. Provisional estimates suggest that greenhouse gas emissions in 2003 were about 14 per cent. below the baseline.

The Government has a separate goal to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010. Emissions of carbon dioxide for 2003 are provisionally estimated at about seven per cent. lower than in 1990.

Commercial Sea Fishing

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her estimate is of the financial contribution to the economy of commercial sea fishing. [184709]

Mr. Bradshaw: The recent report by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, "Net Benefits: A sustainable and profitable future for UK fishing", estimates the UK catching industry lands over £540 million in catches each year, resulting in between £800 and £1,200 million of directly related economic activity in the UK. This estimate does not include indirect expenditure arising from commercial sea fishing.

Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her attention was brought to recent e-mailed communications by individual members of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters critical of the work of the Committee prior to the completion of the Committee's work; and if she will examine the actions of these Committee members in respect of their compatibility with the commitments entered into as conditions of membership of the Committee. [185522]

Mr. Morley: I have been made aware of the recent e-mailed communication by individual members of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters (CERRIE), although this was not sent directly to the Department. CERRIE held its last formal meeting on 24 June, and its report is currently being finalised by the Committee members, who anticipate that it will be ready for publication in the autumn. It is regrettable that members of the Committee have chosen to pre-empt publication by issuing a statement critical of the report and of other members of the Committee. We will welcome an informed debate on the scientific issues in the CERRIE report, once it is published. In the meantime, I have asked officials to consider with the Committee Chairman whether there are any lessons to be learned from the experiences with the CERRIE Committee that should be taken into account in the future.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost of printing departmental headed notepaper was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185942]

Alun Michael: Defra came into being in June 2001. As part of the Department's information and communications strategy electronic templates were made available on desktop PCs enabling staff to generate letterheads from local laser printers, replacing the need for overprinting pre-printed stationery. There are occasional requirements for specialist headed paper which in the financial year 2003–04 totalled £4,297 in value.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost of running her Department's canteen facilities was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185943]

Alun Michael: Defra came into being in June 2001. From information held centrally, the cost of running the Department's canteen facilities in financial year 2001–02 was £398,058 and in financial year 2003–04 the cost was £443,025.

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether *(a)* her Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186092]

Alun Michael: The normal age at which staff may retire with immediate payment of pension is 60. However, subject to continued organisational need and to their continued efficiency, staff other than those in the senior civil service may elect to stay beyond age 60 subject to a maximum retirement age of 65.

Applications for employment, again for all grades other than the senior civil service, are accepted from those over the age of 60, subject to the maximum retirement age of 65. In real terms this normally means that age 63 or 64 is the maximum age at which staff are recruited. It would be uneconomic, in terms of payback on recruitment and training costs, to recruit closer to the age at which they would be required to retire.

All of the agencies also follow these rules with the exception of the Rural Payments Agency which has undertaken to apply them at the end of its change programme, scheduled for completion by the end of 2004.

Currently the normal age maximum for the senior civil service, as set by the Cabinet Office, is 60.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185915]

Alun Michael: Details relating to vehicles provided to Ministers by the Government Car Dispatch Agency will be covered by the Minister for the Cabinet Office. A separate response will be provided by Cabinet Office.

Defra and its agencies currently have some 611 road vehicles including cars, 4x4s, vans and lorries.

The number of personal injury accidents, reported officially via accident reporting arrangements, involving road vehicles operated by the department, (including all Agencies) occurring within each of the last five years is as follow:

1999—18

2000—10

2001—23

2002—15

2003—19

It should be noted that these figures relate to all road traffic accidents on official business, whether in fleet, hire or private vehicles. Fleet data on its own can only be extracted manually and would thereby incur disproportionate costs.

The core department has a policy to assist with the management of work-related road safety and encouragement of safe driving. The policy is based on risk and consists of a generic risk assessment and guidance documentation. Defra Agencies have equivalent policies in compliance with the Defra Safety Policy.

Ducks (Factory Farming)

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the welfare of factory farmed ducks with reference to *(a)* access to water other than drinking water and *(b)* the practice of de-beaking. [186027]

Mr. Bradshaw: In determining the welfare requirements of farmed ducks for water, other than drinking water, a balance needs to be struck between the

behavioural needs of the birds and the risks to health, hygiene, and food safety if they are given unlimited access to open water.

Defra is shortly to fund a research project which will assess the extent to which different commercial systems currently in use in this country fulfil the welfare needs of farmed ducks. Part of the study aims to quantify a duck's motivation to gain access to water.

Our existing Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Ducks and our consultation document on a new code, propose that the practice of de-beaking or bill trimming should be avoided and only used if veterinary advice is that the procedure is essential to prevent worse welfare problems, such as the birds injuring each other.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans the Government has to improve the welfare standards of factory farmed ducks. [186028]

Mr. Bradshaw: The welfare of ducks is protected by The Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968, which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress. More detailed standards are laid down in The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2000 (S.I. 1870). These Regulations include specific requirements on inspections, record keeping, freedom of movement, buildings and equipment and feed and water.

There is also a specific Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Ducks. Flock-keepers are required by law to have access to, and be familiar with this code, which encourages all those who care for ducks to adopt the highest standards of husbandry.

We are currently revising the duck welfare code and a three month public consultation ends on 10 September.

Eaton Farm

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will allow Mr. Andrew Morris of Eatons Farm, Tibberton, to sell calves under 42 days of age from that farm. [180355]

Mr. Bradshaw: When a herd is under movement restrictions, movements of cattle from the premises (except direct to slaughter) will only be licensed where a pre-movement isolation unit has been agreed with the Divisional Veterinary Manager, and all the isolated cattle have tested clear twice at 60-day intervals from the date of isolation. Testing of the isolated calves must take place at the same time as the rest of the herd (that is, although the isolated calves can be treated as a separate epidemiological unit, the whole herd including the adult animals needs to be fully up-to-date with its testing before any movements will be permitted).

Electronic Tagging

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the progress of the trials for the electronic tagging of animals. [185142]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Sheep EID/EDT Pilot Study is examining the practical application of electronic identification (EID) and electronic data transfer (EOT) in sheep. Commercial farms are taking part in the trial and we are examining both eartags and boluses and a range of EID equipment. We are also planning to include a small number of selected markets and abattoirs later in the trial.

Study findings will be published on the Defra website www.defra.gov.uk. An interim report is due in September 2004 and the final report in June 2005.

Correspondence

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Thurrock sent in May about the UK National Allocation Plan for carbon and the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [185687]

Mr. Morley: I responded to my hon. Friend's letter on 22 July 2004.

Energy Efficiency

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much money was spent on grants to aid energy efficiency in *(a)* Merseyside, *(b)* Crosby and *(c)* the North West in each of the last three years. [177860]

Mr. Morley: Defra currently provides grant funding for energy efficiency through four main routes. These organisations or programmes undertake work at a national or UK level.

The Warm Front programme—to provide energy efficiency measures to the vulnerable.

The Community Energy programme—capital and development funding to refurbish existing and install new community heating schemes.

The Carbon Trust—to support and promote energy efficiency and low carbon innovation for business and public sector.

The Energy Saving Trust—to support and promote energy efficiency in the household sector.

Warm Front

Total costs of measures under the Warm Front scheme are as follows:

	Merseyside (£ million)[1]	*Crosby (£000)*[1]	*North West (£ million)*[1]
2001–02	13	315,000	18
2002–03	14.5	450,000	8
2003–04	12	530,000	9

Community Energy

Community Energy figures as follows:

2001–02: Programme not up and running until 02/03

2002–03: No spend

2003–04: £19,000

These spend figures relate to development grant money to fund feasibility studies, business plans and bids for capital grants, and form part of £2 million set aside for developing bids within the £50 million pot. There were no capital grants awarded to schemes in the North West in either 2002–03 or 2003–04 as no bids were submitted of sufficient quality which met the

programme's criteria. The programme's publicity has very much focused on regions that have had a poor take up of grant.

Carbon Trust and Energy Saving Trust

The Trusts' programmes have no specific levels of funding attributed to particular regions.

Total Funding

The total funding made available by the Department to support and promote efficiency measures for these programmes (The Carbon Trust, The Energy Saving Trust, Community Energy and Warm Front) in each of the last three years is set out as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	256
2002–03	225
2003–04	[1]243

[1] Budget

Environmental Business Growth Action Programme

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what funding her Department has provided for the Environmental Business Growth Action Programme in 2004–05; [184148]

(2) what the *(a)* objectives, *(b)* aims and *(c)* targeted outputs are of the Environmental Business Growth Action Programme; and if she will make a statement. [184149]

Mr. Morley: The Environmental Business Growth Action Plan aims to help the West Midlands to develop its potential to be a leading region in the area of environmental technologies, products and services. Its primary focus is support for SMEs and for the expansion of growth sector industries in this field. The business plan estimates that the programme will help to modernise and diversify the region's economy by assisting 2,600 SMEs across the region, creating an estimated 700 new jobs and safeguarding a further 2,000 jobs.

The plan provides funding for a range of initiatives supporting business growth in environmental technologies and improving environmental management practice in all businesses. It is operated by the Environment Agency, and draws on funding support from Advantage West Midlands and from European Structural Funds via Government Office West Midlands. It acts on behalf of a partnership comprising Advantage West Midlands, Government Office West Midlands, together with other regional organisations, with the Environment Agency acting as accountable body. Advantage West Midlands also participates in the management board of the plan together with other regional partner organisations.

EU Bycatch Regulation

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to ensure that the UK Bycatch Response Strategy takes steps to protect harbour porpoises in coastal waters where vessels under 12 metres operate. [184897]

Mr. Bradshaw: Agreement was reached at the March Agriculture and Fisheries Council on Community legislation to address this issue. The legislation makes the use of acoustic deterrent devices ("pingers") mandatory for vessels of 12 metres and over involved in specified fixed gear fisheries in the Celtic Sea, Channel and North Sea. Alongside this, on 22 July I announced my intention to request the European Commission to close the pair trawl fishery for bass for the forthcoming season, using the provisions for emergency measures under Article 7 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 2371/2002 in the light of research results showing significant dolphin bycatch in this fishery. We are considering whether further measures are required to protect porpoises and other cetaceans in the context of the implementation of the UK Small Cetacean Bycatch Response Strategy.

External Costs (Agriculture)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the external costs associated with agricultural activities, with particular reference to the environmental costs. [184583]

Alun Michael: Defra and the devolved administrations commissioned a project to develop a framework for valuing the external costs associated with the positive and negative impacts of agriculture on the environment. Eftec, who carried out the research, are in the process of finalising their report on the "Framework for Environmental Accounts for Agriculture", which will be published on the Defra website soon.

I will write to the right hon. Member for Lewes to inform him when the report is published.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent estimate she has made of the costs which might be incurred by *(a)* intensive livestock farmers and *(b)* extensive livestock farmers in the collection of fallen stock in the event of a ban on hunting. [176300]

Alun Michael: No estimate has been made with regard to the impact on intensive livestock farmers. However, the effect of a ban on hunting is likely to be small as hunt kennels generally do not collect fallen stock from intensive pig and poultry farms.

In relation to extensive livestock farmers, I refer the hon. Member to the estimate of extra costs given in the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Hunting with Dogs in England and Wales, the Burns Report, dated June 2000.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what security standards are expected from operators and receivers of fallen stock; what checks are made on such operators; how many prosecutions there have been since the beginning of the scheme; and if she will make a statement. [185232]

Mr. Bradshaw: The fallen stock scheme is due to start in the autumn. A set of detailed terms and conditions, including strict bio security conditions, will apply to all those wishing to collect fallen stock under the scheme. Operators' premises are already subject to approval and inspection by the State Veterinary Service under the Animal By-Products Regulations, but for those

premises which join the scheme additional checks on compliance with scheme rules will also apply. The scheme has no legislative basis so the question of prosecutions does not arise: However, operators found not to be in compliance with scheme rules will be subject to exclusion from the scheme.

Farm Animal Exports

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farm animals, by species, were exported from the UK for each year, from 1994 to date; and if she will make a statement. [184856]

Alun Michael: The following table shows UK exports of farm animals by species 1994 to 2003. Cattle exports from the UK have been banned since 27 March 1996 under EU rules relating to BSE.

UK Exports of live farm animals by species 1994 to 2003

Number of head

	Type					
	Poultry	*Ovines (sheep)*	*Porcines (pig)*	*Bovines (beef)*	*Other live animals (horse)*	*Caprines (goat)*
1994	28,656,876	1,803,684	204,961	480,857	4,196	128
1995	26,240,265	1,668,931	248,909	450,158	5,506	161
1996	23,831,384	1,545,111	218,724	67,358	5,289	287
1997	19,730,084	1,186,126	362,647	—	6,565	375
1998	23,428,527	1,382,607	250,420	—	5,875	402
1999	25,240,783	1,811,842	175,504	—	6,169	483
2000	34,945,573	1,362,344	159,372	—	6,439	448
2001	33,375,306	380,729	31,314	—	5,913	2
2002	51,194,199	370,573	32,914	—	4,798	2
2003	32,114,728	344,949	40,220	—	7,904	350

Note:
2003 data is provisional and subject to amendment
Source:
HM Customs and Excise/Defra
Data prepared by Statistics (Commodities & Food), Branch C&D, ESD, DEFRA

Farm Animal Imports

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farm animals, by species, were imported live to the UK for each year from 1994 to date; and if she will make a statement. [184849]

Mr. Bradshaw: The following table shows UK imports of farm animals by species 1994 to 2003.

UK Exports of live farm animals by species 1994 to 2003

Number of head

	Type					
	Poultry	*Porcines (pig)*	*Ovines (sheep*	*Bovines (beef)*	*Other live animals (horse)*	*Caprines (goat)*
1994	6,002,194	72,909	152,433	26,126	2,474	7
1995	7,450,440	120,939	112,637	16,808	2,474	8
1996	4,748,591	457,332	102,414	6,452	2,649	—
1997	6,017,532	185,243	109,391	10,064	5,288	—
1998	6,157,693	198,418	96,785	3,430	3,446	—
1999	9,134,640	180,251	127,697	3,036	3,124	13
2000	7,681,502	267,511	169,999	6,242	6,579	—
2001	11,005,083	63,895	24,292	34,157	3,581	—
2002	5,002,415	231,427	21,743	23,128	3,828	—
2003	6,333,253	330,810	34,593	11,221	4,118	41

Note:
2003 data is provisional and subject to amendment
Source:
HM Customs and Excise/Defra
Data prepared by Statistics (Commodities and Food), Branch C and D, ESD, Defra

Farming

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she last visited an agricultural show; and what plans she has to visit a show. [180716]

Margaret Beckett: The last Agriculture Show I visited was on 5 July. I have no further visits to Agriculture Shows planned in my diary this year.

Fly-tipping

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what volume of waste she estimates was illegally fly-tipped in the most recent year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* the nature of the waste and *(b)* whether it was fly-tipped in urban or rural areas. [184855]

Mr. Morley: Both the Environment Agency and local authorities have responsibilities for tackling fly-tipping. Prior to the launch of the Flycapture database on 5 April 2004, there was no national system for gathering and reporting data on fly-tipping dealt with by the Environment Agency and local authorities. However, the Agency did have its own incident reporting system that did record summary data on fly-tipping incidents dealt with by the Agency.

The most recent year for which complete data is currently available is 2002. Data for 2003 will be released on the 27 July 2004 with the Agency's Spotlight report.

During 2002, the Agency dealt with 4,997 fly-tipping incidents. Of these, 1,392 incidents involved Construction, Demolition or Excavation wastes (including asbestos), 891 involved Household waste, 432 involved Tyres and 197 involved Fuels/oils.

No data are available on the volume of wastes fly-tipped during 2002 and the Agency does not currently collect data on the urban/rural split.

In future years, the Flycapture database will be able to provide more comprehensive data on the nature and scale of the problem dealt with by both local authorities and the Agency.

Foot and Mouth

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what actions on the part of the UK authorities were *(a)* required and *(b)* recommended by the European Union with regard to the September 2000 foot and mouth disease outbreak in KwaZulu-Natal; and when these were implemented; [183401]

(2) what actions the UK authorities took in regard to the November 2000 foot and mouth disease outbreak in Mpumalanga that were not taken in regard to the September 2000 outbreak in KwaZulu-Natal. [183403]

Margaret Beckett: If there is an outbreak of disease likely to present a risk to human or animal health, European Community legislation allows us to take appropriate safeguard action, which may include a ban on imports of meat from all, or parts, of that country. At the time of the outbreak in KwaZulu-Natal, it was not deemed necessary to take safeguard action since the South African authorities had prohibited the issue of export certificates for fresh meat from the area in which the outbreak had occurred. This meant that exports from South Africa could not take place.

On 7–8 November 2000 the European Commission informed the Standing Veterinary Committee (SVC) (now known as the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health) of the outcome of an inspection and indicated that safeguard measures may be necessary. On 25 November the Commission published legislation prohibiting imports into the Community of fresh meat from 16 districts in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

On 5 January the Government issued a Declaration under Regulation 35 of the Products of Animal Origin (Import and Export) Regulations 1996, prohibiting imports into England and Wales of meat from all of South Africa. Similar action was taken in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The outbreak in Mpumalanga was confirmed on 30 November. The Commission took action in February 2001 to extend EU restrictions on imports of meat in respect of Mpumalanga. By that time, the UK had already banned imports of meat from the whole country, so no further action was necessary.

Greyhounds

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to propose that a new code to protect racing greyhounds will have statutory backing. [185209]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under the Animal Welfare Bill we are considering the possibility of introducing secondary legislation to cover racing greyhounds. A decision on the content of any regulations will be made in light of the outcome of work currently being done within the industry to raise welfare standards.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what Environment Agency *(a)* procedures and *(b)* resources will be used to ensure that all hazardous waste producers, including those producing small and sporadic quantities of hazardous waste are (i) made aware of and (ii) comply with the requirement to register as a hazardous waste producer. [185011]

Mr. Morley: We expect to go out to consultation on the new hazardous waste regulations, including the proposed requirement for hazardous waste producers to notify their premises to their Environment Agency, later this month. The Environment Agency will consider during the consultation period both how to make producers aware of their obligations and how to ensure compliance.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1258W, on hazardous waste, when she expects the landfill sites which have applied for a licence to accept hazardous waste to be judged as fit for that purpose and have their licences granted. [185611]

Mr. Morley: Tables 1, 2 and 3 as follows show sites whose operators have applied for permits to be merchant dedicated hazardous waste landfill sites (which would receive hazardous waste on a commercial basis) or in-house dedicated hazardous waste landfill sites (which are used to dispose of waste from their own operations such as factory process waste).

These tables are drawn from information used to provide that published on the Environment Agency website (www.environment-agency.gov.uk). Also included is information about when the application is

likely to be determined, where this is known. For some sites, the determination date is not yet known.

Please note that the tables also include some sites whose applications have been refused.

Table 1: Sites whose operators have applied for permits to be merchant landfills for hazardous waste

Site name	Operator	Location	EA region	Range of hazardous wastes applied for	Proposed input (000 Te/Yr)	Permitting progress
1. Purton Brickworks	Hills Minerals and Waste Ltd.	Swindon, Wilts.	Thames	Range includes contaminated soils, filter cakes, packaging	99	Permit issued
2. Port Clarence	Zero waste	Teesside, N. Yorks	North East	Wide range	100	Permit issued
3. Southwood Landfill	Southwood Waste Mgt.	Shepton Mallett, Somerset	South West	Asbestos only. Quantity is same as current WML	22	Permit issued
4. Pinden Quarry	Pinden Plant	Dartford, Kent	Southern	Asbestos only. Quantity is same as current WML	26	Permit issued
5. Slipe Clay cliffe, King's Cliffe	Atlantic Waste Services	King's Cliffe	Anglian	Wide range of wastes	249	Permit issued—but site not operational
6. Eardswick Hall	Brock plc	Crewe, Cheshire	North West	Contaminated soils	75	Permit likely to be determined by end August 2004
7. Whitemoss	J. Routledge and Sons	Skelmersdale, Lancs.	North West	Range of hazardous waste although mainly contaminated soils	150	Permit likely to be determined by end August 2004
8. ICI no. 3	Impetus Waste Mgt.	Teesside, N. Yorks	North East	Wide Range of hazardous wastes	25	Permit likely to be determined by end July 2004
9. Randle Landfill	Ineos Chlor Ltd.	Runcorn, Cheshire	North West	Treated hazardous wastes arising from the chemical manufacturing process	150	Permit likely to be determined by end August 2004
10. Winterton South	Integrated Waste Mgt. Ltd.	Winterton, North Lincs.	Anglian	Wide range	250	Permit issued
11. Meece 2	Biffa	Stone, Staffs.	Midlands	Limited range of "Chapter 19" Hazardous wastes: 19 01 05, 19 01 07, 19 01 10, 19 01 13, 19 01 15	50	Permit likely to be determined by end October 2004
12. Warboys	Fenside Waste Mgt.	Huntingdon, Cambs.	Anglian	Wide range but slightly narrower range and lower quantities than existing WML allows	100	Pending—planning refused so unable to progress
13. Wingmoor Farm	Grundon	Cheltenham, Glos.	Midlands	Wide range	120 haz. and 30 inert cover	Permit likely to be determined by end July 2004
14. Thornhill Quarry	Dernex Ltd.	Dewsbury, West Yorkshire	North East	Asbestos fibres only	5,000 per year (total 120,000)	Application refused
15. VHE Construction	VHE Construction	Rotherham, S. Yorkshire	North East	Hazardous but mainly contaminated soil no asbestos	Only 50,000T remaining then full	Application refused
16. Rushton	CSG Ltd.	Kettering Northants.	Anglian	Full range of haz.	15	Application refused

Table 2: New sites whose operators have applied for permits to be merchant landfills for hazardous waste

Site name	Operator	Location	EA region	Range of hazardous wastes	Proposed input (000 Te/Yr)	Permitting progress
17. Winsford Rock Salt Mine	Minosus	Winsford, Cheshire	North West	Range of inorganic, non-flammable waste currently in negotiation with agency over detail of waste types	100	Dependent on resolution of planning issues and range of waste to be accepted
18. Lillyhall Phase 4	Alco Waste Management	Distington, Cumbria	North West	Wide range	35 per year plus 15 inert for cover	Pending—application received recently

Table 3: Sites whose operators have applied for permits to be in-house landfills for hazardous waste

Site name	Operator	Location	EA region	Range of wastes	Proposed input (000 Te/Yr)	Permitting progress
1. Grange Top Quarry	Castle Cement	Ketton, nr. Stamford	Anglian	Haz. (CKD) only	5	Permit issued
2. Royal Ordnance Landfill	BAE Systems	Chorley, Lancs.	North West	Contaminated land and other hazardous waste including asbestos	10	Permit issued
3. Bradley Park Landfill	Syngenta	Huddersfield, West Yorkshire	North East	Wide range of wastes	350	Refused
4. Southam	Rugby Cement	Southam, Warks.	Midlands	CKD and on site road sweepings	24.9	Determination pending
5. Alcan Pot Linings	Alcan Aluminium	Newbiggin, Northumberland	North East	Spent pot linings	14.4	Determination pending
6. Coplow Quarry	Castle Cement	Clitheroe, Lancashire	North West	CKD	20	Determination pending

Table 3: Sites whose operators have applied for permits to be in-house landfills for hazardous waste

Site name	Operator	Location	EA region	Range of wastes	Proposed input (000 Te/Yr)	Permitting progress
7. National security request	National security request	National security request	National security request	Unable to respond due to unresolved claim for national security	—	Unknown—outstanding national security request
8. National security request	National security request	National security request	National security request	Unable to respond due to unresolved claim for national security	—	Unknown—outstanding national security request
9. Morfa	Corus	South Wales	Wales	Wide range	100	Permit likely to be determined by end August 2004
10. Tripcock Point	Tilfen Land Ltd.	Thamesmead, London	Thames	Mainly contaminated soils	100	Pending—Tranche 3 app. received recently
11. Minworth Landfill	Severn Trent Water	Minworth, Sutton Coldfield	Midlands	Incinerator ash from incineration of digested sewage sludge	27	Permit likely to be determined by end September 2004
12. Rugby Works	Rugby Cement	Rugby, Warks.	Midlands	CKD and on site road sweepings and soils from excavation on site	24.9	Permit refused

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 June 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1188–89W, on hazardous waste, what the annual capacity in tonnes of hazardous waste is of each site listed in Tables 2 and 3. [185988]

Mr. Morley: The annual capacity in tonnes of hazardous waste of each site in the tables referred to is set out in the following tables, and are correct as of 22 July. It is important to note that the figures show capacity applied for in each individual PPC permit and not necessarily capacity available when and if permits are issued.

Table 1: Sites whose operators have applied for permits to be Merchant Landfills for Hazardous Waste

Site name	Operator	Location	EA region	Range of hazardous wastes applied for	Proposed input (000Te/Yr)	Permitting progress
1. Purton Brickworks	Hills Minerals and Waste Ltd.	Swindon, Wilts	Thames	Range includes contaminated soils, filter cakes, packaging	59	Permit Issued
2. Port Clarence	Zero Waste	Teeside, N.Yorks	North East	Wide Range	100	Permit Issued
3. Southwood Landfill	Southwood Waste Mgt.	Shepton Mallett, Somerset	South West	Asbestos only. Quantity is same as current WML	22	Permit Issued
4. Pinden Quarry	Pinden Plant	Dartford, Kent	Southern	Asbestos only. Quantity is same as current WML	26	Permit Issued
5. Slipe Clay Cliffe, King's Cliffe	Atlantic Waste Services	King's Cliffe	Anglian	Wide range of wastes	249	Permit Issued—but site not operational
6. Eardswick Hall	Brock Plc	Crewe, Cheshire	North West	Contaminated soils	75	Permit likely to be determined by end August 2004
7. Whitemoss	J. Routledge and Sons	Skelmersdale, Lanes.	North West	Range of haz waste although mainly contaminated soils	150	Permit likely to be determined by end August 2004
8. ICI no. 3	Impetus Waste Mgt.	Teeside, N.Yorks	North East	Wide Range of haz wastes	25	Permit likely to be determined by end July 2004
9. Randle Landfill	Ineos Chlor Ltd.	Runcorn, Cheshire	North West	Treated haz wastes arising from the chemical manufacturing process	150	Permit likely to be determined by end August 2004
10. Winterton South	Integrated Waste Mgt Ltd.	Winterton, North Lines.	Anglian	Wide Range	250	Permit Issued
11. Meece 2	Biffa	Stone, Staffs.	Midlands	Limited range of 'Chapter 19' Haz wastes: 19 01 05*, 19 01 07*, 19 01 10*, 19 01 13*, 19 01 15*	50	Permit likely to be determined by end October 2004
12. Warboys	Fenside Waste Mgt.	Huntingdon, Cambs.	Anglian	Wide range but slightly narrower range and lower quantities than existing WML allows	100	Pending—planning refused so unable to progress
13. Wingmoor Farm	Grundon	Cheltenham, Glos.	Midlands	Wide range	120 haz and 30 inert cover	Permit likely to be determined by end July 2004
14. Thornhill Quarry	Dennex Ltd.	Dewsbury, West Yorkshire	North East	Asbestos fibres only	5,000 per year (total 120,000)	Application refused
15. VHE Construction	VHE Construction	Rotherham, S. Yorkshire	North East	Hazardous but mainly Contaminated soil no asbestos	only 50,000T remaining then full	Application refused
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18. Lillyhall Phase 4	Alco Waste Management	Distington, Cumbria	North West	Wide range	35 per year plus 15 inert for cover	Pending—application received recently

Table 3: Sites whose operators have applied for permits to be In-house Landfills for Hazardous Waste

Site Name	Operator	Location	EA Region	Range of Wastes	Proposed Input (000 Te/Yr)	Permitting Progress
1. Grange Top Quarry	Castle Cement	Ketton, Nr Stamford	Anglian	Haz (CKD) only	5	Permit issued
2. Royal Ordnance Landfill	BAE Systems	Chorley, Lanes	North West	Contaminated land and other haz waste including asbestos	10	Permit issued
3. Bradley Park Landfill	Syngenta	Huddersfield, West Yorkshire	North East	Wide range of wastes	350	Refused
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6. Copkow Quarry	Castle Cement	Clitheroe, Lancashire	North West	CKD	20	Determination pending
7. National security request	National security request	National security request	National security request	Unable to respond due to unresolved claim for national security	—	Unknown—outstanding national security request.
8. National Security request	National security request	National security request	National security request	Unable to respond due to unresolved claim for national security	—	Unknown—outstanding national security request.
9. Morfa	Corus	South Wales	Wales	Wide range	100	Permit likely to be determined by 2004
10. Tripcock Point	Tilfen Land Ltd	Thamesmead, London	Thames	Mainly cont soils	100	Pending—Tranche 3 app received recently
11. Minworth Landfill	Severn Trent Water	Minworth, Sutton Coldfield	Midlands	Incinerator ash from incineration of digested sewage sludge	27	Permit likely to be determined by end September 2004
12. Rugby Works	Rugby Cement	Rugby, Warks	Midlands	CKD and on site roadsweepings and soils from excavation on site	24.9	Permit refused

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the new hazardous waste regulations will make it an offence for householders to dispose of *(a)* fluorescent light tubes and *(b)* used batteries in domestic refuse. [186120]

Mr. Morley: It is not proposed that the Hazardous Waste Regulations, to be implemented in 2005, should make it an offence for householders to dispose of such items in the municipal waste stream. Mixed domestic waste containing small amounts of hazardous wastes such as fluorescent tubes and used batteries will continue to be dealt with as non-hazardous municipal waste.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether *(a)* used disposable nappies, *(b)* used continence pads and *(c)* cat litter and other animal wastes are classified as hazardous waste; what guidance her Department has issued to waste collection authorities on this matter; and if she will make a statement. [186156]

Mr. Morley: For a waste to be classified as "hazardous", it must normally be listed as such in the European Waste Catalogue. Nappies, incontinence pads and cat litter are not listed as hazardous. It is open to Member States to determine that other wastes are hazardous where these display one or more of the hazardous properties specified in the Hazardous Waste Directive at above the thresholds the Directive specifies. Waste such as used disposable nappies and incontinence pads would be considered under property H9 (infectious). However, to be considered hazardous there would need to be a high risk that infectious substances were present in the waste at a concentration above that naturally encountered. Since the source population for household waste is healthy, the risk of infection is very low and nappies and incontinence pads do not therefore meet the criteria necessary for a "hazardous" classification. Where an individual is being treated by a health professional in their own home, it is for the health professional to make a clinical decision on whether or not the nature of the patient's illness would render the patient's hygiene waste infectious.

Small amounts of animal waste arising in households, such as cat litter, can be placed in the bin, if suitably wrapped, and dealt with as municipal household waste.

Defra is working with stakeholders to issue guidance for local authorities on dealing with hazardous household waste which will be issued prior to new hazardous waste regulations coming into force in July 2005.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the amount of hazardous waste that will be stock-piled per month in the six month period following 16 July owing to the short-term shortfall of disposal capacity. [183394]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 12 July 2004]*: No such estimate has been made. Our aim is to ensure as smooth a transition as possible of the implementation of the Landfill Directive and to avoid the need for storage of hazardous waste over and above that which normally occurs at the site of production or at waste transfer stations.

Alternatives to disposal via landfill, such as high temperature incineration and use as a fuel, remain unchanged. There are also a number of alternatives to disposal such as minimisation, recycling and treatment to render the waste non-hazardous.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to increase the *(a)* re-use and *(b)* recycling of hazardous waste. [183395]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 12 July 2004]*: In the main hazardous waste originates from the business sector and it is generally in their economic interest to reduce, reuse and recycle their hazardous waste.

However, Defra has taken some specific steps to assist business increase
the re-use and recycling of hazardous waste. These include support for:

Envirowise, which supports small to medium sized businesses in the management of their waste, provide free consultations, waste audits, and sector specific guidance.

Waste Implementation Programme (WIP) which is looking at how research and development technologies could assist the recycling and recovery of waste, including hazardous waste.

Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) which is developing markets for recycled materials and products across the board.

In addition, implementation of the Landfill Directive and rises in landfill tax will encourage business to look further at their management of hazardous waste.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what she expects her Department to publish the criteria for the treatment of toxic waste. [183396]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 12 July 2004]*: The criteria for stabilised non-reactive granular hazardous waste and for granular hazardous waste and are set out in Part 3, Paragraphs 14 and 17 of Schedule 1 of the Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002 as amended by the Landfill (England and Wales)(Amendment) Regulations 2004. Equivalent criteria for monolithic wastes are being developed and will shortly be issued for consultation.

Incineration

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what studies the Department has commissioned into the *(a)* health and *(b)* environmental effects of incineration; and how much each study cost. [186152]

Mr. Morley: Defra commissioned the independent 'Review of Environmental and Health Effects of Waste Management: Municipal Solid Waste and Similar Wastes', which was published on 6 May. The review, which was carried out by Enviros consulting, and peer reviewed by The Royal Society brings together the available evidence of the health and environmental effects of the main different kinds of waste management facility, including incineration.

Defra estimates that the final cost of the report will be in the region of £175,000 (excluding VAT).

Landfill

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on the EU Landfill Directive; and if she will make a statement on progress in its implementation. [184400]

Mr. Morley: In the course of six consultation exercises and the many formal and informal meetings with stakeholders, the Government has received a large number of representations on all aspects of the Landfill Directive. The Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002, as amended by the Landfill (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2004, implement the technical and regulatory aspects of the Directive in England and Wales.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many landfill sites have applied for permits under the provisions of the Directive; when they will be in a position to accept and process the waste; and what the length of time is for *(a)* permits to be granted and *(b)* planning permission to be given. [183041]

Mr. Morley: For hazardous waste, the Environment Agency has received 18 applications for permits to operate merchant landfills post July 2004, and a further applications to operate in-house landfills. Of these 30 applications, permits have been issued for seven sites, five applications have been refused, two have planning issues to resolve and the remainder are under consideration. The aim has been to complete the consideration process for as many sites as possible before 16 July. However where that date is not met, sites with a current waste management licence to accept hazardous waste can continue to accept only that waste after 16 July.

In addition to the above, the Environment Agency has received 39 applications to operate separate cells for stable, non-reactive hazardous waste at non-hazardous waste landfills; six permits have been issued, two applications have been refused and the remainder are under consideration.

Further details on all these applications is available on the Environment Agency website (www.environment-agency.gov.uk).

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the detail of the change to the Landfill Regulation 2002 regarding the management of landfill sites was published; and how many days this was before implementation. [184627]

Mr. Morley: The Landfill (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 came into force on 15 June 2004. These amend the Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002 in order to implement Council Decision 2003/33/EC on criteria and procedures for accepting waste at landfill. This met the deadline of 16 July 2004 set out by the Council Decision for the requirements to be transposed. A formal consultation on the Amendment Regulations was held from September to December 2003.

The Amendment Regulations were published on 18 June 2004, some 392 days before the Waste Acceptance Criteria come into force on 16 July 2005.

The co-disposal of hazardous wastes with non-hazardous wastes in the same landfill (with some specified exceptions) will be banned from 16 July 2004. This ban is a requirement of the 1999 Landfill Directive. Implementing the Directive was the subject of two formal consultations by Defra, in October 2000 and August 2001. The co-disposal ban was a provision in the Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002. These Regulations came into force and were published on 15 June 2002, some 731 days before the implementation of the ban.

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outcome was of the negotiations between her Department, the Environment Agency and the non-ferrous metal industry over the impact that the Landfill Directive and Landfill Regulations 2004 will have on the industry; and if she will make a statement. [185265]

Mr. Morley: The aim of the Landfill Directive is to provide for measures, procedures and guidance to prevent or reduce as far as possible, negative effects on the environment, including on groundwater pollution and global warming, as well as any resulting risk to human health, from landfilling waste. The Government are totally committed to this aim, as well as believing that landfilling waste is a lost opportunity to obtain economic value from discarded materials. While there is no doubt that one consequence of the Landfill Directive is to increase costs, it is true to say that in the past, the cost of landfill has not reflected its adverse environmental impact. In the many meetings with the non-ferrous metal industry, the Government have been encouraging it to reduce as far as possible the waste output from its operations, look at alternative treatments to landfill, see how the industry can still dispose of waste to landfill when there is no alternative disposal option currently available and encourage it to come forward with research proposals to achieve those above aims that may be able to draw on landfill tax funding.

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what consultations took place between members of the non-ferrous metals industry and the Environment Agency concerning the requirements of the Landfill Directive Regulations 2004, with particular reference to waste categorised as H12; and if she will make a statement. [185266]

Mr. Morley: The non-ferrous metals industry is in regular contact with the Environment Agency via its trade association, the Non-Ferrous Alliance (NFA). Both organisations are also members of the Hazardous Waste Forum.

The agency has discussed the requirements of the Landfill Directive implementation at liaison meetings with the NFA, and made presentations on waste classification at the NFA's recent Environment Forum.

The Government's intention is that the agency should regulate the requirements of the Landfill Regulations during the period July 2004-July 2005 via the application of site-specific assessments. The agency is actively undertaking this work in order to provide for an appropriate level of environmental protection, conscious of any potential implications for hazardous waste capacity. This includes ensuring consideration of wastes that display hazard category H12 (substances and preparations which release toxic or very toxic gases in contact with water, air or an acid).

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her assessment is of the impact on the non-ferrous metal industry of the change in the number of landfill sites to take hazardous waste; what guidance was given to the non-ferrous metal industry before 18 July; when the new requirements were introduced; and if she will make a statement. [185267]

Mr. Morley: The cost of landfill disposal for the non-ferrous metal industry, as for other industries, is likely to rise. This will act as an encouragement to waste producers to examine their processes to see if waste arisings can be reduced and to consider other treatment and disposal options that may be more environmentally and economically sustainable than landfill. Defra and Environment Agency officials have met with representatives of the non-ferrous metal industry on a number of occasions in the past year to help them understand their obligations and to discuss any issues that arise. In addition, the Non-Ferrous Alliance is a member of the Hazardous Waste Forum, a group that consists of waste producers, waste managers, central and local government and regulators and looks at issues surrounding hazardous waste.

Magpies

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects of the increasing number of magpies on the small bird population of the UK; and if she will make a statement. [182367]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Magpie is known to take songbirds although the available evidence suggests that this does not have a significant adverse effect on their population levels. Defra issues a general licence allowing year round control of Magpies, and a small number of other species, to conserve wild birds. This licence may be used by authorised persons only and the landowners' permission must be obtained. This licence is among a number of general licences relating to birds that is currently the subject of a consultation exercise.

The decline in farmland birds has come to prominence during the last 10 years, but long term data on bird numbers indicates that many of these declines began over 25 years ago. The precise reason for the declines in different species varies, but in the majority of cases can be attributed to an intensification of farming practices during recent decades. This is demonstrated by the fact that population declines have been more marked in intensively managed arable farmland habitats compared with other habitats. The population status of songbird and farmland bird species are monitored and Defra is aware of declines in certain species.

Marine Nature Reserves

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of British waters are *(a)* marine nature reserves and *(b)* closed to fishing. [185111]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are three Marine Nature Reserves (MNRs)—Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland (165 km^2), Lundy in England (13.9 km^2) and Skomer in Wales (13.24 km^2). Data from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee's "Offshore Nature Project" gives the total area of UK territorial waters as 161,200 km^2. The three MNRs together cover 0.12 per cent. of territorial waters.

Of the three MNRs, only one, Lundy, includes an area within it which is closed to fishing covering 3.3 km^2. The remaining MNRs are closed only to certain types of fishing: Skomer MNR is closed to beam trawling, dredging and scallop fishing by any means; Strangford Lough MNR has a temporary ban in place on fishing with mobile gear. In addition there are small areas closed to fishing as a result of oil and gas explorations and defence activities.

There are also a number of areas where restrictions on certain types of fishing are in place to protect both habitats and species. These include: the Darwin Mounds cold water coral reefs where bottom trawling is prohibited in an area covering 1,381 km^2; the Mackerel Box, a large area in the Western Channel and the Cornish peninsular where mainstream mackerel fishing is prohibited; the Sandeel Box, off the north-east coast of the UK where industrial fishing is banned to protect the food source of a range of predators including sea-birds; and, 37 bass nursery areas around the coast of England and Wales. Data on inshore and offshore restricted areas is not collated centrally to enable calculation to be made of the percentage of UK territorial waters encompassed by these areas.

Marine Protection

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Government's policy is on marine protection following recommendations at the World Parks Congress in Durban last year. [186212]

Mr. Morley: The proposals for marine protection that emerged from the World Parks Congress were taken account of in the decision and work programme on marine and coastal biodiversity that was adopted at the Seventh Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in February.

The Government are working through the European Union and the OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic to contribute to a global network of marine and coastal protected areas as agreed by the Parties. This is in line with the Government's Marine Stewardship initiative to better protect and manage the marine environment.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been made of *(a)* the economic benefits and *(b)* the environmental benefits of creating a series of marine parks. [186280]

Mr. Bradshaw: A meaningful assessment of the economic and environmental benefits of a series of marine parks would depend on factors such as the purpose, number and magnitude of marine protected areas and which activities are regulated. Assessments of environmental benefits are undertaken for new sites designated under the Habitats and Birds Directives to assess their value in contributing to the restoration or maintenance of natural habitats and species of Community interest.

The Review of Marine Nature Conservation Working Group gave consideration to the economic and environmental benefits of providing improved protection for important marine features and ecosystems, including an assessment of the relative efficiency with which environmental benefits were likely to be delivered by a range of designated areas, including marine parks. The Working Group's report was submitted to Government on 26 July. The Government will consider the recommendations of the report, including the future role of protected areas within an overall strategy for marine conservation.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received on *(a)* designating the River Exe in Devon a marine park and *(b)* creating a series of marine parks. [186281]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Exe Estuary is classified as a Special Protection Area under the EC Wild Birds Directive. I am not aware of any formal representations made regarding designating the Exe Estuary as a marine park. I have, however, received a number of representations from a variety of organisations on providing improved protection to marine areas and the Government are considering these in the context of developing an overall strategy for marine conservation.

Meat Products (Injected Water)

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications for meat producers of supermarkets injecting water into meat products. [185884]

Alun Michael: Defra has not made such an assessment, but the Food Standards Agency held a stakeholder meeting earlier this year about the control and labelling of added water in meat products.

The meeting concluded that these products should be clearly labelled, so that consumers can make informed choices about the products they buy. The agency is currently drawing up best practice guidelines to encourage clear labelling of these products.

Mercury

Mr. Olner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the amount of mercury present in ashes after cremation. [181691]

Alun Michael: The question relates specifically to the residue of ashes left after cremation. The report of the monitoring undertaken by AEA Technology for the Federation of British Crematorium Authorities showed that all mercury is released into the atmosphere during cremation. It follows that we do not see mercury in ashes to be an issue.

Ministerial Travel Costs

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total cost of air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain was for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in the Department in the last year for which figures are available. [184530]

Margaret Beckett: No DEFRA Minister has visited Northern Ireland during the past year.

Ministerial Visits

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list visits made by each Minister in the Department between December 2003 and April 2004, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* constituency visited and *(c)* cost. [171569]

Margaret Beckett: Between December 2003 and April 2004 departmental Ministers have undertaken 63 visits in the UK. Information on constituencies visited and details of the cost of each individual visit could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the travel costs incurred *(a)* by her Department and its predecessors and *(b)* by each Minister within her Department, for each of the last 10 years. [175643]

Margaret Beckett: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government has published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government has also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for earlier years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost and in some cases will no longer be held. Information for 2003–04 will be published in due course.

The following table shows domestic ministerial and overall departmental expenditure recorded since the Department was formed.

£000

Year end 31 March	Ministerial travel	Departmental travel
2001–02	53	11,249
2002–03	91	7,272
2003–04	64	7,135

The figures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 include travel expenses (£4,579,000 and £469,000 respectively) incurred as a result of foot and mouth disease.

The figures for both departmental and ministerial travel include the use of helicopters, chartered planes, airline tickets and trains and can be broken down further only at disproportionate cost.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many journeys were made by helicopter by each Minister in her Department and its predecessors in each of the last 10 years; and what the journey length was in each case. [175743]

Margaret Beckett: There is no central record of RAF Helicopter journeys made by DEFRA Ministers in the financial year 2001–02. Since the financial year 2002–03, only one helicopter journey of 45 minutes duration has been made by any DEFRA Minister.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which of her Ministers will be attending the Country Landowner's Association Game Fair on 23–24 July. [183068]

Margaret Beckett: None.

Nappies

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with *(a)* ministerial colleagues within the Department of Health and *(b)* management within the NHS in respect of the use of (i) disposable and (ii) reusable nappies within hospitals. [186177]

Mr. Morley: The use of disposable nappies in the NHS is well established. We want to ensure that parents who are interested in re-usable nappies are provided with information about that option alongside information on disposables. As such, I attended a meeting with my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Public Health (Melanie Johnson), in July last year and the Women's Environmental Network (WEN). I have also written to her with a view to meeting again to discuss the case for a strong lead from hospitals and health trusts on the issue of re-usable nappies.

I have had no discussions with NHS management.

Fisheries

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she plans to modify the days at sea restrictions in the Western Channel sole fishery to enable fishermen to exploit non-Total Allowable Catch species. [184716]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are no days at sea restrictions in the western Channel.

Official Engagements

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1300W, on official engagements, if she will give a daily breakdown of her diary for the period in question, giving dates and times of each meeting. [185977]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: I have nothing to add to my answer to the hon. Member of 15 July, *Official Report*, Column 1300W.

Older Cattle

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to implement the Food Standards Agency recommendation that older cattle may now enter the food chain. [184233]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are still considering Food Standards Agency (FSA) advice. No decision has been made as yet.

Over-30 Month Scheme

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proposals she has to amend the over-30 month scheme; and if she will make a statement. [185147]

Mr. Bradshaw: The over-30 month scheme is kept under review. It may be amended in line with any change to the over-30 month (OTM) rule. The Government are still considering advice from the Food Standards Agency on the OTM rule. No decision has been made as yet.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Maldon and East Chelmsford on 27 May 2004, ref 177397. [183834]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 13 July 2004]*: I replied to the hon. Member on 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1294W.

Polish/UK Fishing Fleets

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what European community funds have been allocated to *(a)* Poland and *(b)* the UK in the same period for the modernisation, restructuring and decommissioning of the fishing fleet; and when such funds were first made available. [184710]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Polish plan for allocating the Community financial provision under the EU FIFO fisheries structural fund envisages about 16.3 million euros being spent on modernisation of existing vessels, and about 80.1 million euros on decommissioning vessels. This covers the period from Poland's accession to the EU in May 2004 to the end of 2006.

The Fisheries Departments in the UK are currently reviewing what expenditure should be allocated to modernising, restructuring and decommissioning vessels for the equivalent period, and equivalent figures to the Polish plans are not available.

The current programme under the FIFO scheme began in 2000.

Post-consumer Paper Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what strategy is in place to increase the collection of post-consumer paper waste for recycling in the UK over the next five years; what specific targets have been set; and what measures are in place to ensure that these targets are met. [184950]

Mr. Morley: The Government have introduced a number of measures to increase the recycling of paper. For example, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) is developing markets for waste paper as one of it's priority materials, and has been allocated £30 million over three years to increase awareness of waste issues, and particularly recycling, amongst householders. The Government have also set statutory weight-based recycling targets, for every local authority. Measures taken to help authorities meet their targets include a Performance Reward Grant (PRG). This will be funded by £45 million in 2005–06, rising to £90 million in subsequent years; and will replace the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund that has been contributing to improving local authorities performance over the past three years.

Regulations implementing the Directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste (2004/12/EC) have set targets for recycling paper packaging waste, peaking at 70 per cent. in 2008. Voluntary agreements are in place with the Newspaper Publishers Association and the Direct Marketing Association (DMA). These will increase the recycled content of newsprint to 70 per cent. in 2006 and of DMA literature to 70 per cent. in 2013. Targets set so far have been exceeded. Government are negotiating a similar agreement with the Periodical Publishers Association, to increase the recycling of post consumer magazines. In addition, under the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003, local authorities will have to collect at least two recyclable materials separate from other household waste by 2010.

Purfleet Industrial Estate

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Environment Agency last inspected the potential for the flooding of the Purfleet Industrial Estate, Essex consequent on the surface water flow from the A13 road; and if she will make a statement. [185802]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: Surface water flooding through run off from roads is the responsibility of the relevant highways authority.

I understand however that the highways authority consulted the National Rivers Authority (the Environment Agency's predecessor) over proposed surface water discharges from the A13 improvements during the early 1990s. Consultation at that time would

have involved both specific and general technical assessments of existing surface water drainage capacities within the surrounding area. One of the options considered would have been attenuation of increased flow from the A13 improvement works.

Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the future of the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee. [186051]

Mr. Morley: I provided a written statement on the future of the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee to this House on 22 March 2004. There is nothing to be added to this.

Ragwort

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has issued written advice to *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* the Highways Agency setting out their responsibilities under the Code of Practice on How to Prevent the Spread of Ragwort; and if she will make a statement. [186074]

Alun Michael: I launched the Code of Practice on How to Prevent the Spread of Ragwort at the Royal Show on 4 July. The code provides comprehensive guidance for all those with land management responsibility, including the Highways Agency and local authorities, on how to develop a strategic approach to ragwort control where there is a risk to animal welfare. It sets out clearly the responsibilities of horse and livestock owners, as well as those of land managers. The code provides advice on how to assess the risk posed by ragwort to horses and other grazing animals, the different control methods available, environmental factors, and health and safety issues.

A copy of the code has been sent to the Highways Agency and to all local authorities. I have urged all landowners and land managers to work with horse and animal owners to implement the recommendations of the code which have legal underpinning in enforcement proceedings under the Weeds Act 1959. A representative of the Highways Agency was involved last year when I launched an earlier draft of the code at Hickstead as a voluntary code, prior to completion of the legislation and spoke in support of the code.

Recreational Sea Fishing

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her estimate is of the financial contribution to the economy of recreational sea fishing in Britain broken down by principal categories of expenditure. [184708]

Mr. Bradshaw: A recent report commissioned by Defra on the economic contribution of sea angling estimates a figure of £538 million for England and Wales. This figure relates to total direct and indirect expenditure on the sport. Expenditure varies between shore and boat anglers, but on average about 42 per cent. of the total is spent on purchase and operation or chartering of boats, 26 per cent. on tackle, and 32 per cent. on food, accommodation, transport and other costs.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether catches landed by recreational fishing vessels are subject to the Common Fisheries Policy quota restrictions. [184814]

Mr. Bradshaw: EU Regulations governing the Common Fisheries Policy require account to be taken of all landings, with certain specified exceptions, for the purposes of quota management: there is no exemption for landings made by recreational fishing vessels. However, within the UK, vessels engaged in recreational fishing are not generally subject to quantitative restrictions on landings: they might be prohibited from making further landings if it became necessary to close a fishery to the commercial inshore fleet, or to the UK fleet as a whole, when the UK's quota for that fishery had been taken in full.

Recycling (Greater London)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the amount of *(a)* household and *(b)* industrial waste recycled by boroughs within the Greater London area was in each of the last three years. [185341]

Mr. Morley: Latest results from the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey show the following amounts of household waste recycled or composted in the Greater London area:

	Tonnes
2000–01	304,000
2001–02	319,000
2002–03	368,000

The latest results available for industrial and commercial waste, reused or recycled are from the Environment Agency, National Waste Production Survey, 1998–99. Greater London results show 2,454,000 tonnes.

Sewers and Drains Review

Liz Blackman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she intends to publish her findings on the Review of Existing Sewers and Drains in England and Wales consultation document published in July 2003. [185392]

Mr. Morley: The Department plans to publish a response to the consultation in the early autumn. This will summarise responses, give the Government's views and set out the issues that need to be addressed before a final decision can be made. A decision paper should be published early next year.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the *(a)* number, *(b)* percentage and *(c)* location of sites of special scientific interest that have been subject to inappropriate development since May 1997. [184864]

Mr. Bradshaw: For the purposes of this answer, "inappropriate development" is taken to mean development that is causing the unfavourable condition[1] of a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). To provide this information since 1997 would involve disproportionate cost. Factors adversely affecting sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) are continually updated according to the latest condition assessment completed by English Nature conservation officers. All SSSIs are assessed on a rolling basis at least once every six years. English Nature carried out the first round of condition assessments on the complete SSSI series in England between 1997–2003.

According to the latest condition assessments[2] for each unit, 1,052 hectares of SSSI land[3], on 55 different SSSIs, were in unfavourable condition due to activities authorised by development or mineral planning permission, excluding peat permissions. This is equivalent to 0.1 per cent. of the total SSSI area in England. The SSSI name, county and unit area adversely affected are detailed in the following table.

County	*SSSI Name*	*Unit area (ha)*
Avon	Severn Estuary	39.18
Bedfordshire	Totternhoe Chalk Quarry	1.21
Buckinghamshire	Stone	0.13
Cambridgeshire	Little Paxton Pits	6.97
Cornwall	Gwithian to Mexico Towans	0.18
Cornwall	River Camel Valley and Tributaries	21.58
Cumbria	Ash Fell Edge	7.96
Cumbria	Duddon Estuary	4.46
Cumbria	River Kent and Tributaries	1.14
Dorset	Canford Heath	4.14
Dorset	Ebblake Bog	9.95
Dorset	Holt and West Moors Heaths	1.24
Dorset	Parley Common	0.99
Dorset	Povington and Grange Heaths	9.44
Dorset	Slop Bog and Uddens Heath	5.79
Dorset	Wareham Meadows	57.11
Durham	Fairy Holes Cave	213.6
East Sussex	Maplehurst Wood	13.81
East Sussex	Rye Harbour	8.2
Essex	Purfleet Chalk Pits	4
Essex	West Wood, Little Sampford	23.79
Hampshire	Avon Valley (Bickton to Christchurch)	155.19
Hampshire	Castle Bottom to Yateley Common and Hawley Commons	77.02
Hampshire	Hurst Castle and Lymington River Estuary	45.24
Hampshire	Moorgreen Meadows	10.37
Hampshire	Pamber Forest and Silchester Common	0.18
Hampshire	Portsdown	2.91
Hampshire	Shortheath Common	6.01
Hereford and Worcester	Puxton Marshes	5.18
Isle of Wight	Briddlesford Copses	0.91
Isle of Wight	Prospect Quarry	4.34
Isle of Wight	Whitecliff Bay and Bembridge Ledges	1.51
Kent	Darenthwood	4.11
Kent	Dungeness	Not available
Kent	Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes	120.99
Kent	Southborough Pit	1.08
Kent	The Swale	61.19
Leicestershire	Enderby Warren Quarry	1.71
Norfolk	River Wensum	2.84
North Yorkshire	Acaster South Ings	23.05
Northamptonshire	Bozeat Meadow	2.6
Northamptonshire	Cowthick Quarry	1.21
Northamptonshire	Higham Ferrers Gravel Pits	3.76
Northamptonshire	Southfield Farm Marsh	1.06
Northumberland	The Scroggs	1.37
Shropshire	Allscott Settling Ponds	28.16
Shropshire	Fenn's, Whixall, Bettisfield, Wem & Cadney Mosses	2.02
South Yorkshire	Sprotbrough Gorge	12.89
South Yorkshire	Wadsley Fossil Forest	0.21
Staffordshire	Biddulph's Pool and No Man's Bank	43.73
Staffordshire	Chasewater Heaths	1.33
Staffordshire	Doxey and Tillington Marshes	1.39
Suffolk	Cavenham—Icklingham Heaths	11.62
West Yorkshire	Bingley South Bog	4.33
West Yorkshire	Nostell Brickyard Quarry	11.44

[1] Unfavourable condition comprises the condition categories of unfavourable no change, unfavourable declining, part destroyed and destroyed, according to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Common Standards.

[2] Data extracted on 14 July 2004

[3] SSSIs are divided into units. A factor affecting part of a SSSI unit is attributed to the entire unit area for the condition assessment purposes.

Sugar

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what aspects of the reform of the EU Sugar Regime are designed to encourage farmers to produce biomass and biofuels. [186095]

Mr. Morley: The European Commission's latest Communication on sugar reform, presented to the Agriculture Council on 19 July, aims to move away from the present systems of price and production support towards a sustainable decoupled, market-based approach in line with other recent CAP reforms. It would involve both price and quota cuts in an initial phase, followed by a further review in 2008. This approach, which the Government welcomes as an important step in the right direction, should help to make sugar beet itself more competitive with other sources of biomass and biofuels, as well as promoting diversification among existing growers.

Warm Front

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the role of local government is in delivering the Warm Front programme. [185311]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 21 July 2004]*: Warm Front is managed on behalf of Defra by two Scheme Managers—Eaga Partnership Ltd. and Powergen Warm Front Ltd. Both Scheme Managers work closely with a range of national and local organisations, including local authorities, to help promote the availability of Warm Front and to encourage take up.

Both scheme managers work with local authorities in a range of activities such as local roadshows and events, promotional campaigns, the development of affordable warmth strategies, energy awareness days also involving local MPs and include local authorities in regular updates about the scheme.

In addition to this, both Scheme Managers provide information to local authorities in their area for their returns to the Department under the Home Energy Conservation Act.

Waste Management

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance was given to waste producers on the conditions of storage on pollution prevention and control sites of orphan wastes; what requests she received from waste producers for advice; and if she will make a statement. [185264]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is responsible for regulating the storage of wastes, in accordance with environmental legislation, in England and Wales. Normally, some form of authorization, a licence or permit, is required; in some cases an exemption may be appropriate.

Anyone, including producers, who either wishes to alter his/her authorisation or requires a new one, should apply to the agency. Guidance on how to apply is available on the agency's website: www.environment-agency.org.uk.

Whaling

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it is the Government's policy to continue to oppose the re-introduction of whaling other than by certain indigenous peoples. [185809]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* The UK Government are opposed to all forms of whaling other than limited subsistence whaling by indigenous people to meet a defined and substantiated need. We strongly support the current International Whaling Commission moratorium on commercial whaling.

Wind Farms

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of wind farms on wild birds. [184493]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The Government believes that the generation of electricity from wind farms can make a major contribution to achieving the 2010 targets for renewable energy. It is estimated that, if global warming continues as at present, 25 species of bird in Britain will be extinct by 2050.

The Department for Trade and Industry works closely with the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (which, like the DTI, has regulatory functions for offshore wind farm developments), the statutory nature conservation and other organisations as appropriate, to ensure that decisions on whether to grant consent for wind farm developments are considered in the light of the best available information about impacts on the environment and on birds in particular.

One of the outcomes of this close working is that applicants for consents for those offshore wind farm developments proposed under Round 2 of Crown Estate leasing, will be required to provide two years of bird survey data as part of the environmental reports that are submitted with consent applications.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers requested entrance to European Union member states in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 1999, *(c)* 2001, *(d)* 2003 and *(e)* 2004. [184262]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of asylum seekers requesting entrance to European Union member states is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. For example for the UK the majority of applications are made in country and it is therefore not possible to identify such cases as asylum seekers prior to entry.

Including dependants, applications for asylum in the UK fell by 41 per cent. in 2003 compared with a fall of 10 per cent. in applications to the rest of the EU (excluding Italy). When the relative size of domestic populations is taken into account, the UK ranks seventh among EU countries (excluding Italy) in terms of asylum seekers per head of population.

Information on the number of asylum seekers applying for asylum in European Union member states is given in the table. (Data for 2004 are not currently available and hence data for the 10 new EU member states are not included.)

Applications[1] received for asylum in Europe, including dependants, by year of application, 1997 to 2003

European Union Countries	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*
Austria	6,700	13,800	20,100	18,300
Belgium[2]	13,300	25,000	40,800	48,700
Denmark	5,100	5,700	6,500	10,100
Finland	1,000	1,300	3,100	3,200
France[2]	24,200	25,500	35,100	44,200
Germany	104,400	98,600	95,100	78,600
Greece[3]	4,400	3,000	1,500	3,000
Ireland	3,900	4,600	7,700	10,900
Italy[4]	1,700	9,500	33,400	18,000
Luxembourg[3]	400	1,700	2,900	600
Netherlands	34,400	45,200	39,300	43,900
Portugal[3]	300	400	300	200
Spain	5,000	6,600	8,400	7,200
Sweden	9,600	12,800	11,200	16,300
United Kingdom[5]	41,500	58,500	91,200	98,900
Total EU	255,800	312,300	396,700	401,900

	2001[6]	*2002[6]*	*2003[7]*	*Asylum seekers/ 1,000 of population[8]*
Austria	30,100	39,400	32,400	3.9
Belgium[3]	28,000	21,400	19,300	1.9
Denmark	12,500	5,900	4,600	0.8
Finland	1,700	3,400	3,100	0.6
France[3]	53,900	58,100	70,700	1.2
Germany	88,300	71,100	50,400	0.6
Greece[4]	5,500	5,700	8,200	0.7
Ireland	10,300	11,600	7,900	2.0
Italy[5]	9,600	7,300	n/a	n/a
Luxembourg[4]	700	1,000	1,600	3.1
Netherlands	32,600	18,700	13,400	0.8

	2001[6]	2002[6]	2003[7]	Asylum seekers/ 1,000 of population[8]
Portugal[4]	200	200	100	0.0
Spain	9,200	6,200	5,700	0.1
Sweden	23,500	33,000	31,400	3.5
United Kingdom	91,600	103,100	61,100	1.0
Total EU	397,600	386,100	309,700	0.9

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 100.

[2] Figures based on IGC data but adjusted to include an estimated number of dependants.

[3] Figures based on UNHCR data, including dependants.

[4] IGC data for 1997 to 1998. UNHCR data for 1999 to 2002

[5] Figures have been adjusted to include an estimated number of dependants between 1997 and 2001 . 2002 and 2003 figures based on actual data..

[6] Revised figures.

[7] Provisional figures.

[8] Source: 2003 World Population Data Sheet, Population Reference Bureau website.

Information on asylum applications in EU member states is published in quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin 'Asylum Statistics United Kingdom'. Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2003 will be available from the end of August 2004. Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department has commissioned to establish the number of failed asylum applicants who remain in the United Kingdom illegally; and if he will make a statement. [184025]

Mr. Browne: The Government have commissioned research into the methods used in other countries to estimate the size of their illegal populations in order to define methods appropriate for the UK. The work on this is ongoing.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the current time taken to return failed asylum seekers. [184175]

Mr. Browne: I refer my hon. Friend to a reply given to a similar question posed by Gareth Thomas MP on 12 June 2003.

The Immigration Service (IS) is fully committed to removing failed asylum seekers and others who have no entitlement to be in the United Kingdom.

There are no publishable guidelines or data on how quickly removal should take place. The speed with which a failed asylum seeker is removed very much depends on the individual circumstances of each case, whether there are any barriers to removal (including lack of co-operation by the government of their country of origin) and how quickly these can be overcome.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office regarding the conditions of failed Somali asylum seekers who have been returned to Somalia. [181483]

Mr. Browne: The Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) were informed of our programme of enforced returns to Somalia and we keep in close contact with these Departments at official and ministerial level on the situation in Somalia. The Home Office's Country Information and Policy Unity (CIPU) produce country information materials that are used as the background against which asylum applications are considered. The FCO are consulted about these country information materials, prior to the publication of the documents in order to ensure that this material is accurate and comprehensive.

Caseworkers also have access at all times to senior caseworkers with specific country knowledge, as well as to CIPU which provides up-to-date and specific information on request, drawing on a range of reliable sources, including the FCO, with which CIPU maintains regular contact. If, on the basis of the available information, a Somali asylum applicant is found not to be in need of protection by the Home Office and by the independent Immigration Appellate Authority, then it is considered safe for that person to be returned to Somalia, and they will be considered for removal. We do not routinely monitor the conditions of failed asylum seekers once they have been returned to their country, having been found to have no protection needs.

It is also worth noting that according to the UNHCR's 2003 Global Refugee Report, 9,543 Somali refugees were assisted to return to North West Somalia (Somaliland) from Ethiopia and Djibouti, while 680 returned to North-west Somalia (Puntland) and four to Mogadishu, bringing the total number of assisted Somali returnees to 10,227 last year.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many single additional payments were made to asylum seekers, under Regulation 11 of the Asylum Support Regulations 2000, in each financial year since 2000–01; [176073]

(2) what the estimated cost savings are of the proposed abolition of the £50 single additional payment available to National Asylum Support Service supported asylum seekers. [176074]

Mr. Browne: The estimated number of Single Additional Payments made since 2000–01 is set out in the following table:

Financial Year	Number
2000–01	2,000
2001–02	32,000
2002–03	47,000
2003–04	63,000

We estimate that abolition will save the Exchequer approximately £4 million in the next financial year.

Single Additional Payments were introduced when financial assistance was paid by way of vouchers. Now that support is provided entirely in cash, asylum seekers are no longer limited to where they can shop and can get better value for their money. Moreover, as applications are being processed more quickly, with 80 per cent. of initial claims processed within two months, the justification for one-off payments every six months is reduced.

Asylum seekers can still apply for a £300 maternity payment and since March 2003 additional support for pregnant women and children under three has meant that the level of asylum support has increased overall for these more vulnerable groups.

Autopsies

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many autopsies have been carried out in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Huddersfield and *(c)* Kirklees in each of the last 10 years. [166730]

Paul Goggins: Information on the total number of autopsies (post-mortem examinations) in the UK is not collected centrally. The recording of information at the time of registration of death is not considered to be sufficiently reliable to give definite figures or to monitor trends.

Information on post-mortem examinations other than those ordered by a coroner or procurator fiscal is not available for Scotland and Northern Ireland, and is only available for England and Wales since 1997. Figures are given in the first column of the table.

The table also gives (where known), for each year since 1993, the number of post-mortem examinations conducted in those deaths which were investigated by coroners in England and Wales, and in Northern Ireland, and by Procurators Fiscal in Scotland; and in the last column, in the coroner's district of the western part of West Yorkshire metropolitan county (which includes both Huddersfield and Kirklees).

Information on post-mortem examinations carried out in Huddersfield and Kirklees in deaths where the coroner was not involved is not available.

Post-mortems conducted in the UK, 1993–2002

Year	*England and Wales, certified by doctor, with post-mortem*	*England and Wales coroner post-mortems*	*Scotland: post mortems ordered by Procurator Fiscal*[1]	*Northern Ireland coroner post-mortems*	*Post mortems carried out on the order of the West Yorkshire (West) coroner (includes Huddersfield and Kirklees)*
1993	n/a	129,148	n/a	1,428	1,829
1994	n/a	125,176	5,868	1,471	1,815
1995	n/a	126,398	5,905	1,524	1,963
1996	n/a	126,184	5,875	1,479	2,022
1997	3,061	123,015	5,680	1,525	1,995
1998	3,524	124,356	5,757	1,672	2,068
1999	3,496	124,780	5,946	1,517	1,858
2000	4,228	124,536	5,771	1,333	1,775
2001	2,546	121,112	5,685	1,408	1,864
2002	n/a	117,684	5,699	1,436	1,754

n/a—not available

[1] "Fiscal" post-mortems are reported by financial year. In this table the figure has been assigned to the year containing the April-December portion of the financial year.

Sources:

Second column-ONS; third column-Home Office; fourth and fifth columns-Crown office and Courts office in Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively.

Cultural Objects

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department has commissioned into the link between the black market in stolen or otherwise tainted cultural objects and organised crime; and if he will make a statement. [185679]

Caroline Flint: We commissioned independent consultants to carry out an Options Appraisal on the potential establishment of a database of stolen or illegally removed cultural items. As part of that work, the consultants spoke to the police and others in the public and private sectors about the link with organised crime and the likely impact of such a database on crime levels. This work produced no evidence that a database of stolen cultural items will reduce crime, nor any data on the extent of organised crime involvement. This confirms the evidence we gave to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee on 11 November 2003.

Universities (Charitable Status)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government have to change the charitable status of universities. [184964]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government intend, as set out in the Draft Charities Bill, that the Higher Education Funding Council for England would regulate English universities in regard to Charity Law. The regulation of Welsh universities has not been fully decided although they would also be regulated in regard to Charity Law. This is a change in regulation, not in charitable status, and universities will remain charities.

"Reducing Crime—Changing Lives"

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a summary of responses to "Reducing Crime—Changing Lives". [182308]

Paul Goggins: A summary of the responses to "Reducing Crime—Changing Lives" will be published in due course in accordance with the Cabinet Office code of practice on consultation.

999 Services

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police constabularies have a centralised 999 service; and if he will make a statement. [184508]

Ms Blears: All forces deal with 999 calls from their service provider, either BT or Cable and Wireless, locally. These calls are sent to specific numbers provided by each force to a central point within the force; this can be the Force Control Room for those forces that do not have a centralised call handling function or to a designated Communication Centre in the case offerees that have centralised their call handling functions. The manner in which forces deal with the 999s from that point varies depending on whether the Force Control takes ownership or whether they have a centralised control/communication centres and they take ownership or whether they pass command and control to their Divisions, Basic Command Units or OCUs.

At the present time there are about 32 forces who have a centralised function in one form or another and most other forces are in the planning stages to go down that route. However, information on how each force deals with the calls locally is not collated centrally.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many 999 control centres there are, broken down by police constabulary; and if he will make a statement. [184509]

Mr. Blunkett: 32 forces have a centralised call handling function for dealing with 999 calls. Most other forces are currently in the process of planning to establish such a function.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many calls were made to 999 police services in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend-on-Sea in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [184510]

Ms Blears: A file will be sent to the Library. The Home Office does not collect total calls for service at a Basic Command Unit level, only at force level data.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time taken for a call to be answered by the 999 police service was in each year since 1997, broken down by police constabulary; and if he will make a statement. [184511]

Ms Blears: This information is not collected. However, we are able to state what percentage of calls are answered within target time, for example 90 per cent. of all 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds. Forces will set their own target time, so it is not comparable when 90 per cent. of 999 calls are answered within 10 seconds and 80 per cent. are answered within 15 seconds.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what performance targets are in place for the 999 Police Service, relating to customer satisfaction; and if he will make a statement. [184513]

Ms Blears: We are committed to improving the quality of service the police provide to the public when they are in contact with them.

Call handling is a particularly important aspect of this service. A member of the public should be able to expect the same high quality service whenever they are in contact with the police, which is responsive to their needs, irrespective of where they live.

We are working with partners, including the Association of Chief Police Officers, to introduce minimum standards for service to the public, including the answering of telephone calls. We will also ensure that people are clear about the best way to contact the police.

New performance measures for user satisfaction with police services were introduced in April 2004, as part of the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF). These include measures which report satisfaction of users who have contacted the police by 999 and other means with:

ease of making contact with the police,

the actions taken by the police,

how well they were kept informed of progress and

the way they were treated by police staff and

the overall service provided.

The measures recognise that it is the quality of service provided, and not just speed of the initial answer that is important to users of police services.

Age Cards

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the *(a)* availability and *(b)* misuse of fake proof of age cards; and if he will make a statement. [181503]

Mr. Browne: We have been working closely with the British Retail Consortium (BRC) on the Proof of Age Standards Scheme (PASS) which aims to ensure that different proof of age schemes comply with common standards. This is indicated by displaying the PASS holographic logo on the card. Through the BRC and other groups we encourage retailers to accept only PASS compliant cards. A person using a fake proof of age card commits an offence if it is used to deceive.

In the longer term, the introduction of ID cards will also provide retailers with a single, clear and highly reliable means of verifying proof of age.

Alcohol Promotions

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will ban *(a)* happy hours and *(b)* one-price-for-all-you-can-drink promotions in pubs. [184807]

Ms Blears: We are currently having discussions with the industry around the development of the social responsibility scheme for alcohol retailers. This was one of the recommendations contained in the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England, published by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit on 15 March 2004. Alcohol retailers will be encouraged to sign up to the scheme which will include a commitment from pubs and clubs to clamp down on irresponsible promotions.

The scheme will be voluntary, but we will be assessing its effectiveness early in the next parliament. If the impact is not as we would expect, we will look to further measures, including the possibilfty of legislation.

Animal Research

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officer hours were spent by the Cambridgeshire police force in tackling criminal activity linked to animal rights extremism in each year since 1999. [185073]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* Information on police hours spent tackling criminal activity linked to animal rights extremism is not collected centrally.

However, Cambridgshire Constabulary tell me that since 1 January 2000 they have spent a total of 35,569 days or 357,548 hours on the response to activities of animal rights protestors.

Anti-terrorism

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information he has collated about the number of arrests under the anti-terrorism legislation over the last 12 months; how many led to *(a)* charges and *(b)* release; and if he will make a statement. [184737]

Ms Blears: Due to the method by which Terrorism Act arrests are recorded, figures for the requested period are not available. The closest period we can compile is 11 March 2003 to 30 June 2004. For this period, 274 people were arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000. 46 of these were charged under the Act. The remainder were either released without charge, bailed to return, cautioned, charged under other legislation or dealt with under immigration or mental health legislation.

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons were for the arrests of seven people in Greater Manchester and three others in other parts of England on 19 April under terrorism legislation; and if he will make a statement. [185091]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* This was an intelligence-led operation and the police would have been failing in their duty if they did not act on any available information and investigate its veracity.

The police decided not to press charges and all the suspects were released without charge.

Appeals Processing

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the appeal in the case of NA, reference D1038877, was received by *(a)* the Home Office and *(b)* the Appeals Processing Centre; and when he expects the Appeals Processing Centre to pass it to the Independent Appellate Authority. [184965]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* This appeal was received by the Home Office, Immigration and Nationality Directorate Appeals Processing Centre, on 18 May 2004. The appeal has been processed and was forwarded to the Immigration Appellate Authority on 19 July 2004.

Burglaries

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many three strike rule burglaries there were in the last year for which figures are available; how many resulted in a prison sentence; and what the average period was prior to remission. [182911]

Paul Goggins: The number of persons sentenced in 2002 under the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 has been published in Criminal Statistics England and Wales 2002, Table 4G. The corresponding average sentence imposed by the courts is three years.

CCTV (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public money has been spent on CCTV cameras in Tamworth constituency since 1995–96. [185833]

Ms Blears: Since 1996 the Home Office has provided Tamworth borough council with £382,000 for close circuit television schemes.

Allocation of that funding locally is a matter for Tamworth borough council and the Staffordshire police.

Community Sentences

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the success rate of community sentences. [182284]

Mr. Browne: Data on breach rules are published in Criminal Statistics England and Wales 2002.

Community Support Officers

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* community support officers and *(b)* community wardens there are in each police authority area in Wales; and what the projected change in numbers is over the next four years [186098]

Mr. Browne: At the end of June this year the number of Community Support Officers (CSOs) on patrol in each police authority area in Wales and new ones successfully bid for in the recent third round of funding was as follows:

Force	*CSOs already on patrol*	*Additional CSOs for 2004–05*
Dyfed-Powys	4	6
Gwent	48	10
North Wales	8	25
South Wales	50	5

The new Neighbourhood Policing Fund will support the recruitment of 20,000 extra Community Support Officers and wardens by 2008.

Community or Neighbourhood wardens are not employed by police authorities but by organisations such as local authorities or housing associations. Information on their numbers is not held centrally.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer question number 163249 regarding computer misuse in his Department, tabled by the hon. Member for Northavon on 18 March. [183207]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 12 July 2004]*: I replied to the hon. Member on 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 578W.

Contingency Planning

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on emergency planning arrangements in the UK. [184906]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 20 July 2004]*: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary makes regular statements to the House on emergency planning arrangements in the UK. The last such statement was made on 25 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 41WS, and these issues were addressed in the Intelligence Security Commission (ISC) debate on 8 July and extensively in a joint evidence session the Home Secretary gave to a special joint meeting of the Home Affairs and Defence Select Committees.

In addition, the 2004 Spending Review (Cm6237) set out details of the significant new investment that the Government have made in this field.

Correctional Services Review

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons Patrick Carter was selected to carry out the correctional services review. [182291]

Paul Goggins: Patrick Carter, a non-executive member of the Prison Service Board and the Home Office Board, was selected to carry out the correctional services review on the strength of his previous experience within the correctional services.

Correspondence

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his officials at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will answer letters dated 12 March and 20 April from the hon. Member for Vauxhall about a constituent, reference number: A571357. [184699]

Mr. Browne: A response to the letter of 12 March 2004 was sent to my hon. Friend on 9 July 2004. The Immigration and Nationality Directorate do not have a record of receiving my hon. Friend's letter of 20 April 2004 but they are contacting her office to clarify the matter.

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when a reply will be sent to the hon. Member for Walsall, North's letter of 8 June concerning a constituent, ref 5835523. [185290]

Mr. Browne: I wrote to my hon. Friend on 24 August.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to reply to the letter to him dated 2 June 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms K Akhtar. [185347]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 27 July 2004.

Country Status

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many countries had their status changed from unsafe to receive failed asylum seekers in the last 12 months. [185208]

Mr. Browne: Countries of origin of asylum seekers are not designated as safe or unsafe to receive failed asylum seekers. All asylum and human rights claims are considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Individual asylum seekers found by both the Home Office and the independent Appellate Authority not to be at risk of persecution and not in need of humanitarian protection are considered for removal on a case by case basis.

Separately, section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 provides for the designation of countries which are considered to be generally safe and from which many asylum claims are likely to be clearly unfounded.

Crime (Public Expenditure)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent in real terms on tackling crime in each of the last 25 years, broken down by police authority area. [186159]

Ms Blears: This information is not available. General government grants (Principal Home Office police grant and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Revenue Support grant) are normally distributed to police authorities using the police funding formula that takes account of the whole range of policing activity, including tackling crime.

Force net expenditure on policing in England and Wales has increased from £1,468 million in 1979–80 to an estimated £9,157 million in 2003–04, an increase of 100 per cent. in real terms.

Source:

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Police statistics

Crime Reduction Policy

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the progress made towards local crime reduction targets in each area participating in the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas scheme. [160202]

Ms Blears *[pursuant to her reply, 10 March 2004, Official Report, c.1573W]*: Due to a printing error, the percentage sign was missing from the answer given. A corrected version is as follows.

In June 2001, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced funding of £15 million over three years for a project to improve the security of small retailers in the 10 per cent. most deprived areas throughout England and Wales.

Individual projects are developed by local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in conjunction with Regional Home Office Directors. Part of this process is to ensure adequate local targets have been set, and systems put in place to measure performance against them.

A detailed evaluation of the scheme is currently under way and will be completed in the autumn. The findings, which will be widely disseminated, will identify effective interventions that have been shown to have a beneficial impact on crime against small retailers. The evaluation will also examine other ways in which the scheme has impacted upon businesses and the surrounding retail environment—such as the fear of crime among business, fear of crime among customers, business viability and partnership working.

Criminal Justice Act 2003

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will amend the Criminal Justice Act 2003 to exempt all police officers from being required to be available for jury service; and if he will make a statement. [181750]

Ms Blears: We have no intention of amending the provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 relating to jury service. Under these provisions a large number of occupations ceased to be exempt from, or to have a right to decline, serving on juries. This will allow juries to be more representative of the communities that they serve.

Criminal Records Bureau

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what advice Essex police have given to the Criminal Records Bureau as to their estimated despatch time for returning applications; what factors affect the time scale for the process; and if he will make a statement; [185801]

(2) what the cause of delay to processing Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) application No. 4881924 is; on which date the CRB forwarded this application for checking by the Essex police; and when the constituent of the hon. Member for Thurrock can expect a reply. [185803]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) received application No. 4881924 on 7 May 2004. Following initial checks, the application was sent to Essex Constabulary in mid-May and it was returned to the bureau on 19 July. The Disclosure was completed and issued to your constituent on this date and I trust that it has now been received. I apologise for any inconvenience caused by its delay.

The Criminal Records Bureau aims to complete 90 per cent. of all Enhanced Disclosures within four weeks and has been regularly meeting these targets since June 2003.

Factors such as the volume of applications, the number and availability of staff, the number and type of police data bases searched and the existence of any relevant intelligence on Disclosure applicants can affect processing time scales at any police force, including Essex Constabulary. The estimated despatch time for returning applications can therefore fluctuate, depending upon variations of these factors.

In recent months, and due to a combination of these factors, checks undertaken by Essex Constabulary have been taking longer to complete and a backlog of cases has built up.

Although this work is the responsibility of the constabulary, the CRB has been working closely with them to manage the backlog of cases and to minimise any disruption and inconvenience to Disclosure applicants.

The CRB has in fact seconded a number of its staff in recent months to Essex and will shortly be sending more staff to help clear the outstanding work. This work is expected to be finished during the next two-three months and the backlog eliminated.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171146]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office Departmental Report 2004 (Cm 6208) is the main vehicle by which the Home Office explains its aims and performance for 2003–04, and how it organised itself to deliver. As such it plays an important part in maintaining accountability to both Parliament and the public. It also provides key external stakeholders with an overview of the Department's activities as a whole.

In order to ensure transparency, the report is structured around our key aims and the key PSA targets and other priorities that underpin these.

The report's publication was handled by the Stationery Office Ltd. (TSO). Under the terms of the contract with TSO that company generally meets the costs of printing and publication and uses its commercial judgement as to the number of copies which it prints and the sale price.

The direct costs of production borne by the Home Office and the printing costs of those copies ordered by the Department came to £65,282 excluding VAT and £72,210 including VAT. This excludes the costs of staff time within the Department, obtaining estimates of which would involve disproportionate cost. 1,150 copies were purchased by the Department for distribution within its headquarters (to directors, board members and on request to other members of the Senior Civil Service) and to senior managers in key delivery partners such as probation areas, police forces, and Government offices. Copies were also made available to Parliament and the press. The report is also available without charge on the Department's website.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have left employment in his Department because of *(a)* anxiety, *(b)* stress, *(c)* depression and *(d)* other mental health reasons in each year since 1997. [175677]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office does not record the reasons for employees leaving employment in the level of detail requested.

However, since 2003 the Home Office has operated a voluntary exit survey which indicates that seven staff have stated stress as their reason for leaving the Department in 2003 and (to date) four staff in 2004.

The Department is legally obliged to providing a safe working environment for employees and has a number of initiatives in place to reduce work related stress, including return to work interviews and managing sick absence by line managers and stress seminar and workshops run by the Home Office Health and Welfare Service.

Domestic Violence

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what policies are in place to tackle female-on-male domestic violence. [185075]

Mr. Browne: The 2001 British Crime Survey's Inter-Personal Violence Module shows that one in four women and one in six men have suffered domestic violence at some point in their lives, though women form the overwhelming majority of those subject to the heaviest abuse in terms of frequency, range of violence and severity of injury. The Government's definition of domestic violence is clear that domestic violence can occur regardless of gender or sexuality and the important measures in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill will protect both male and female victims.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the procedure is for women to press charges against their male partners in cases of domestic violence. [185813]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* A decision on whether or not to proceed with a case and press charges is a matter for the CPS, having received a file of evidence from the police. Decisions will be made on the appropriate level of charge once the two tests in the code for Crown Prosecutors have been passed. These are firstly whether there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction, and secondly that of the public interest. Victims' views are taken into consideration as part of the public interest test. The two tests must be passed before any criminal case can proceed. The procedure is the same regardless of gender or sexuality.

Drug Rape

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the recommendations of the Sturman Report on drug rape published in June 2000; and if he will make a statement. [177572]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 6 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 202W.

Drug Testing and Treatment

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug testing and treatment orders were issued in Gloucestershire in each month since the scheme's inception. [184204]

Caroline Flint: The drug treatment and testing order (DTTO) was piloted in Gloucestershire, Liverpool and Croydon between October 1998 and March 2000. The number of DTTOs made in Gloucestershire in each month during the pilot phase, including April to September 2000 during which the pilots were allowed to continue post-evaluation until the order was rolled-out, was:

Month/year	*DTTO commencements*
1998	
October	0
November	0
December	0
1999	
January	4
February	7
March	9
April	8
May	6
June	6
July	10
August	17
September	4
October	3
November	6
December	5
2000	
January	6
February	5
March	4
Post evaluation	
April	3
May	4
June	7
July	5
August	6
September	3

The number of DTTOs made in Gloucestershire in each month following roll-out of the order across England and Wales on 1 October 2000 is:

Month/year	*DTTO commencements*
2000	
October	7
November	6
December	1
2001	
January	5
February	1
March	4
April	3
May	4
June	5
July	2
August	3
September	1
October	6

Month/year	DTTO commencements
November	6
December	7
2002	
January	3
February	8
March	4
April	5
May	5
June	5
July	3
August	3
September	4
October	5
November	3
December	7
2003	
January	4
February	3
March	2
April	4
May	1
June	3
July	2
August	6
September	3
October	9
November	3
December	4
2004	
January	6
February	9
March	8
April	4
May	7

Drugs (Prisons and Probation Service)

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will define best value in respect of the provision of drug services for prisons and probation services in England and Wales. [184894]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service assesses the delivery of service against the specifications for each type of intervention. There are a number of ways "best value" can be judged, which include the effectiveness, accessibility, impact on reoffending and cost efficiency of drug services.

In England, the Probation Service does not directly commission drug services in relation to community Drug Treatment and Testing Orders (DTTOs). Drug Action Teams (DATs) in the community contract local treatment providers to deliver the required treatment.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders in *(a)* jail and *(b)* the community have been dealt with by the major drug agencies which have contracts with the prisons and probation services in the latest year for which figures are available. [184895]

Paul Goggins: The total number of prisoners for 2003–04 entering each type of drug treatment service where the service was delivered partly or solely by an external drug agency is given in the table.

Prison entrants into drug treatment services provided, at least in part, by external agencies 2003–04

Entrants onto – clinical services[1]	CARATs[2] initial assessments	Drug treatment programmes entrants
4,386	51,080	3,076

[1] This does not include clinical services provided through Primary Care Trusts
[2] Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare Service

In England, the Probation Service does not directly commission drug services. Drug Action Teams (DATs) in the community contract local treatment providers to deliver the required treatment. Information on the extent of involvement of major drug agencies is not available centrally.

Dungavel Removal Centre

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to expand Dungavel Removal Centre. [184572]

Mr. Browne: On 16 March 2004 we announced publicly the decision to create a new building on the Dungavel site designed to hold up to 44 single males which will achieve the capacity of 194 places. In February 2004, work on the construction of that new building began and is now nearing completion. We expect this to be operational during August.

There are no plans to increase the capacity of Dungavel beyond 194 places.

Either-way Cases

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of the proportion of contested cases triable either-way in the magistrates court that resulted in acquittal in *(a)* the Crown courts and *(b)* magistrates courts in each of the last five years. [183591]

Paul Goggins: Information collected centrally by the Home Office does not contain details on defendants' plea at magistrates courts (nor therefore data on the number of contested cases).

The available information contained in the table provides figures for the number of defendants who pleaded "not guilty" to a triable either-way offence (where that offence was the principal offence) at the Crown court, and the number who were acquitted, in England and Wales, for the years 1998 to 2002.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Number of defendants[1] who pleaded "not guilty"[2] at the Crown court, who were acquitted[3] for triable either-way only offences, England and Wales 1998 to 2002

	Number of defendants who pleaded not guilty	Number of defendants who pleaded not guilty who were acquitted	Proportion of defendants pleading not guilty who were acquitted (Percentage)
1998	21,501	12,578	58
1999	21,324	12,847	60
2000	21,493	13,477	63

Number of defendants[1] who pleaded "not guilty"[2] at the Crown court, who were acquitted[3] for triable either-way only offences, England and Wales 1998 to 2002

	Number of defendants who pleaded not guilty	Number of defendants who pleaded not guilty who were acquitted	Proportion of defendants pleading not guilty who were acquitted (Percentage)
2001	20,863	13,230	63
2002	19,076	11,771	62

1 Table excludes the figures of those defendants who pleaded "not guilty" who were not tried.
2 Not guilty plea to the principal offence.
3 Acquitted—includes, not guilty, no evidence offered, charge withdrawn, judge rules no case to answer.

Electoral Fraud

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* arrests and *(b)* convictions for electoral fraud there have been in each of the last four years. [185272]

Paul Goggins: Arrest data are not collected centrally at the level of detail requested.

The information collected centrally by the Home Office is limited to various fraud related offences under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and is shown in the table. Similar offences, under other fraud and forgery provisions, cannot be separately identified.

Offenders[1] found guilty at all courts of various fraud related offences under the Representation of the People Act 1983, England and Wales 1999 to 2002

Offence description: Tampering with nomination and ballot papers etc., making false declarations as to election expenses, bribery, treating, undue influence and personation offences

	Number
1999	5
2000	1
2001	10
2002	1

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Highly Skilled Migrants Programme

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications have been *(a)* made and *(b)* accepted for the Highly Skilled Migrants Programme, broken down by (i) the top 20 nationalities and (ii) occupation, since the inception of the programme. [172596]

Mr. Browne: I regret that a full breakdown of the information requested is not readily available in the format requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

However, we are able to provide a breakdown of the number of applications received and approved by the top 10 nationalities up to the 23 June 2004. They are as follows:

	Number
Applications Received	
India	4,798
Pakistan	2,840
Nigeria	1,570
United States of America	1,448
South Africa	1,176
Australia	1,173
China	712
New Zealand	539
Zimbabwe	395
Russian Federation	332
Applications Approved	
India	1,569
United States of America	1,094
South Africa	686
Pakistan	639
Australia	588
Nigeria	377
China	273
New Zealand	266
Canada	198
Russian Federation	179

Fear of Crime

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of fear of crime among the people of the Harwich constituency. [184994]

Ms Blears: Tendring's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and Tendring district council (which includes the Harwich constituency) both conduct surveys, which include an assessment of fear of crime. The partnership and council are in the process of completing the next surveys and the results will be available in August/September this year.

Home Detention Curfew Scheme

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many juveniles have been released from prison under the Home Detention Curfew Scheme sinces its inception; and how many offences have been committed by juveniles released under the Home Detention Curfew Scheme since its inception. [184803]

Paul Goggins: One hundred and twenty one juveniles, aged under 18, have been released on Home Detention Curfew since eligibility for the scheme was extended to juveniles under the age of 18 on 14 July 2003. Of those released from custody, 12 have been reported as having been cautioned, convicted or awaiting prosecution for committing 19 offences during the period they were subject to the scheme.

Identity Cards

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has had on the introduction of identity cards; and if he will make a statement. [181699]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 5 July 2004]*: We are involved in a wide range of discussions across Government and with key stakeholders. In addition to the evidence, my right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary and I gave to the Home Affairs Select Committee on

identity cards, he has discussed this matter at meetings he attended on smartcard technology at Sheffield Council and with representatives of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the impact identity cards will have on the relationship between the citizen and the state. [182233]

Mr. Browne: The identity cards scheme will not change the relationship between the citizen and the state. The scheme is about helping people safeguard identity, protecting citizens from illegal migration and working, organised crime and terrorism, identity theft and unauthorised access to public services. The introduction of identity cards is one of a range of steps the Government are taking to meet these challenges.

Illegal Immigrants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate he has made of the number of illegal immigrants who have entered the UK concealed in lorries. [182725]

Mr. Browne: There is no official estimate of the number of clandestine entrants to the UK.

Illegal entry action is initiated against those people who are detected having entered or attempting to enter the country clandestinely or by means of deception, either verbal or documentary.

The available figures include those people who were identified as having entered the country clandestinely, they are not separately identifiable as such information would be available only by examination of individual case-files at disproportionate cost.

The Immigration Service has deployed a range of initiatives to deter and detect illegal entry to the UK including moving controls overseas, enhancing juxtaposed controls in Paris, Lille and Calais, deploying New Detection Technology in France and Belgium, the Airline Liaison Officer Network, visa regimes and close co-operation with carriers, port authorities and our ED colleagues. These measures successfully prevented over 9,000 people reaching the UK from France during 2003.

Immigration

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his officials at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will resolve the immigration status of constituents of the hon. Member for Vauxhall, reference numbers *(a)* O164833 and *(b)* O150701. [185696]

Mr. Browne: The information is as follows:

O164833 has raised human rights issues and these will be considered by an Immigration and Nationality Directorate caseworker as a matter of priority.

O150701 was forwarded to the Immigration Appellate Authority on 9 July. A preliminary hearing has been scheduled for August and a substantive appeal hearing will take place on 9 September.

Immigration Detention (Electronic Monitoring)

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department under what conditions individuals seeking asylum will be required to wear an electronic tagging device; and what sanctions will be imposed for failure to comply with such a condition. [183919]

Mr. Browne: Section 36 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) Act 2004 will allow for electronic monitoring of those aged 18 years and over who are liable to detention under immigration legislation and will be used as an alternative to detention.

Individuals who are liable to detention may be required to wear an electronic tagging device if a Chief Immigration Officer, adjudicator or judge of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission considers, following an individual risk assessment, that the risk of absconding can be managed through the additional safeguard of electronic monitoring by tagging.

Tagging involves wearing a bracelet similar to a wristwatch, which emits a signal to a receiver at the subject's home address to confirm that they are complying with a residence restriction.

The consent of the individual will be required in order for an electronic monitoring provision to be applied. This is intended to ensure that the subject complies with the necessary practical arrangements for monitoring specified by the person imposing the requirement.

Failure to comply with an electronic monitoring condition (for example through tampering with the equipment or failing to be at the specified address during the specified period) will be treated as a failure to comply with a residence or reporting requirement attached as a condition of immigration bail, temporary release or temporary admission. Sanctions available include detention and/or prosecution under immigration legislation with a penalty of up to £5,000 or six months imprisonment.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on trials for electronic tagging of asylum seekers in Scotland. [185732]

Mr. Browne: Section 36 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc.) Act 2004 will allow for the electronic monitoring of those aged 18 years and over who are liable to detention under immigration legislation and will be used as an alternative to detention.

Electronic monitoring may be applied where it is felt that the risk of absconding can be managed with this additional safeguard, and an individual risk assessment will be conducted in each case.

A pilot is planned for the autumn in England, Wales and Scotland. The pilot will encompass a total of 200 people for voice recognition and up to 50 people for tagging (including up to 10 on satellite tracking). Numbers will be divided between the three contractors operating under the existing Home Office contract for England and Wales, and an interim contractor in Scotland. Satellite tracking is currently only available in a limited number of locations in England and will therefore not be applied in Scotland or Wales at present.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely impact on asylum detention centres of the electronic tagging of those seeking asylum in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [186139]

Mr. Browne: Electronic monitoring will be applied where it is felt that the risk of absconding can be managed with this additional safeguard. An individual risk assessment will be conducted in each case and I am not therefore able to estimate at this stage how many of the individuals held in immigration detention centres will apply to be released with such a condition, nor how many would be considered suitable. A pilot planned for the autumn should help inform the position.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to pilot a programme of tagging by electronic means those seeking asylum in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [186140]

Mr. Browne: Clause 36 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc.) Bill will allow for the electronic monitoring of those aged 18 years and over who are liable to detention under Immigration legislation.

Electronic Monitoring may be applied where it is felt that the risk of absconding can be managed with this additional safeguard, and an individual risk assessment will be conducted in each case. A pilot is planned for the autumn in England, Wales and Scotland. The pilot will encompass a total of 200 people for voice recognition and up to 50 people for tagging (including up to ten on satellite tracking). Numbers will be divided between the three contractors operating under the existing Home Office contract for England and Wales, and an interim contractor in Scotland. Satellite tracking is currently only available in a limited number of locations in England and will therefore not be applied in Scotland or Wales at present.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his plans are in relation to the numbers of those being detained at the Yarl's Wood Detention Centre over the next *(a)* six, *(b)* 12 and *(c)* 18 months; what assessment he has made of the likely impact on these numbers of his proposals in relation to the electronic tagging of those seeking asylum in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [186148]

Mr. Browne: Our plans are to increase the number of detainee's at the Yarl's Wood Removal Centre from 60 at present to 120 in September 2004 and 407 in January 2005 when building work is completed.

Electronic monitoring will be applied where it is felt that the risk of absconding can be managed with this additional safeguard and an individual risk assessment will be conducted in each case. I am not therefore able to estimate how many of the individuals held at Yarl's Wood Removal Centre will apply to be released with such a condition, nor how many would be considered suitable.

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people liable to detention under the Immigration Acts he is planning to include in the electronic monitoring pilot his Department is launching this autumn; how many he estimates will at the time be held at the Yarl's Wood Removal Centre; whether he plans to include *(a)* men, *(b)* women and *(c)* children among those he is planning to include in the pilot; how many he estimates will be subject to (i) tagging, (ii) satellite tracking and (iii) voice recognition; how he is planning to monitor the progress of the pilot; when he expects to evaluate the outcome; and if he will make a statement. [185978]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* Section 36 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) Act 2004 will allow for electronic monitoring of those aged 18 years and over who are liable to detention under immigration legislation and will be used as an alternative to detention.

The pilot to test the effectiveness of electronic monitoring in an immigration context will include 200 individuals for voice recognition and up to 50 people for tagging (10 of whom may be subject to satellite tracking).

Electronic monitoring will be applied where it is felt that the risk of absconding can be managed with this additional safeguard and an individual risk assessment will be conducted in each case. Therefore, it is not possible to estimate how many of the individuals held at Yarl's Wood detention centre will apply to be released with such a condition, nor how many would be considered suitable.

Electronic monitoring may be applied only to men and women of 18 years of age and over. Therefore no children will be included in the pilot.

Evaluation of the pilot will commence after a three-month period.

Immigration Detention Facilities

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the expected date is of *(a)* decommissioning and *(b)* closure of the immigration detention facility at Oakington, Cambridgeshire. [185623]

Mr. Browne: South Cambridgeshire district council is considering a planning notification to extend the use of Oakington until the end of 2006, when it is expected that the site will close. Decisions on decommissioning have yet to be finalised.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detention places he expects to be available for immigration control purposes over the next three years; where they will be; and if he will make a statement. [185625]

Mr. Browne: We expect to have around 2,800 places available for immigration control purposes by January 2005. From January 2007 this number will fall to around 2,500 places which will be located at Campsfield House (292 spaces), Colnbrook (326 spaces) Dover (316 spaces), Dungavel (194 spaces), Harmondsworth (551 spaces), Haslar (160 spaces), Lindholme (112 spaces), Tinsley House (150 spaces), Yarl's Wood (407 spaces).

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his long-term plans are for the Yarl's Wood Detention Centre; and whether these include housing those detained prior to deportation. [186149]

Mr. Browne: There are currently no plans to develop the site at Yarl's Wood further. Some of those held there may be awaiting deportation.

Insurance Cover

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made towards the implementation of an action plan based on the report of the Insurance Cover Working Group entitled "Research into Insurance Cover for the VCS in England"; and when it will be completed. [181008]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 29 June 2004]:* On Friday 16 July 2004 the Home Office published a paper responding to the suggestions made by independent consultants in their report "Research into Insurance Cover for the VCS in England", which was commissioned by the Home Office Insurance Cover Working Group (ICWG).

The paper outlines the practical action that is and has been taken across Government to address the challenges facing voluntary and community organisations in obtaining insurance cover for their activities.

Five action points have been agreed between the insurance industry, the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and Government:

1. The Home Office Minister responsible for communities will champion the cause of insurance for the voluntary and community sector.

2. Government work on employers' liability insurance, legal costs and full cost recovery, will be taken forward by The Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Constitutional Affairs and the Home Office Active Communities Directorate, ensuring that the interests of the voluntary and community sector are taken into account.

3. Sources of practical advice and expertise on the required needs of the insurance industry will be brought together by providing access to relevant information on the Home Office, Association of British Insurers, and various voluntary and community sector organisation's websites, in order to increase the capacity of the sector to deal with insurance issues.

4. Better practical arrangements for working with local government will be investigated by the Home Office, working with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Local Government Association.

5. There will be an on-going dialogue between the voluntary and community sector, the insurance industry and government, facilitated by the Home Office through the Insurance Cover Working Group (ICWG) meeting to discuss progress and on-going issues, as appropriate.

Implementation of the plan has already started and will continue over the coming months as parcels of work are completed. The ICWG will be an "honest broker" between the VCS, the insurance industry and other key players, highlighting and discussing specific issues of concern to the VCS. I will champion this insurance issue for the VCS.

The actions we are taking are practical measures to empower the VCS. For example, by encouraging greater understanding of the issues facing the VCS within the insurance industry, by facilitating greater dialogue, encouraging the principle of "full cost recovery" across Government and providing better and more accessible information regarding such things as risk management/ bulk purchasing schemes/and basic details to do with the provision of insurance cover, all adding up to practical help for the VCS. However, these are just the first steps in an area where there can be no overnight changes. Therefore, the Government and their partners are committed to making a difference over the long term.

In tandem with this longer term commitment, I have now set in motion a process for the delivery of a policy framework designed to address the increasing insurance burden and other concerns in the voluntary and community sector, particularly those parts of the sector that undertake activities with a greater element of risk. From this process we expect guidance to emerge on risk and its management as well as the development of a document similar to "Making the Market Work", an initiative the Association of British Insurers (ABI) developed for the assessment of Trade Associations Health and Safety schemes.

This work will undoubtedly draw on the Working Group's report and benefit from the group's input. Copies of the paper "Programme of Action", can be viewed and downloaded from the Home Office website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/active/developing/icwg.html.

Means-tested Benefits

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the means-tested benefits available through the Department and the agencies for which it is responsible *(a)* in May 1997 and *(b)* now. [182572]

Mr. Browne: The Home Office was not responsible for any means tested benefits in 1997.

Since 3 April 2000 the Home Office has been responsible for administering the support available to destitute asylum seekers under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Money Laundering Offences

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many deposit-taking institutions reported possible money laundering offences to the National Criminal Intelligence Service in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003; and what proportion of the total disclosures and reports were made by the top 10 sources of such reports in each year. [185590]

Caroline Flint: The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 imposes an obligation upon individuals and business in the regulated sector undertaking relevant business such as accepting deposits, to make disclosures to the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) where they have knowledge, suspicion or reasonable grounds to know or suspect that another person is engaged in money laundering. These disclosures are commonly known as Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs).

The information requested, based on disclosures input on to the NCIS database, is set out in the table.

	2001	2002	2003
Total Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) from deposit taking banks	19,355	36,694	63,601
Percentage of above SARs from top 10 bank sources	82.29	91.57	90.38
Total SARs from building societies	2,294	3,704	5,210
Percentage of above SARs from top 10 building society sources	74.28	66.79	66.55
Total SARs from deposit takers	21,649	40,398	68,811
Percentage of above SARs from top 10 deposit taking sources	79.56	83.61	83.76

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who will have statutory responsibility for prisoners' families under the National Offender Management Service arrangements. [176677]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service will continue to have responsibility for making arrangements for offenders to maintain meaningful links with their families and vice versa. Maintaining family support will be a specific objective build into the induction phase of the offender management process for offenders received into custody. The Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan published on 19 July recognises that the families and children of offenders are a vulnerable group and sets out a specific workstream to take forward work to further develop support arrangements.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements have been made to ensure that the National Offender Management Service will have an approved Welsh language scheme from its first day of operation. [180945]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service will build on the existing Welsh language schemes within the Prison and Probation Service in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the relevant trade unions will register disputes under the National Offender Management Service arrangements. [181583]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 7 July 2004]:* Trade unions will continue to register disputes with the employing body. In the case of Prison Officers represented by the POA this will be the Prison Service, with existing procedures remaining in place. The unions recognised by the National Probation Service (Napo, UNISON and GMB-Scoop) will continue, as under existing procedures, to register a dispute with an individual Probation Board.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when details of governance arrangements for the National Offender Management Service will be published. [181826]

Paul Goggins: On 20 July 2004 I made a statement on the National Offender Management Service which outlines the way I intend to introduce the new single service. The statement includes some additional details of governance arrangements. I will make available further clarification of governance arrangements as the service develops.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the impact of the introduction of the National Offender Management Service on the input of the voluntary sector to the criminal justice system. [182319]

Paul Goggins: It is expected that the development of National Offender Management Service (NOMS) will open up new opportunities for the involvement of voluntary organisations as a provider of services. The National Offender Management Service is preparing a strategic review of existing and future relationships with the voluntary and community sector. A draft strategy will be circulated for consultation in the autumn.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many consultees responded to the recent consultation document on the National Offender Management Scheme. [182381]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office has received 177 responses to the consultation paper on the National Offender Management Service's organisational design.

Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of the efficiency savings that will be achieved by establishing the proposed National Offender Management Service. [184406]

Paul Goggins: The establishment of the National Offender Management Service will lead to efficiency savings through the better targeting of interventions and an increase in the number of completed orders. Substantial savings will also be made by combining HQ functions which in turn will contribute to the 20 per cent. overall reduction in Home Office HQ costs. In addition, over the spending review 2004 period we will continue a target of three per cent. efficiency savings across the services.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Home Office's equal opportunities policy was followed in respect of the appointment of the national offender manager for the National Offender Management Service. [185263]

Mr. Browne: Yes. The Home Office's equal opportunities policy is applied to all recruitment and appointment processes.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what structure will be put in place for joint working on public protection between the Probation Service and the police under the new National Offender Management Service structure. [163027]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) will build upon the range of work probation boards undertaken at a local level. The significant contribution the multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) have made to public protection will form a key part of the core offender management function within the NOMS. Operationally MAPPA usually function at a local rather than area level and will continue to do so under the arrangements for NOMS. The multi-agency public protection panels, which oversee the management of the

highest risk offenders, will continue to operate at whatever level is most appropriate—usually local, sometimes area but occasionally wider—to manage the risks posed by the individual offenders in question.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff are employed in the National Offender Management Service Team, broken down by *(a)* grade and *(b)* function. [172411]

Paul Goggins: Currently the Prison Service has around 47,500 members of staff and the National Probation Service has around 19,000 full-time equivalent employees. The correctional services headquarters has around 400 staff.

All of these employees now come under the ambit of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). However, as the NOMS senior management are currently developing proposals for the shape, size and structure of the new service it is not yet possible to provide details on the grade and function split of NOMS staff.

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what instructions have been given to police forces in England and Wales regarding the National Neighbourhood Watch Association. [186194]

Ms Blears: Officials wrote to all Chief Constables on 25 May 2004 to set out the Home Office's position in relation to the National Neighbourhood Watch Association. This letter encouraged Chief Constables to continue to support Neighbourhood Watch in their force areas. No instructions were given.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on agreements for commercial sponsorship of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association. [186195]

Ms Blears: The commercial sponsorship agreements of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association are a matter for the association and any sponsors.

The Home Office generally has no interest in the commercial sponsorship deals of voluntary organisations. The only exception would be when the proposed deal involved the use of a public asset, for example the Neighbourhood Watch logo. In such a case the Home Office would act to ensure that the asset was used properly and that it continued to be publicly available.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidence his Department provided to the Direct Line Insurance Company in 2002 that it *(a)* had designed and *(b)* owned the artwork for the Neighbourhood Watch logo. [186196]

Ms Blears: The Neighbourhood Watch logo was designed by the Central Office of Information in 1985 on behalf of the Home Office, it is therefore Crown Copyright.

The Home Office is unaware of providing evidence that this was the case to the Direct Line insurance company in 2002.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his Department will provide a loan to the National Neighbourhood Watch Association. [186198]

Ms Blears: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and I have decided not to give further funding to the National Neighbourhood Watch Association on the basis of a financial audit which was undertaken earlier this year. Under these circumstances it would be inappropriate for us to provide them with a loan.

Nuclear Terrorism

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of the time commitment entered into by participating members of the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre is devoted to nuclear terrorism threats. [184402]

Ms Blears: It is not possible to give a precise figure. The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) analytical effort devoted specifically to nuclear threats is variable, proportionate to the number and credibility of such threats.

Obscene Publications Acts

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to amend the Obscene Publications Acts 1959 and 1964. [185434]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* We are concerned about the availability of obscene material, particularly on the internet. We are currently considering whether the law governing obscene publications should be strengthened. This issue was debated in the Adjournment debate on 18 May, which was obtained by my hon. Friend the Member for Brighton, Pavilion (Mr. Lepper).

Obscene Websites

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are for meetings to be held between Ministers, credit card companies and collection agents to discuss ways of limiting access to obscene websites. [184460]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The Home Office has been working closely with the Association for Payment Clearing Services, (APACS) who have a clear policy that acquiring banks routinely monitor the transaction activity of their internet merchants and that they will not knowingly do business with sites that sell content inciting, advocating or perpetuating violence against persons, including scenes of sexual assault. APACS have also been developing a range of work with the Internet Watch Foundation to assist in tracking and identifying illegal sites.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to encourage international co-operation and an international unified policy on obscene publications on the internet. [184461]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* International co-operation is essential if we are to have any impact on the availability of any particular kind of material on the internet. We have raised this matter in

the United States, and are considering what scope there is for a wider initiative to influence other countries, and for specifically targeting those questions at the G8.

Offender Behaviour Programmes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will list the accredited offender behaviour programmes available in each prison; [183996]

(2) how many places were available on each accredited offender behaviour programme in each prison in the last year for which figures are available. [183997]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* A table has been placed in the Library which gives information on the programmes available in each prison in the public and contracted sectors in 2003–04. We are not able to provide information in terms of the number of places, but have provided the number of accredited offending behaviour programmes completed by prisoners and the numbers of accredited drug programme starts in that year.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new offender behaviour programmes are being considered; who is developing them; and when each is expected to become accredited. [184689]

Paul Goggins: Since 2000 the National Probation Directorate and Her Majesty's Prison Service have successfully designed and gained accreditation for 15 probation and 10 prison offender behaviour programmes covering a comprehensive range of offender needs.

Programmes for further work in connection with women's offending, domestic violence, drugs and sex offending will be submitted for accreditation at the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel in line with the schedule in the table.

Offending behaviour programmes currently in development or awaiting accreditation

Programme	*Status*	*Expected accreditation date*	*Lead responsibility for development*
A booster module for the accredited violence programmes	Designed by the Canadian Technica Software Corporation. Implementation of this programme has been delayed due to resource limitations. A review of resources for the financial year 2005–06 will determine whether this is to be rolled out. If so, a submission to CSAP will be made.	2005–06 (see note, left)	NPS
The second Domestic Violence programme (CDVP)	Designed by the Correctional Services Canada and is also accredited for use by HMPS for those offenders in custody. It is currently being piloted in NPS areas.	March 2005	NPSNPS
A community version of the prison adapted sex offender treatment programme	Development of this programme will be subject to resources.	Provisionally October 2005	NPS
A sex offender one to one internet offenders programme	Developed by NPS it has been piloted.	Provisionally October 2005	NPS
Healthy sexual functioning	To complement an existing sex offender programme. Currently being piloted. A community version of HMPS Healthy Sexual Functioning (HSF) will be adapted when resources permit.	October 2004	HMPS/NPS
JETS	Juvenile Enhanced Thinking Skills	October 2004	HMPS
Programme for violent psychopathic offenders	A complex intervention, across a number of modules, which aims to reduce recidivism in high risk, violent offenders who have high levels of psychopathy. The programme emphasises the need for staff training and support, integration of treatment across the wider regime and progression and resettlement. Currently being piloted in the DSPD units at HMP Frankland and Rampton High Security Hospital.	February 2005	HMPS
C.A.R.E a multi-modal intervention for women in custody	Choices, Actions, Relationships and Emotions. In development, to be piloted later in 2004. The programme is being developed by Offending Behaviour Programmes Unit in partnership with the Women's Team. It targets medium to high risk women with multiple needs and who have been convicted for violent or substance-related offences. At this stage it is only likely to be available for women in custody.	2005	HMPS/NPS
FOR	Focus on Resettlement—short pre-release motivational programme	2005	HMPS/NPS
Short duration programme for substance abusers	The programme is being developed by the Prison Service Drug Strategy Unit (DSU)	November 2004	HMPS
Prisons-Addressing Substance Related	The newly formed Women's Team has responsibility to develop intensive drug	P-ASRO (For Women) March 2006	HMPS

Offending behaviour programmes currently in development or awaiting accreditation

Programme	*Status*	*Expected accreditation date*	*Lead responsibility for development*
Offending PASRO Action on Drugs	treatment programmes for women in custody. The team intends to modify and develop two programmes, which are already accredited for men and are currently being piloted in women's prisons—PASRO and "Action on Drugs".		

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Batley and Spen on 19 April, reference 167051, on police sickness reduction schemes. [184799]

Ms Blears: I replied to my hon. Friend on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 223W.

Passport Checks

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what comparative studies he has conducted as to the time taken for *(a)* EU and *(b)* non-EU passengers to complete immigration formalities in the airports of EU capital cities. [185395]

Mr. Browne: No comparative studies have been undertaken on the time taken for EU and non-EU passengers to complete immigration formalities in the airports of EU capital cities.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he sets service standards that the Immigration Service should seek to process foreign nationals *(a)* more slowly, *(b)* more quickly or *(c)* at the same speed as those arriving at Heathrow from other EU countries. [185396]

Mr. Browne: The UK Immigration Service is committed to clearing bona fide passengers with minimal delay, and has set standards for passenger processing times, which comply with international standards previously adopted. These standards are embedded in the UK Immigration Service's annual business objectives, and are kept under regular review.

The standards are to clear:

90 per cent. of non-EEA passengers in 30 minutes and all such passengers within 45 minutes

EEA passengers with minimal delay.

Passports (Over-75s)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will implement his proposal announced on 19 May to make passports available free of charge for people over the age of 75 years. [184433]

Mr. Browne: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend, the Member for Wrexham (Ian Lucas) on 23 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1421W.

Police

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received about the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 removing the exemption for police officers from jury service. [181755]

Ms Blears: We have had a number of recent discussions with police representatives in relation to the new jury service provisions which were introduced by the Criminal Justice Act 2003. We will be working with the police to provide appropriate guidance to police officers and civilian police staff who are called upon for jury service.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage change there has been in the number of police officers in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Leicester, *(b)* Leicestershire and *(c)* England. [186261]

Ms Blears: Information on the strength for the Leicestershire Constabulary and for England for each year since 1997 is set out in Table 1. Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002 and is set out in Table 2.

Leicestershire Constabulary restructured its BCUs in 2002–03 resulting in a reduction from five to four BCUs by 31 March 2003. Table 2 therefore sets out strength for each BCU. Overall BCU strength increased between March 2002 and March 2003 by 1.2 per cent. (from 1,555 to 1,574 officers). BCU numbers for March 2004 will be published later in the year. The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Matthew Baggott) and within each BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Table 1: Police strength—(a) Leicestershire Constabulary 1997 to 2004, (b) England 1997 to 2004

	Police strength[1]	*Percentage change*
(a) Leicestershire police strength: 1997–2004		
31 March 1997	1,949	
31 March 1998	1,983	+1.7
31 March 1999	1,993	+0.5
31 March 2000	1,993	—
31 March 2001	2,033	+2.0
31 March 2002	2,100	+3.3
31 March 2003	2,114	+0.7
31 May 2004	2,264	+7.1
(b) Police strength: England 1997–2004		
31 March 1997	118,459	
31 March 1998	118,139	−0.3
31 March 1999	117,195	−0.8
31 March 2000	115,324	−1.6
31 March 2001	116,440	+1.0
31 March 2002	120,073	+3.1
31 March 2003	124,158	+3.4

Table 1: Police strength—(a) Leicestershire Constabulary 1997 to 2004, (b) England 1997 to 2004

	Police strength[1]	*Percentage change*
31 May 2004	130,272	+4.9

[1] Source for 1997 to March 2003 is the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS). May 2004 was collected separately outside of the normal data collection arrangements and has not been subject to the same validation as RDS data. All figures are full-time equivalents.

Table 2: Basic Command Unit strength—Leicestershire Constabulary

Basic Command Unit	*March 2002*	*March 2003*
Central	325.7	415
East	305.5	399
North	279.4	354
South	291.8	—
West	352.5	406

Note:
All figures are full-time equivalents.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued to the police on the definition of conducting a search of premises immediately after a suspect has emerged, in relation to section 32 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. [186224]

Ms Blears: None apart from paragraph 4.2 of Code B of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), Codes of Practice. Paragraph 6 of Code B covers general considerations on searches.

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes there have been in police numbers in *(a)* the Harwich constituency, *(b)* Tendring district and *(c)* Essex since 1997. [184995]

Ms Blears: The table sets out police strength in Essex since March 1997. Information on the number of officers within Basic Command Units has only been collected from March 2002. It is not possible to identify the number of officers at constituency level. The deployment of officers to Divisions is a matter for the Chief Constable (David Stevens) and within the D (Tendring) Division deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

	Officer strength	
	Essex police[1]	*D (Tendering) Division*
31 March 1997	2,961	—
31 March 1998	2,928	—
31 March 1999	2,891	—
31 March 2000	2,806	—
31 March 2001	2,887	—
31 March 2002	2,946	178.2
31 March 2003	3,007	169
31 May 2004	3,130	Not available[2]

[1] Source for 1997 to March 2003 is the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS). May 2004 was collected separately outside of the normal data collection arrangements and has not been subject to the same validation as RDS data.

[2] Basic Command Unit data for 31 March 2004 will be published later in the year.

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many special constables there are in *(a)* the Thames Valley Police Force and *(b)* Oxfordshire; and how many there were in (i) 2001 and (ii) 1997. [186002]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* The latest published police service strength figures are contained in Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/03 and are for the year ending 31 March 2003. Figures for March 2004 will be published later this year.

The number of Special Constables in Thames Valley Police Force for the years requested are as follows:

As at 31 March	*Number*
2003	369
2001	418
1997	656

There are no separate statistics published for the number of Special Constables in Oxfordshire, which area forms part of the Thames Valley Police Force. Deployment of Specials within the Force area is a matter for the Chief Officer.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many measures are to be reported by the police under the 2004–05 Statutory Performance Indicators for policing; and how many were to be reported under *(a)* the 2003–04 Police Best Value Performance Indicator and *(b)* the Best Value Performance Indicator applicable to police authorities in previous years. [184898]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) for 2004–05 were set by Statutory Instrument 2004/644 under the Local Government Act 1999. In previous years the 1999 Act was used to set "Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)".

Individual SPIs and BVPIs are based on one or more "component measures". The number of SPIs for 2004–05, plus the number of BVPIs set in previous years, is listed as follows together with an estimate of the number of component measures:

In 2004–05 there were 13 indicators comprised of 36 measures;

In 2003–04 there were 19 indicators comprised of 44 measures;

In 2002–03 there were 21 indicators comprised of 48 measures;

In 2001–02 there were 32 indicators comprised of 47 measures.

Prisons

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison officers, in full-time equivalent terms, were employed by the Prison Service on 31 March in each of the last five years; and what the planned number of officers was in each case. [183952]

Paul Goggins: The table shows the number of full-time equivalent officer grade staff employed since 1999 against the best available estimate of planned officer posts. The figures include prison officers, senior officers and principal officers.

As at 31 March	Full-time equivalent officers	Operational staffing requirement	Forecast planned posts
2004	23,952	24,709	—
2003	23,332	—	24,147
2002	22,881	—	23,666
2001	23,672	—	23,901
2000	24,020	—	24,158
1999	23,831	—	23,876

The figures for the planned number of officer posts prior to 2004 are not an accurate reflection of the operational staffing requirement. These figures, based on forecast planned posts, included staff nominally identified for special units within prisons that were used infrequently and were staffed using additional supplementary hours from existing staff; and the staffing requirements for new accommodation that had not yet opened. The Prison Service introduced new arrangements for the collection of workforce data earlier this year to eliminate these anomalies and to reflect more accurately the operational staffing requirement. Before April 2001 the figures were collected as part of a general planning process and were not specifically designed for workforce planning purposes.

A contract supplementary hours scheme has been in operation since April 2001, which allows governors to deploy existing staff on pre-arranged, additional hours contracts, to meet any shortfall in actual staffing availability. In April 2004 this scheme contributed the equivalent of 373 full-time officers. As a result, actual staffing availability at April 2004 (full-time equivalent staff in post plus the use of contracted supplementary hours) was (24,325) compared to the operational staffing requirement of (24,709). This represents a gap of 1.6 per cent, which the Director General considers to be an acceptable operating margin.

Figures on the use of contract supplementary hours are not available prior to April 2004.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the effect of additional investment on delivery in prison and probation services since 1998. [182322]

Mr. Browne: In its Public Service Agreement, published in 2000, the Home Office committed itself to reducing by 2003–04 the proportion of offenders given prison or community sentences who are subsequently reconvicted by 5 per cent. compared to a 1997 baseline. The target was carried forward in the 2002 Public Service Agreement, with a new baseline of 2000. Latest published figures, for 1999, show that 3.2 per cent. fewer offenders were reconvicted than predicted. The Home Office also committed itself to maintaining the (then) current low number of escapes, including Category A escapes. There has been no escape of a Category A prisoner since 1995. The baseline for the total number of escapes in 1997–98 was 0.17 per cent. of the average prison population. The outcome for 2003–04 was 0.067 per cent.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1673W, on prisons, what moneys will be made available to *(a)* build and *(b)* manage the projected prison establishments. [163273]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 23 March 2004]:* The Prison Service plans to ensure that its operating assets are fit for purpose. To that end, it seeks potential sites for new establishments, whether to expand capacity or as part of improving the mix of existing capacity. The business cases for acquisition of sites, for options for the construction of buildings and for future management of sites will be made within the constraints of resources that become available through the spending review process.

Mr. Osten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what minimum nutritional standards have been set for prison food. [183933]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 13 July 2004]:* The requirements for Prison Service catering—for all types of establishment—are set out in the Prison Service Catering Manual (Prison Service Order 5000). Chapter 3 of the manual sets out the mandatory provisions required to produce nutritional meals. These include ensuring that:

Catering management systems deliver a high standard of menus economically

There is a multi-choice, pre-select menu that includes healthy options and reflects prisoners' preferences

Prisons maintain high standards in the presentation and serving of food to prisoners

There are regular independent inspections of food production and servery arrangements.

All Prison Service establishments have the objective of offering a range of foods that enable prisoners to make healthy eating choices. All establishments must offer at least one lower fat/high fibre/lower sugar or lower salt item on each menu and there must be a clearly marked healthy eating option included on all menus. In particular prisons are required to offer a wide range of interesting fresh fruits, vegetables and salads. As well as being monitored during the cooking process nutrition is also monitored in food specifications via purchasing. Prison Service caterers are required to look objectively at menu selection and continually seek to modify their recipes, cooking methods and service towards more healthy guidelines.

Catering staff are provided with training information and the skills required to produce healthy food—this includes guidelines on how to cook food so as to retain as high a range of vitamins and minerals as possible. The Prison Service runs nutrition training courses at intermediate level for prison caterers—these lead to a formal qualification from the Royal Institute of Public Health. Some establishments involve the local hospital dietician in their menu planning and some have obtained Healthy Eating Awards (Heartbeat) from their local authorities.

Increasingly—and through a partnership between prisons catering, education and PE departments—the Prison Service is encouraging individual prisoners to eat more healthily by:

Reduction of fat intake, especially saturated fats which are thought to raise cholesterol levels in the blood

Promotion of starchy, fibre-rich foods such as wholemeal bread, potatoes, pasta and rice together with fruit and vegetables

The reduction of sugar intake

The avoidance of excessive salt.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 938W, on prisons, for what reasons his Department does not propose to extend this further to mirror the two-tier workforce provisions contained in the Local Government Code of Practice on Workforce Matters. [183982]

Mr. Browne: The Home Office complies fully with the policies that currently apply to central Government and agencies, including the Cabinet Office Statement of Practice "Staff Transfers in the Public Sector" and its annex "A Fair Deal for Staff Pensions".

There are no immediate plans to mirror the local government arrangements but as we move forward with our reforms we will work with other Departments to further address the "two-tier" issue.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his Oral Answer to the hon. Member for Rochford and Southend, East (Sir Teddy Taylor) 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1116, on prisons, what factors have contributed to prison operational capacity increasing by 500 places in recent months; and in which prison establishments these places are located. [185363]

Paul Goggins: The additional places referred to in my reply of 12 July to the hon. Member for Rochford and Southend, East (Sir Teddy Taylor) are the result of additional houseblocks which have opened at Her Majesty's Prison Wymott (180 places); Her Majesty's Young Offender Institution Swinfen Hall (120 places); Her Majesty's Prison Wealstun (180 places); and Her Majesty's Prison Winchester (40 places). In addition, a new prison, Her Majesty's Prison Bronzefield, opened in June 2004 and, as at 12 July, had 150 places available.

At the same time some accommodation has been taken out of use for refurbishment.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many suicides of *(a)* men and *(b)* women there were in each London prison in each of the last five years. [186220]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is provided in the table.

		Number of self-inflicted deaths[1]						
Establishment	*Gender*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Total*
Belmarsh	Male	1	1	1	0	1	3	7
Brixton	Male	1	4	2	2	2	1	12
Feltham	Male	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Holloway	Female	1	2	1	1	1	0	6
Latchmere House	Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pentonville	Male	0	1	1	3	1	0	6
Wandsworth	Male	2	0	7	1	2	3	15
Wormwood Scrubs	Male	0	1	1	1	1	1	5
Total		5	9	14	9	8	8	53

[1] The Prison Service employs the term "self-inflicted death" rather than "suicide". This includes all those deaths where it appears the person may have acted specifically to take his/her own life.

Tackling the number of self-inflicted deaths of prisoners is a key ministerial and Prison Service priority. Central to the suicide prevention strategy that I announced on 31 March is the need to reduce levels of distress in prisons and to promote the well being of all staff and prisoners. The strategy has strong support from partner agencies and external organisations, and is being developed in close partnership with the Department of Health. The developing strategy will link existing programmes and planned investment in five broad areas of work. These are:

Regime, activities and care planning for all prisoners;

Improved knowledge and outlooks of all staff at all levels;

Meeting the special needs of the most vulnerable prisoners;

Training and support for staff;

Design solutions to minimise impulsive acts.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women prisoners were held in prisons in England and Wales on 1 July *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 2003, *(c)* 2002 and *(d)* 2001. [186225]

Mr. Browne: The number of female prisoners held in prison establishments in England and Wales on 30 June in each of the last four years is provided in the following table.

Population of female prisoners England and Wales, 30 June

	Number
2001	3,713
2002	4,394
2003	4,595
2004	4,452

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the salary ranges are for prison custody officers at each privately run prison establishment. [184693]

Paul Goggins: The salary ranges for prison custody officers at each of the privately run prisons in England and Wales are shown in the table (as provided by each of the four contractors):

£

Establishment	Salary range	Comment
HMP and YOI Ashfield	15,008–16,043	Attracts an additional £1,500 local economy allowance
HMP Altcourse	14,758–16,773	—
HMP Bronzefield	14,700–22,400	—
HMP Doncaster	14,500–18,500	—
HMP Dovegate	12,500–17,000	The maximum salary after two years service is £17,000
HMP Forest Bank	14,700–22,400	—
HMP Lowdham Grange	12,000–17,100	Salary after graduation £14,200
HMP Parc	14,608–17,657	—
HMP Rye Hill	14,758–15,893	—
HMP Wolds	15,726–21,576	—

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will *(a)* carry out an access audit of prisons and *(b)* develop a strategy for disabled prisoners. [184836]

Mr. Browne: The Prison Service is currently undertaking access audits across the prison estate to ensure that establishments are able to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The Prison Service treats all prisoners as individuals and prisons are required to address all individual prisoner needs. However, Prison Service Order 2855 adds to this general duty of care and sets out mandatory requirements including that every establishment must ensure that they have a local policy to prevent discrimination on the grounds of disability and that each establishment should nominate an appropriate member of staff (Disability Liaison Officer) to act as a contact on matters concerning disability.

Pubwatch Scheme

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what support the Government is providing to the national Pubwatch scheme in *(a)* England, *(b)* the North West and *(c)* Cheshire. [183677]

Ms Blears: The Home Office does not provide direct financial support to Pubwatch schemes. But the Government welcomes the contribution that Pubwatch can make in helping to tackle alcohol-related violence and disorder. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England published on 15 March 2004 highlighted how solutions involving the industry such as Pubwatch can contribute to targeting the problem of alcohol related violence at source.

Re-offending

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his Department's strategy to reduce crimes committed by re-offenders. [185811]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* On 19 July, the Home Office published its strategic plan "Confident Communities in a Secure Britain", setting out how it will cut crime in the next five years, including its goal of reducing re-offending through the rehabilitation of offenders.

Some of the key elements include:

The development of a new strategy to target the most prolific offenders in our communities. Local areas have been asked to focus on the individuals who, in their judgement, are the most prolific, most persistently antisocial and who pose the greatest threat to the safety and confidence of their local communities. All local areas will be expected to have a scheme in place to tackle these offenders by 6 September 2004.

More work with the parents of young offenders and greater use of supervised community programmes, including using electronic tagging and tracking.

The parallel publication of a National Action Plan to reduce re-offending through greater strategic direction and collaborative working. Over 60 action points have been agreed across Government within the main areas to support the rehabilitation of offenders. A complementary approach is being developed in Wales.

The Action Plan has been set within our proposals for improving the management of offenders, with the establishment of a National Offender Management Service, providing better targeted interventions and clearer accountability for reducing re-offending.

Finally, because drug use contributes to an enormous proportion of re-offending, directing drug-using offenders into treatment is fundamental to our strategy. The development of through-care and after-care provisions are at the heart of the Criminal Justice Interventions Programme addressing the need and bridging the gap particularly for those drug misusing offenders leaving the criminal justice system and treatment.

Retail Crime

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of *(a)* the proportion of retail crime that was reported to the police and *(b)* the actual level of retail crime in each year since 1997. [185604]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* The Business Crime Team within the Home Office is working with the police, retailers and the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate to enhance the information on business and retail crime. This work is on-going.

Information on retail crime is available from the British Retail Consortium who publish an annual retail crime survey, which is a national and international commentary on retail crime.

Security Officers (Licensing)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) for what reasons under the Private Security Industry Act 2001 a security officer pays a much higher sum for licences than the actual cost of the licensing and criminal record check; [184536]

(2) for what reasons under the Private Security Industry Act 2001 an individual private security officer will be required to pay for separate licences if during the course of his duties he patrols a shopping centre, monitors CCTV or applies a wheel clamp in a car park; [184537]

(3) for what reasons under the Private Security Industry Act 2001 licensing of the manned guarding sector of the security industry commences in January 2005 when compliance is not required until early 2006; [184538]

(4) for what reasons it was decided that in-house manned guarding teams should be exempt from licensing under the Private Security Industry Act 2001. [184539]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: The cost of the Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence, which is valid for three years, reflects the licence application process and includes the current cost of a Criminal Records Bureau Standard Disclosure (28). It also funds the associated activities undertaken to secure the future of the private security industry. These include compliance with and enforcement of the licensing scheme, raising awareness, accommodation, personnel, and research costs. The licence fee is tax deductible.

The private security industry contains a number of sectors each requiring their own skills and competencies. The SIA has worked closely with the industry to both identify and tailor training for these sector specific competencies. The nature of the sectors will mean that some training and competencies require sector specific licences. However, wherever possible, when competencies overlap between sectors, the SIA has exploited opportunities for one licence to be valid across a range of licensable activities.

The manned guarding sector is expected to commence rollout in January 2005. The industry has been supporting the SIA by working in partnership to find a mutually beneficial approach to the transition to licensing and developing the most appropriate process. The 12 months between commencement and legal requirement will allow business to spread their employees' training requirements and applications over a mutually agreeable time frame that meets both the commercial needs of the industry and the implementation of regulation.

The Government's White Paper published in 1999 envisaged that in-house staff employed on manned guarding duties would be covered by licensing arrangements. However, it was subsequently decided that, in light of differences in needs and circumstances between in-house provision and that under external contract, licensing requirements under the Act should not extend to in-house staff. More recently, the SIA has commissioned a detailed examination of in-house security provision, and a report is expected towards the end of the year.

Sexual Offences

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offences of unlawful sexual intercourse with a child under 16 years were *(a)* recorded and *(b)* successfully prosecuted in each police area in the last year for which information is available. [182382]

Paul Goggins: In England and Wales during 2002–03 there were 1,514 recorded crimes for the offence of unlawful sexual intercourse with a girl under 16. In 2002, in all courts in England and Wales, there were 228 convictions for this offence. For the offence of unlawful sexual intercourse with a girl under 13, there were 187 recorded crimes in 2002–03 and 47 convictions in 2002. There were no equivalent recorded crimes for a boy of these ages.

These statistics are not published at Police Force Area level.

Stop and Search

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases are outstanding from the stop and search orders issued under Section 44 of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 at the time of the use by the US Air Force of RAF Fairford. [183826]

Ms Blears: Stop and search powers under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 were in force in Gloucestershire Constabulary between 6 March and 27 April 2003. During this period, as a result of a Section 44 stop and search, six people were arrested for suspected drug related offences, one person for a suspected breach of the peace and one person for suspected criminal damage. None of these cases are outstanding. Five of those arrested were released, two were cautioned and one received a conditional discharge.

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the 2002–03 stop and search figures for West Yorkshire; and if he will make a statement. [184795]

Ms Blears: The Home Office's Stop and Search Action Team has analysed the figures relating to the use of stop and search powers in West Yorkshire during 2002–03. There was a significant rise in the overall number of people who were stopped and searched by the police, but the figures do not suggest that there is evidence that the police had targeted any particular racial or ethnic group. Between 2001–02 and 2002–03 there was not a significant change in the proportion of people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds that were stopped and searched by the police.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will review the operation of stop and search powers in England *(a)* generally and *(b)* under counter-terrorism legislation. [183120]

Ms Blears: In July 2004 the Stop and Search Action Team (SSAT) was launched to ensure that police forces use the stop and search power fairly and as effectively as possible.

SSAT's programme of work will include further research looking at the disproportionate impact of these powers on communities; work with selected forces to understand the causes of disproportionality; and the development of a good practice package.

The SSAT will be working with both police and community representatives to deliver their work programme. The use of stop and search powers under terrorism legislation is included within the work programme and this will include work to reassure

Muslim communities that these powers, including counter-terrorism powers, are being used proportionately and appropriately.

Street Crime (London)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent on policing in central London and each of its surrounding boroughs in 2003–04. [184278]

Ms Blears: The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)'s net budget requirement in 2003–04 was £2,207.8 million. Distribution of resources within the Service is a matter for the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and the Metropolitan Police Authority.

Resources are allocated directly to borough operational command units using the Service's resource allocation formula. In addition, borough units are able to call upon all-London Units (such as dog sections, Territorial Support Group, Traffic and Air Support Units) when operational priorities dictate.

The Commissioner informs me that the budget for the Westminster borough operational command unit in 2003–04 was £81.4 million. The cost of policing public order, specialist units, non-operational support units providing service to Westminster, the Royal Palaces, Palace of Westminster and Diplomatic Protection was additional. Total police spending in Westminster could be calculated only at disproportionate cost.

I understand from Chamberlain to the Corporation of London that the net budget for the City of London Police in 2003–04 was £67.2 million.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many street crimes were reported in London in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 1999, *(c)* 2001, *(d)* 2003 and *(e)* 2004; and how many were prosecuted in each year. [184288]

Ms Blears: Information specifically relating to street crimes is not collected centrally. The statistics that are collected on recorded crime relate to offences of business and personal robbery. Prosecution data does not distinguish between these two types of robbery and is only available for all robbery offences.

Terrorism/Security Legislation

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the recent findings on the percentage of people of Asian origin arrested under terrorism and security legislation. [184174]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* Published figures on arrests under terrorism legislation do not include information on ethnic origin. The statistics published recently in the report under section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 included the ethnic breakdown of those stopped and searched under section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

We are concerned about any issues of disproportionality and are committed to improving and developing a close partnership with all communities towards the shared aim of combating terrorism. We are undertaking specific work to reassure communities that counter-terrorism powers are being used proportionately and appropriately.

The Home Office has formed the Stop and Search Action Team to take work forward to ensure that stop and search as a police power is used fairly and as effectively as possible in the prevention and detection of crime. We have also published guidance for police forces on the authorisation of powers under section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, which emphasises the need to consider as wide a range of factors as possible when authorising the use of these powers.

The powers within the Terrorism Act are aimed at terrorists, whatever their background or section of society they may come from. They are not aimed at a particular race, religion, or any other social group. In using them, the police have regard to the threat we face in this country from terrorism. That threat is mainly, but not exclusively, from international terrorism in connection with Al Qaida and its associated networks.

Terrorist Attack

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to post advice for citizens on actions to be taken during terrorist attacks on the *(a)* Home Office and *(b)* UK resilience websites. [184600]

Mr. Blunkett: I refer the hon. Member to my statement of 20 March 2003, *Official Report*, column 51WS.

The UK Resilience website already directs the public to the Home Office website and the advice on what measures they can take to protect themselves from terrorism at work, home and when preparing to go abroad http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/terrorism/protect/index.html.

The hon. Member will also be aware that on Monday 26 July my colleague Caroline Flint MP launched a public information booklet called "Preparing for Emergencies—What You Need To Know" which will be delivered to every household in the UK during August. This booklet can be accessed on the following website: www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk.

Victim Support

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent by his Department supporting victims of *(a)* crime and *(b)* domestic violence in each of the last 25 years; and what the planned budgets for each are as a result of the Spending Review for each police authority area in England and Wales. [186136]

Ms Blears: The information is as follows:

(a) A large part of the budget of the criminal justice agencies goes to help support victims of crime—it is estimated that around £650 million is invested at national level. However, it is not possible to break down the specific amounts, or to separate different types of crime. The following table shows the expenditure over the last 25 years that can be identified as being directly allocated from the Home Office to support victims of crime.

Allocation to organisations directly supporting victims

Financial year	*Total (£ million)*
1978–79	14.624
1979–80	17.658
1980–81	24.402
1981–82	25.238
1982–83	33.203
1983–84	36.635
1984–85	39.518
1985–86	46.068
1986–87	53.979
1987–88	60.563
1988–89	79.602
1989–90	85.696
1991–92	162.432
1992–93	173.702
1993–94	191.081
1994–95	202.940
1995–96	208.820
1996–97	240.829
1997–98	234.841
1998–99	229.437
1999–2000	247.466
2000–01	267.368
2001–02	326.535
2002–03	268.110

(b) The Home Office also provides funding for numerous initiatives and pilot projects including the Road Traffic pilot projects and support for victims of human trafficking. The Home Office also announced in April 2004 that it would provide additional funding of £4 million over two years, specifically to boost the development of services for victims of sexual offending, including developing and extending the network of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs).

(c) The Government are committed to tackling domestic violence. The Home Office is spending £14 million on domestic violence in the 2002 Spending Review period (2003–04 to 2005–06). This money is being used to help support victims, bring perpetrators to justice and prevent domestic violence in the first place, all of which will help make victims and their children safer. In earlier spending rounds, domestic violence related projects have included the piloting of a range of interventions through the Violence Against Women Initiative, part of the £10.7 million Crime Reduction Programme.

(d) Spending programmes and support for police authorities from the provisions of the 2004 Spending Review are under consideration.

Visiting Forces Act

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions since 1974 US forces personnel have submitted certificates of immunity under the Visiting Forces Act 1952 to British courts. [178709]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 14 June 2004]:* Statistics on certificates of immunity are not collected centrally.

Volunteering

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to encourage voluntary activity among *(a)* senior civil servants and *(b)* members of the Cabinet. [185081]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* Volunteering within the Home Office is encouraged at all levels including senior civil servants particularly through a new scheme called the "Out of Office Experience," which has been running for the last 12 months. As part of this initiative staff are encouraged to apply for up to five days Special Annual Leave per year, with pay, to undertake voluntary work. The initiative encourages volunteering and enables staff to see Home Office policies being delivered at the front line.

There is no specific initiative in place to encourage volunteering among Cabinet members, but all ministers witness at first hand the dedication of many volunteers and the valuable contribution their activity makes in many areas of life when they undertake official visits to agencies that use volunteers.

Witness and Victim Intimidation

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of intimidation of *(a)* witnesses and *(b)* victims have been recorded in each year for which figures are available. [184961]

Mr. Blunkett: An exact answer to the question is not available.

The table shows recorded crime figures since 1997 for the offence of perverting the course of justice in England and Wales.

	Number
1997	6,779
1997–98	7,108
1998–99	9,216
1998–99[1]	9,265
1999–2000	9,637
2000–01	9,763
2001–02	10,287
2002–03	11,295

[1] The number of crimes recorded in that financial year using the expanded offence coverage and revised counting rules which came into effect on 1 April 1998.

The following table gives figures on Court Proceedings by offence:

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts, England and Wales 2002 [1]

Offence description	*Statute*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Intimidating a juror or witness or person assisting in investigation of offenders	Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 Sec. 51(1)	2,046	415
Harming or threatening to harm a juror, witness or person assisting in investigation of offences	Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 Sec. 51 (2)	249	65
Intimidating or intending to intimidate a witness	Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 Sec. 39	15	3

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts, England and Wales 2002 [1]

Offence description	*Statute*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Harming or intending to harm a witness	Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 Sec. 40	3	1

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

HEALTH

EU Clinical Trials Directive

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact of the EU Clinical Trials Directive in the UK. [185535]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The United Kingdom Clinical Trials Regulations[1] to implement the Clinical Trials Directive[2] came into force on 1 May 2004. It is still early to fully assess the impact of the Directive in the UK. Transitional arrangements allowed holders of existing authorisations or exemptions to roll them over as clinical trial authorisations without applying again to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) or paying a fee. The MHRA has met its deadline of 14 days for Phase I applications and of 30 days for all other applications. Generally the new procedures have been introduced without disruption of clinical trials. Industry and academia have both given early positive feedback on the UK's implementation of the Directive.

[1] The Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations 2004 S.I. 1031.

[2] Directive 2001/20/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 April 2001 on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the member states relating to the implementation of good clinical practice in the conduct of clinical trials on medicinal products for human use.

Meat Products (Added Water)

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment the Food Standards Agency has made of the effects of producers injecting water into meat products; [185885]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effects of supermarkets injecting water into meat products. [185882]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is aware of concerns about trade in products which appear to be raw unprocessed meat but which have been injected with excess added water, in some cases as high as 50 per cent., and moisture retaining ingredients. While there are no food safety concerns the FSA's view is that this practice is unacceptable. It is therefore pressing for stronger legislative controls at European Union level to prohibit use of moisture retaining ingredients, introduce limits on addition of water and improve labelling.

The FSA is aware of concerns about the labelling of some pork products with lower levels of added water which are sold in United Kingdom supermarkets. A stakeholder meeting held earlier this year concluded that label declarations of added water on these products should be sufficiently prominent that consumers can make informed choices about the products they buy. The FSA is currently drawing up best practice guidelines to encourage clearer labelling.

Milk Products

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether liquid or powdered milk, from EU member states used in the production of milk products produced in another EU member state can be identified by UK authorities on its import to the UK. [184719]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Milk products from other European Union Member States are in free circulation and would not be subject to any special checks when entering the United Kingdom. They must carry a health mark identifying the establishment from which they come and, through that establishment, it would be possible for enforcement authorities to trace the origin of the milk used to make them.

Abortions

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many abortions have been performed in each year since 1990 at *(a)* 22 weeks gestation and *(b)* 23 weeks gestation; [185596]

(2) what the gestational age was of each of the recorded abortions since 1990 for *(a)* cleft lip and *(b)* cleft palate; [185601]

(3) how many abortions for *(a)* cleft lip and *(b)* cleft palate were performed prior to 1990. [185602]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The available information is contained in the annual Office for National Statistics publication, "Abortion Statistics, series AB"; Office for National Statistics, "Congenital Anomaly Statistics notifications, series MB3" and Department of Health, "Statistical Bulletin 2003/23", copies of which have been placed in the Library.

Adur, Arun and Worthing Primary Care Trust

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of staff in Adur, Arun and Worthing Primary Care Trust are agency staff. [185519]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

The NHS Professionals special health authority has been established to provide strategic management of the temporary labour market within the national health service. This new organisation, which became fully operational on April 1, 2004, will in future collect and analyse information on agency usage in the NHS trusts, in which the service is implemented. However, this will not capture all agency usage within the NHS, as not all organisations utilise NHS Professionals.

Asthma

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the incidence of *(a)* child and *(b)* adult asthma was in each of the last 25 years, broken down by region. [186100]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Breast Screening

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of breast screening sites provide screening for women aged between 65 and 70 years; and if he will make a statement. [186268]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As at 30 June 2004, 51 per cent. of the 81 local breast screening programmes in England had begun inviting women aged 65 to 70 for breast screening. All local programmes are expected to begin inviting the older women by December 2004 and we are closely monitoring the achievement of this target. Since the age extension began in April 2001, over 250,000 more women have been invited for breast screening. 400,000 more women a year will be invited once the extension is fully implemented.

Care Homes

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of people had their needs reviewed within three months of placement in a care home in each local authority. [182642]

Dr. Ladyman: We have issued guidance to local councils under the "Fairer Access" to Care Services in May 2002, which stated that there should be an initial review within three months of help first being provided to the individual. The information on the percentage of people whose needs are reviewed within three months of placement in a care home is not held centrally.

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds were available for the elderly in care homes in the Thames Valley in *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 1997 and *(c)* 2001. [186001]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* The table shows the number of places available for adults aged 65 and over in residential and nursing care homes in the Thames Valley, at 31 March for the years 1997 and 2001.

Number of care home places for adults aged 65 and over in the Thames Valley[1], 1997 and 2001, as at 31 March

	Residential	*[2,3]Nursing*
1997	6,300	—
2001	6,500	4,600

[1] For 1997 residential care, the Thames Valley has been taken as Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire local authorities. For 2001, the Thames Valley has been taken as Bracknell Forest, Milton Keynes, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham local authorities for residential care; and Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire health authorities for nursing care.

[2] Nursing home figures include places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.

[3] Information is not available by age band at health authority level for 1997.

Note:
Numbers of rounded.

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Children's Health Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which hospitals operate children's accident and emergency departments. [185404]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect this information in the form requested.

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes in funding for children's health services he intends to make as a consequence of the 2004 Spending Review. [186071]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* In the 2004 spending review, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer confirmed sustained high levels of investment in the national health service of 7.1 per cent., in real terms. The large majority of this funding will be allocated directly to primary care trusts and it will be local decision making that determines the level of investment required to achieve national standards and meet local priorities.

Chiropractors

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations the Government have received about the availability of chiropractic treatment on the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [185501]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The only representation we have received so far this year on this subject was from the hon. Member for Witney (Mr. Cameron) on behalf of a constituent. I replied on 9 May.

Chlamydia/Ectopic Pregnancies

John Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list *(a)* the rate for the detection of chlamydia and *(b)* the rate of ectopic pregnancies for each of the hospital trusts in London and the South East in the last year for which figures are available. [182779]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the rate of detection of chlamydia for each hospital trust in London and the South East is not available.

Data on ectopic pregnancies are shown in the table:

Number of hospital episodes with a primary diagnoses of ectopic pregnancy (ICD10 Code 000), 2002-03

Trust name	*Total episodes*
London	
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	36
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	71
The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	43
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	62
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	53
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	119
West Middlesex University NHS Trust	40
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	55
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	39
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	77
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	46
Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Trust	94
The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	96
St. Mary's NHS Trust	69
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	71
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	85

Number of hospital episodes with a primary diagnoses of ectopic pregnancy (ICD10 Code 000), 2002-03

Trust name	Total episodes
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	144
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	65
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	54
Barts and The London NHS Trust	103
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	62
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	114
Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust	76
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	60
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	124
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	43
Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	46
South East	
Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Trust	28
Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust	52
Milton Keynes General Hospital NHS Trust	56
Frimley Park Hospital NHS Trust	42
South Buckinghamshire NHS Trust	36
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust	79
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	94
Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals NHS Trust	56
Winchester and Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Trust	34
North Hampshire Hospitals NHS Trust	43
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	46
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	64
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	79
Stoke Mandeville Hospital NHS Trust	38
Medway NHS Trust	40
Worthing and Southlands Hospitals NHS Trust	45
Royal West Sussex NHS Trust	28
Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Trust	26
Oxford Radcliffe Hospital NHS Trust	110
Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust	54
Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust	51
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust	103
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	62
East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust	60
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	46

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics
Produced by SD3G

Continuing Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary care trusts have successfully implemented the Single Assessment Process as outlined in Standard Two of the National Service Framework for Older People; and if he will make a statement. [185993]

Dr. Ladyman: Localities were required to complete an audit of progress regarding their implementation of the single assessment process for older people up to 1 April 2004. Progress reports should have been forwarded by localities to strategic health authorities (SHAs) by the end of June. SHAs have a further three months to take stock of the reports and approach individual localities over issues of significant concern.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 361W, on continuing care, on what date the report of the review of NHS continuing care will be published. [186304]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 361W and also to the written ministerial statement I made on 22 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 78WS.

Cosmetic Surgery

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 800W, on cosmetic surgery, if he will accept the Select Committee's recommendation that health warnings be placed on all advertising for cosmetic surgery. [184209]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government's response to all the recommendations in the Health Select Committee's fifth report on the regulation of private and other independent healthcare was published on 3 December 1999. Copies are available in the Library.

The Government did not support the Committee's recommendation that health warnings be placed on all advertising for cosmetic surgery. As the Committee noted, all surgery carries an element of risk—it is not exclusive to cosmetic procedures. It is the professional duty of all surgeons to discuss with each patient the possible risks, to secure informed consent.

Dentistry

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many training places were available in dental schools for trainee dentists in each year since 1991. [184210]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* The quota of training places available for dentists in dental schools in England shown in the table has remained unchanged since the last dental workforce review conducted in 1987. Information on the number of dentists admitted to dental schools, which is available from 1997 and is included in the table, shows that intakes have increased. On 16 July, we announced that funding would be provided for an extra 170 undergraduate dental training places in England from October 2005.

Number of training places available in England

Dental school	Number of training places	Number of students admitted each year						
		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003[1]
Birmingham	65	69	71	71	69	73	77	76
Bristol	50	59	55	57	56	55	58	60
King's College, London	145	173	148	138	152	50	168	151
Leeds	55	58	52	62	54	61	65	59
Liverpool	55	59	56	57	53	57	56	66
Manchester	60	59	66	81	89	79	87	90
Newcastle	68	80	78	65	73	70	70	72
QMW (Barts and The London)	55	55	56	60	65	68	61	78
Sheffield	47	56	51	56	61	59	69	72

Number of training places available in England

Dental school	*Number of training places*	*Number of students admitted each year*						
		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*[1]
Total	600	668	633	647	672	672	711	724

[1] Provisional figures.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on the recent returning to NHS dentistry advertisements in national newspapers; how many advertisements have been placed; for what period of time; what other media are being used to urge dentists to return to working in NHS dentistry; what budget this spending will come from; and what indicators he will use to test the effectiveness of this advertising campaign. [184570]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has spent around £120,000 on media for this campaign. Five different case studies of dentists who have returned to national health service work or joined the "Keeping in Touch" scheme have been used in 15 insertions in some national and professional press titles and magazines. Press is the only advertising medium being used, but free information leaflets have been produced for enquirers. Information is also available from the NHS careers service helpline and website.

The campaign started on 30 June and will continue throughout August in some monthly titles. The effectiveness of the campaign will be judged by the numbers of calls to the response line and by applications to join the "Keeping in Touch" scheme.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is his Department's policy to allow newly qualified dentists from other EU countries to practise in the UK where their training has included no clinical experience. [185826]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: Dentists, who are nationals of and who qualified in a European Economic Area (EEA) State, are entitled to automatic recognition throughout the EEA on the basis that their qualifications must comply with specified minimum training requirements, which include mandatory practical instruction. Where these requirements are not met, recognition may be subject to proof of a specified minimum period of professional experience.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have moved from NHS to private dental treatment in the last seven years. [185860]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally but, in its report, "The private dentistry market in the UK", the Office of Fair Trading estimated that the private dentistry market was valued at over £1 billion in 2001, with 7 million people regularly receiving private dental treatment. We accept that the difficulties people have in accessing national health service dentistry in some areas has contributed to the growth in private dentistry. To address this problem, we are undertaking the most significant reform of NHS dentistry since the inception of the NHS. On 16 July, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, announced that an extra £368 million has been allocated to recruiting 1,000 more dentists, funding an extra 170 training places for undergraduates in dental schools and increasing the overall expenditure on primary care NHS dental services by 19 per cent. Commissioning of these services is to be devolved from the Department so that, from October 2005, each primary care trust will have a duty to provide and secure the dental care it considers necessary to meet all reasonable requirements of its population.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the average distance a person from the BB7 postcode area would need to travel to see a NHS dentist if he were to register on 19 July with the nearest available dentist. [185869]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The average distance to a general dental service surgery is 1.51 miles for people living in the BB7 postcode area.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are on waiting lists to register with a NHS dentist. [185870]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are no official waiting lists to register with a National Health Service dentist, although some primary care trusts may keep lists of people who have indicated that they wish to register.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his written statement of 16 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 90–1WS, on NHS dentistry, how many patients will be able to register with the additional NHS dentists. [185872]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: We estimate that 1,000 whole-time equivalent dentists, who we plan to recruit to the national health service by October 2005, will be capable of treating two million people who cannot at the moment access a NHS dentist.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 934W, on NHS dentistry, what assessment he has made of the impact of shortages of dentists accepting NHS patients on levels of emergency hospital admissions for dental treatment. [186199]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Very few dental emergencies require hospital admission. People requiring urgent dental treatment are advised to telephone NHS Direct. Reports indicate that some 93 per cent. of callers to NHS Direct are being advised of available sources of national health service dentistry within locally agreed standards and about 19,000 people a month are doing so.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the UK schools of dentistry that have agreed to increase their undergraduate places in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005, broken down by number of places. [185825]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: We are providing an extra 170 extra undergraduate dental training places in England from October 2005,

supported by £80 million capital expenditure over four years and revenue funding reaching £29 million by 2010–11. The chief dental officer will chair a working party to decide where the extra training places will be provided.

Departmental Age Policy

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186087]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The retirement age for most staff within the Department and its agencies is currently set at 60. However, the requirement to retire at 60 has been amended from November this year to enable staff to remain in employment until they reach 65 years if they wish. Staff in the senior civil service may also apply to stay on beyond 60 if they wish but this is subject to approval by the Permanent Secretary, or Cabinet Office for the most senior staff.

Departmental Consultancy and Accountancy Costs

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost has been to the Department of *(a)* management consultants and *(b)* accountancy advice in the past year. [180321]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Expenditure by the Department for management consultants and accountancy advice for the year 2003–04 is £10.031 million. The central accounting system does not identify separately management consultants and accountancy advice.

Departmental Energy Efficiency

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on energy efficiency in his Department's buildings. [185866]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This Department fully supports the Government's strategy to reduce carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of the Government estate. We have reduced our total annual energy consumption, and are committed to achieving further energy efficiency savings wherever possible. At least 50 per cent. of the Department's energy is now purchased from renewable sources.

Departmental Furnishings

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent in the last year for which figures are available on *(a)* refurbishment and *(b)* office furniture. [185876]

Ms Rosie Winterton: For the financial year 2003–04 the Department spent £2,840,000 on refurbishment and £437,595.07 on the purchase of furniture.

Departmental Light Bulbs

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on replacing light bulbs in the last year for which figures are available. [185865]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost of replacing lamps on the Department's estate during the financial year 2003–04 was £79,083, inclusive of parts and labour.

Departmental Mobiles

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* capital and *(b)* running cost was to the taxpayer of mobile phones in his Department in each year since 2001. [185864]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The capital and running costs to the taxpayer of mobile phones in the Department, in each financial year since 2001, are shown in the table.

£

Financial year	*Capital costs*	*Running costs*
2001–02	Nil	270,000
2002–03	Nil	280,000
2003–04	Nil	304,000

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mobile phones owned by his Department have been reported lost or stolen since 2001. [185867]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department takes the protection of all its assets, including mobile phones very seriously. All users are made aware of their obligation to safeguard departmental property and security procedures are kept under constant review. Departmental records do not differentiate between lost and stolen mobile phones and all losses are investigated.

The number of mobile phones owned by the Department, reported lost or stolen since 2001 is shown in the table.

Financial year	*Numbers lost/stolen*
2001–02	37
2002–03	34
2002–04	29

Departmental Theft

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of theft was to *(a)* his Department in each of the last 10 years and *(b)* the executive agencies for which his Department is responsible in each year since 1997. [185874]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has records of losses and thefts from 1997 to date. The table shows the value in replacement terms for each financial year. It is not possible to break these figures down further to show the split between the Department and its agencies.

£

	Value
1997–98	44,648
1998–99	44,204
1999–2000	40,432
2000–01	47,049
2001–02	33,866
2002–03	66,004
2003–04	56,917

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185920]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department and its executive agencies operate 82 vehicles.

There have been five personal injury accidents involving Department operated vehicles within the last five years. Records are no longer held centrally for dates of accidents.

The Department has introduced a number of measures to enhance drivers' safety, including revising the vehicle choice list and developing guidance to promote safer driving.

Diabetes

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes there were for *(a)* paediatric, *(b)* adolescent and *(c)* adult treatment for type two diabetes in (i) England and (ii) each strategic health authority in each year since 1996. [184102]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Counts of finished consultant episode statistics for paediatric, adolescent and adult treatment for non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, which includes cases of type two diabetes in England and each strategic health authority of residence for 1996–97 to 2002–03 have been placed in the Library. Figures specific to type two diabetes are not held centrally.

Diagnostic and Treatment Centres

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Government will achieve their target of developing 20 diagnostic and treatment centres by 2004; and what the state of progress was at 1 April. [182454]

Mr. Hutton: The Government have already achieved their planned target of opening 20 treatment centres (TCs) by 2004. By 1 April 2004 there were 27 national health service TCs and two independent sector (IS) TCs open and two mobile IS cataract treatment centres.

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Government are on track to achieve their target of developing 47 diagnostic and treatment centres by 2008; and what the state of progress was at 1 April. [182456]

Mr. Hutton: The Government are on track to achieve their target of opening 47 treatment centres (TCs) by the end of 2005. By 1 April 2004, 29 fixed site TCs were open: 27 run by the national health service and two run and managed by the independent sector. In addition, there are two mobile units run by the independent sector providing ophthalmology procedures.

Dog Excrement

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people are estimated to be treated in hospitals and health centres as a consequence of falls following contact with dog excrement on public byways and in public spaces; [185894]

(2) what the estimated cost to public health authorities of treating patients for injuries incurred as a result of falls due to contact with dog excrement *(a)* on public byways and *(b)* in public spaces has been in each year since 1997, broken down by strategic health authority. [185895]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available centrally and it is not possible to estimate the cost.

E-recruitment

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact on professional body journals of the introduction of NHS e-recruitment of allied health professions. [186271]

Mr. Hutton: The Department has had regular meetings with representatives from the healthcare professions to discuss the national health service e-recruitment project and will continue to work with them. In addition, the Department of Health and the Department of Trade and Industry are working with members of the Periodical Publishers Association to share information about the development of the service, assess its impact and explore ways in which the service and the health journals can work together to support cost effective recruitment into the NHS.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements his Department has made to ensure that non-NHS employers will have access to e-recruitment for allied health professionals. [186272]

Mr. Hutton: The first phase of the e-recruitment service for the national health service is to extend the service to NHS employers. When the service has bedded in there will be an opportunity to consider extending the service to other employers and organisations.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to monitor the implementation of NHS e-recruitment in respect of NHS trusts spending on hard copy advertisements. [186273]

Mr. Hutton: National health service employers joining the e-recruitment service are asked to report annually on their spend in hard copy advertisements and how savings are being reallocated to direct patient care.

Fall/Osteoporosis Services

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with primary care trusts with regard to the integration of falls and osteoporosis services. [181437]

Dr. Ladyman: In the development of support for local action on putting in place integrated falls services officials have had continued interaction with colleagues within primary care trusts and councils. This has included involvement in the development of the national service framework for older people, published in 2001, which contains a service model for an integrated falls

service, including appropriate links to osteoporosis, and of supporting information on service development and good practice.

The national primary care development team's healthy communities collaborative on falls and the falls collaborative have also provided opportunities for primary care trusts and departmental officials to come together to consider these issues.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what osteoporosis-specific activities his Department is engaged with; and which relate particularly to osteoporosis sufferers who have not fallen. [182734]

Dr. Ladyman: Local health trusts are taking measures to reduce the risk of fracture by indentying individuals at risk and ensuring appropriate interventions. This is supported by the work of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), which is currently undertaking a technology appraisal looking at five osteoporosis durgs. The Department has also asked NICE to produce a clinical guideline on the assessment of risk fracture and prevention of osteoporotic fractures in individuals at high risk. The guideline will refer to, update and extend the evidence base of previously published guidelines and technology appraisals and those currently under development. Work on the clinical guideline is underway and expected to be published in 2005.

Fluoridation

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what peer review has been undertaken of the Newcastle University report "Bioavailability of fluoride in drinking water—a human experimental study", funded by his Department; [185052]

(2) where he expects the Newcastle University report funded by his Department, "Bioavailability of fluoride in drinking water—a human experimental study", to be published. [185053]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A draft of the final report was submitted for peer review to five eminent academic experts in this field at universities in Sweden, the United States, London, Sheffield and Leicester. In addition, Professor Andy Renwick of the University of Southampton provided advice on the project and on the draft report as an independent member of the Department's steering group. All of these comments were provided to the Newcastle team to help with its preparation of the final report. The university has put the report on its website at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/dental/research/diet/fluoride.htm.

I understand that the researchers plan to submit an article about their findings to an academic journal.

Foundation Trusts

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average turnout of *(a)* public voters and *(b)* patient voters has been in elections for boards of foundation trust hospitals. [185640]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* I am informed by the chairman of the independent regulator that, in respect of the first 20 national health service foundation trusts authorised to date, the average turnout in elections of public voters and patient voters was 52 per cent. and 27 per cent. respectively.

General Practitioners (Out-of-hours Service)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what comparative assessment he has made of the impact on hospital emergency services of *(a)* out-of-hours service cover by general practitioners in (i) Sheffield and (ii) other areas which have chosen not to use an arm's length service provider and *(b)* the cover provided in (A) Nottingham and (B) other areas using arm's length providers. [184969]

Mr. Hutton: No central comparison has been made of the impact of out-of-hours services on emergency services of areas where general practitioners have not opted-out and areas where organised providers, such as GP co-ops, have been commissioned by primary care trusts (PCTs) to provide the service.

As recommended by the independent review of GP out-of-hours services, PCTs should be developing integrated networks of unscheduled care, which bring together accident and emergency, ambulance services, walk-in centres and in-hours services, to meet the full range of patient needs and to reduce unnecessary referrals to emergency services.

There is to be no change to the pattern of provision for 80 per cent. of Nottingham residents already served by the GP co-operative, Nottingham Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) and which have been so for six years. NEMS is an active participant of the local emergency care network and no adverse impact on emergency care has been identified locally.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to encourage general practitioners to ensure that out-of-hours cover services are supported by appropriate access to patient records and history. [184970]

Mr. Hutton: The national quality standards, which all providers of out-of-hours services must meet, include specific requirements that there is rapid and effective transmission of patient data between general practitioner practices and out-of-hours services, a system for transmitting information on patients with special needs from the practice to the provider, and all providers must be able to supply full clinical details of all consultations to the patient's GP practice by the next working day.

This will be further improved through the introduction of the electronic patient record. In Nottingham local providers and practices are establishing systems for sharing patient information. Nottingham Emergency Medical Services, in partnership with the local emergency care network and NHS Direct, has already established a database of important information provided by GPs on the most vulnerable members of their practice population. This is being extended and access to this is being enabled for other emergency care providers.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what comparative assessment he has *(a)* made and *(b)* commissioned of patient safety under

(i) National Emergency Medical Services cover and (ii) general practitioners running their own out-of-hours service. [184974]

Mr. Hutton: All organised out-of-hours providers must meet the national quality standards. The standards, which cover clinical governance, organisational and service standards, and access and clinical assessment, are designed to ensure that patients receive the highest-quality care, and were recommended by the independent review of general practitioner out-of-hours services in 2000.

The national quality standards are currently being reviewed by an expert group, to reflect the new contractual mechanisms in primary care. The new standards will come into effect on 1 January 2005 and from this date all providers of out-of-hours services, including GP practices which choose not to opt-out, will have to meet the quality standards as a contractual obligation.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) will monitor all providers in the delivery of their services to ensure they meet the standards and the strategic health authorities in turn will performance manage the PCTs in delivering these services.

GP Contract

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Vale of York (Miss McIntosh) of 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1050W, on general practitioners, what assessment his Department has made in *(a)* money and *(b)* manpower terms of the potential impact of the new GP contract on ambulance services providing out-of-hours cover. [178176]

Mr. Hutton: No central assessment has been made; however, the new contract provides the opportunity for primary care trusts to commission and resource out-of-hours services together with ambulance services, to provide integrated unscheduled care. This should ensure that patients receive easy access to the treatment they need and that the most effective and appropriate use is made of ambulance services.

GPs (Saturday Morning Surgeries)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the likely impact on hospital emergency services of the choice general practitioners will have after October to opt out of Saturday morning surgeries. [184973]

Mr. Hutton: Under the new general medical services contract, primary care trusts (PCTs) have responsibility for ensuring a high quality service is available to patients during the out-of-hours period, which now includes Saturday mornings. PCTs have consequently built this extra demand into their capacity assumptions and their commissioning. They are also communicating details of changes, where necessary, to patients and other local services.

Health Expenditure

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of public expenditure on health was in real terms at today's prices in each of the last 25 years. [186103]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows total net national health service expenditure in England for the period 1980–81 to 2004–05, at 2004–05 prices.

Total net NHS expenditure at 2004–05 prices[1]

	£ billion
1980–81[2,3]	26.2
1981–82[3]	26.8
1982–83[3]	27.2
1983–84[3]	27.5
1984–85[3]	28.0
1985–86[3]	28.1
1986–87[3]	29.2
1987–88[3]	30.4
1988–89[3]	31.4
1989–90[3]	31.6
1990–91[3]	32.9
1991–92[3]	35.3
1992–93[3]	37.7
1993–94[3]	38.0
1994–95[3]	39.6
1995–96[3]	40.2
1996–97[3]	40.1
1997–98[3]	41.1
1998–99[3]	42.2
1999–2000[3,4]	45.3
2000–01[3]	49.0
2001–02[3]	53.3
2002–03[3]	56.8
2003–04[5,6]	65.1
2004–05[7]	69.4

[1] Figures are not directly comparable across the period.
[2] Expenditure for the period 1980–81 to 1998–99 is on a cash basis.
[3] Outturn.
[4] Expenditure for the period 1999–2000 to 2002–03 is on a stage 1 resource budgeting basis.
[5] Expenditure for the period 2003–04 and 2004–05 is on a stage 2 resource budgeting basis.
[6] Estimated outturn.
[7] Plan.

Note:
Gross domestic product series as at 30 June 2004.

Health Protection Agency

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what formal relationship his Department has with the Health Protection Agency. [184299]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Health Protection Agency (HPA) is a special health authority (SHA), created by the Health Protection Agency (Yr Asiantaeth Diogelu Iechyd) Establishment Order 2003 (SI 2003/505), with further provision made in the Health Protection Agency (Yr Asiantaeth Diogelu Iechyd) Regulations (SI 2003/506). Further material relevant to the Secretary of State's relationship with the SHA is in the Secretary of State's directions to the HPA conferring functions and directing how they should be exercised (dated 1 April 2003) and in the management statement agreed with the authority, copies of which are available in the Library.

The Health Protection Agency Act received Royal Assent on 22 July 2004. This makes provision for establishing the HPA as a non-departmental public body, which will take up the functions of both the HPA

SHA and the National Radiological Protection Board, both of which will be wound up. Our intention is that this should happen on 1 April 2005.

Health Services (Non-EU Nationals)

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the changes to the entitlement of non-EU nationals to treatment by British *(a)* general practitioners and *(b)* dentists will also apply to children travelling from outside the EU. [185631]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is currently consulting on "Proposals to Exclude Overseas Visitors from Eligibility to Free National Health Service (NHS) Primary Medical Services". The consultation ends on 13 August. Copies of the consultation document can be obtained from www.dh.gov.uk/consultation or from the national health service response line on 08701 555455. A copy of the consultation document is available in the Library.

The proposals are intended to provide clarity regarding the eligibility of overseas visitors, including non-European Union nationals and their dependents, to receive free NHS primary medical services, and therefore apply only to those services provided by general practitioners.

The consultation does not cover primary dental services.

Health Workers (West Sussex)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many health workers were recruited to work in West Sussex in 2003–04, broken down by profession. [185505]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The latest available data (September 2003) on the number of health workers employed in West Sussex have been placed in the Library.

Heart Bypass Surgery

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people aged *(a)* 25, *(b)* between 26 and 50, *(c)* between 51 and 60, *(d)* between 61 and 70 and *(e)* 71 years have had heart bypass surgery in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [186269]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Finished in-year admissions all operations count of episodes for patients treated for coronary artery bypass graft, by age at start of episode—NHS hospitals, England, 2000–02

Age group	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
All ages	18,980	18,981	20,058
Under 25	10	7	7
25	0	0	3
26–50	1,499	1,405	1,394
51–60	4,711	4,524	4,701
61–70	7,929	7,638	7,865
71	709	764	838
Over 71	4,117	4,636	5,234
Not known	5	7	16

Notes:

1. A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

2. All operations count of episodes—these figures represent a count of all finished consultant episodes where the procedure was mentioned in any of the 12 (four prior to 2002–03) operation fields in a hospital episode statistics record. A record is only included once in each count, even if an operation is mentioned in more than one operation field of the record.

3. Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data for 2000–01, but ungrossed for 2001–02 and 2002–03, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.

Source:

Hospital episode statistics, Department of Health.

Hepatitis B

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the *(a)* costs and *(b)* benefits of universal vaccination for hepatitis B. [185403]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The joint committee on vaccination and immunisation, the Government's expert advisory committee, is currently reviewing our national hepatitis B immunisation programme. This review will consider whether the programme might need to be expanded or strengthened.

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce a vaccination programme in babies for hepatitis B; and if he will make a statement. [184987]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Immunisation is already recommended for babies born to mothers infected with hepatitis B to prevent them developing chronic infection. The joint committee on vaccination and immunisation, the Government's expert advisory committee, is currently reviewing our national hepatitis B immunisation programme. This review will consider whether the programme might need to be expanded or strengthened.

Hospital Appointments

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received about patients having difficulty using call centres to pre-book hospital appointments under pilot pre-booking and patient choice initiatives. [186009]

Mr. Hutton: Since the launch of the new national health service "Choose and Book" system in the early adopter sites, the Department has not received any representations from patients, or their carers and representatives, about difficulties using the booking management service call centre.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what options will be available for patients booking hospital

appointments other than via call centres following implementation of the Government's proposals for the pre-booking of hospital appointments. [186010]

Mr. Hutton: Under the proposals for electronic booking, patients will be able to book hospital appointments at their local surgery with the help of their general practitioner or the practice staff. Patients will also be able to book their appointments online from home, at an internet kiosk or by telephone through the dedicated call centre.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance has been issued to primary care trusts on establishing call centres to handle requests for booked appointments in pursuance of the Government's proposals for all hospital appointments to be pre-booked. [186011]

Mr. Hutton: The national programme for information technology has issued the following implementation guidance to primary care trusts (PCTs):

The electronic booking implementation document (March 2003).

The booking management services resource pack (December 2003).

The booking management service plan development framework (March 2004).

These documents provided guidance to PCTs in developing their call centre options so that their patients can book their first hospital outpatient appointment by telephone, if they choose not to book the appointment within the primary care surgery.

Hospital Beds

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 931W, on hospital beds, how many hospital beds were available in total in the NHS in England in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1997. [186200]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows data on the total number of national health service available hospital beds, including both psychiatric and non-psychiatric hospitals.

The measure, "Average daily number of NHS available hospital beds" refers to the total number of NHS available beds in a year. The yearly total is the average of the daily totals in that year. The term "available" means that the beds are available for patient use.

Thousand

Average daily number of NHS available hospital beds		
Financial year	*1979*	*1997–98*
England[1]	364	194

[1] 1979: calendar year

Source:
Annual Abstract of Statistics

Hospital Building

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the Government owe to the private sector with regard to hospital building programmes in *(a)* England and *(b)* Herefordshire and Worcestershire. [185197]

Mr. Hutton: Under the private finance initiative (PFI), national health service trusts make regular payments (unitary payments) to their private sector partner once the hospital is open; payments are subject to satisfactory performance of the contract. The total PFI unitary payments in 2003–04 were £346 million. This figure includes Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust and Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust's unitary payments of £10.5 million and £17.8 million respectively.

The payments figure does not include schemes with a capital value below £10 million as information on them is not held centrally.

Hospital Building Programme

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Government are on track to achieve its target of 114 hospitals by 2010; and what the *(a)* anticipated construction cost, *(b)* expected date for start of construction and *(c)* planned date for completion is of each (i) major and (ii) medium-sized building programme. [182453]

Mr. Hutton: Currently there are 132 privately financed and public capital funded hospital schemes counting towards the NHS Plan target of 100 new hospital schemes by 2010. 46 of these are already open, so we are well on course to meet this target.

The tables show the estimated capital value, which incorporates construction costs, start on site and first patient date. Planned financial close dates are given for schemes yet to reach financial close and these are subject to change. The tables include the 15 new projects given the go-ahead by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, on 27 July.

Private finance initiative (PFI) schemes which have reached financial close which are completed and operational

	Capital value (£ million)	*Start on site*	*First patient date*
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	94	30 July 1997	11 September 2000
North Cumbria Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	67	3 November 1997	10 April 2000
Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust	45	14 December 1997	17 October 2000
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	96	1 July 1998	28 February 2001
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust	65	31 July 1998	8 April 2001
County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (North Durham)	61	31 March 1998	2 April 2001
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	67	8 June 1998	25 July 2001
Norfolk and Norwich NHS Trust	158	9 January 1998	21 September 2001
Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust	64	31 March 1999	1 March 2002
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	87	18 March 1999	18 March 2002
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	54	1 February 1999	2 March 2002
County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (Bishop Auckland)	48	28 May 1999	8 June 2002

Private finance initiative (PFI) schemes which have reached financial close which are completed and operational

	Capital value (£ million)	Start on site	First patient date
Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust	100	5 October 1999	3 December 2002
Leeds Community and Mental Health Services Teaching NHS Trust	47	1 March 2000	16 December 2002
King's Healthcare NHS Trust	76	6 December 1999	7 October 2002
Bromley Healthcare NHS Trust	118	19 November 1998	29 March 2003
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	22	8 December 2000	29 March 2003
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust	30	2 May 2001	29 April 2003
West Middlesex University Hospitals NHS Trust	60	30 January 2001	16 May 2003
South Tees Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	122	16 August 1999	1 August 2003
St. George's Hospital NHS Trust	46	20 March 2000	11 September 2003
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	15	11 December 1998	30 March 2000
Queens Medical Centre Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust	17	24 May 1999	1 October 2000
West Sussex Health and Social Care Trust	22	24 June 1999	31 January 2001
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust	28	8 December 1999	1 September 2001
Oxleas NHS Trust	11	4 July 2000	20 December 2001
North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	11	4 July 2000	4 March 2002
North Birmingham Primary Care NHS Trust	18	15 August 2000	18 March 2002
Cornwall Partnerships NHS Trust—Bodmin	10	31 October 2000	1 June 2002
East London and The City Mental Health NHS Trust—Newham	15	5 September 2000	11 June 2002
Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust	15	21 November 2000	9 September 2002
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust—Wansbeck	18	16 November 2000	25 March 2003
Royston, Buntingford and Bishop Stortford PCT	15	4 May 2001	28 April 2003
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust	13	20 March 2002	23 June 2003
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust—Hexham	29	27 April 2001	12 July 2003
Guildford and Waverley PCT—Farnham	29	29 October 2001	1 November 2003
County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust—Chester-le-Street	10	30 May 2002	18 November 2003
Mid Devon PCT—Tiverton	10	1 July 2002	25 May 2004
Newbury & Community PCT	19	4 July 2002	1 March 2004
Total 39	1,832		

Schemes reached financial close with work started on site

		Start on site	First patient date
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	422	12 July 2000	April 2005
Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	137	1 May 2001	December 2004
University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust	379	27 November 2002	May 2006
Gloucestershire Royal NHS Trust	32	1 May 2002	November 2004
Southern Derbyshire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	312	12 September 2003	May 2008
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust—Blackburn	110	9 July 2003	July 2005
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	134	19 December 2003	May 2007
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	238	15 January 2004	November 2006
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	69	6 November 2003	September 2005
Avon and Western Wiltshire Mental Health NHS Trust	83	1 March 2004	March 2006
Brighton Health Care NHS Trust	36	10 June 2004	April 2007
Brent PCT—Willesden	21	5 December 2002	March 2005
Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland MH—Morpeth	31	10 May 2004	March 2006
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust—Wharfedale	14	20 September 2002	November 2004
County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust—West Park	16	4 July 2003	August 2004
Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre NHS Trust	37	20 April 2002	March 2006
Sandwell and W. Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust— City Hospital	26	9 December 2002	October 2004
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	32	9 October 2002	December 2004
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	52	27 January 2004	April 2005
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust—Burnley	30	13 October 2003	November 2005
Doncaster and South Humber Healthcare NHS Trust	12	11 August 2003	January 2005
Salisbury Health Care NHS Trust	24	4 March 2004	February 2006
North Kirklees PCT	25	21 May 2004	May 2005
Wandsworth PCT—Queen Mary's Roehampton	75	6 May 2004	January 2006
Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust—Stoke Mandeville	47	21 May 2004	June 2006
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	51	8 July 2004	September 2006
Total 26	2,445		

Schemes in negotiation but not yet reached financial close—operational dates yet to be finalised

		Planned financial close
Barts and The London NHS Trust (remaining Wave 1A)	1,052	2nd Quarter 2005
Central Manchester Healthcare/Manchester Childrens Hospitals NHS Trusts	420	3rd Quarter 2004
Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	220	4th Quarter 2004
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	265	3rd Quarter 2004
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	192	3rd Quarter 2004
Kingston Hospital	28	4th Quarter 2004

Schemes in negotiation but not yet reached financial close—operational dates yet to be finalised

		Planned financial close
Northampton Community Healthcare	29	3rd Quarter 2005
Addenbrookes NHS Trust	76	3rd Quarter 2004
Northgate and Prudhoe—Neuro Disability Centre	24	1st Quarter 2005
Taunton and Somerset	18	4th Quarter 2004
New Forest PCT— Lymington	36	3rd Quarter 2004
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals	30	4th Quarter 2004
Nottingham Healthcare	19	3rd Quarter 2004
Daventry and South Northamptonshire PCT	24	4th Quarter 2004
Derbyshire Mental Health NHS Trust	32	1st Quarter 2006
East Lincolnshire PCT	24	2nd Quarter 2006
University Hospital Birmingham/South Birmingham MH NHS Trust	379	1st Quarter 2005
North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trusts	269	4th Quarter 2004
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	403	1st Quarter 2005
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	56	4th Quarter 2004
Mid Yorkshire Hospitals and Wakefield	260	1st Quarter 2005
St. Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust	229	1st Quarter 2005
North Middlesex Hospitals NHS Trust	74	2nd Quarter 2005
Mid Essex Hospitals NHS Trust	110	4th Quarter 2004
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	94	4th Quarter 2004
Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trusts	196	3rd Quarter 2005
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	84	3rd Quarter 2005
Bradford Hospitals NHS Trust	50	Under Review
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	125	2nd Quarter 2005
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	127	3rd Quarter 2005
Peterborough Hospitals NHS Trust	293	4th Quarter 2005
Whipps Cross Hospitals NHS Trust	328	2nd Quarter 2006
Total 32	5,566	

Schemes which have not yet placed advertisements in the Official Journal of the European Community

	Number
St. Mary's NHS Trust and Paddington Basin	800
Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	117
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust	104
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	76
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells/Invicta Community Care NHS Trusts	290
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	274
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust	312
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust	80
South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	120
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust	200
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire NHS Trust	880
North Bristol and South Gloucestershire	310
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust	148
Sandwell and West Birmingham Acute Trust	591
Maternity and Childrens Hospital Leeds	204
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	271
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital	121
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	52
Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	73
Taunton Surgical Centre	75
Southend Hospital NHS Trust	100
North Mersey Future Healthcare Project	1008
Cherry Knowle Hospital, Sunderland	50
Northwick Park and St. Marks	305
Total 24	6,561
Total PFI	16,404

Public capital funded schemes which are completed and open

		Start on site	First patient date
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	24	14 August 1998	1 August 2000
Central Sheffield University Hospitals NHS Trust	24	19 September 1998	1 February 2001
Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospital NHS Trust	84	8 January 1997	27 July 2002
Swale PCT	14	1 December 2000	7 October 2002
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	14	1 December 2000	20 February 2004
Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust	12	1 May 2001	16 February 2004
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust—Royal Albert Edward Infirmary	25	1 November 2000	19 June 2004
Total 7	197		

Schemes with work started on site/approval to tender

		Start on site	First patient date
Barnet PCT (Edgware Community)	24	1 April 2001	1 October 2004
Guys and St. Thomas NHS Trust	50	19 September 1998	1 January 2005
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	12	12 December 2003	1 February 2005
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	75		
Total 4	161		
11 Total Publicly Funded Schemes	358		
132 Total PFI and Publicly Funded Schemes	16,762		

Hospital Hygiene

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans he has to improve and update the hospital cleanliness rating system; [185334]

(2) what proposals he has to amend hospital cleanliness inspections to reflect the disparity between inspection outcomes and patient experience noted in the Healthcare Commission State of Healthcare Report 2004. [185622]

Mr. Hutton: The patient environment action team (PEAT) process for measuring hospital cleanliness was redesigned for the 2004 inspection round, following discussions with a number of representative bodies. The number of areas assessed this year was increased from 18 to 24.

This has significantly extended the information available to hospitals about their performance. A new rating system was designed around a five-point scale and introduced an "excellent" category. The scoring process continues to be weighted in relation to cleanliness issues in wards and accident and emergency departments.

The new national healthcare standards, published on 21 July, include cleanliness and performance against them will be rated in the Healthcare Commission's annual assessments of national health service bodies in England. The Commission will undertake a review of hospital cleanliness and infection control shortly.

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence he has collected on whether the results of hospital cleanliness inspections differ depending on whether they are pre-announced. [185621]

Mr. Hutton: Since 2000, all patient environment action team inspections of hospital cleanliness have been unannounced.

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what data he collects on the *(a)* cleanliness and *(b)* hygiene of NHS operating theatres; and if he will publish them. [185629]

Mr. Hutton: Information concerning the specific cleanliness and hygiene of operating theatres is not collected centrally. Guidance was issued in the form of a standard measure of cleanliness for hospitals in the national standards of cleanliness 2002 (further revised in 2003). In this guidance, operating theatres are classified as very high risk and it is stressed that constant cleaning is deemed critical.

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* research he has commissioned and *(b)* evidence he has collected on the influence of the control of laundering of nurse and medical staff uniforms on hospital-acquired infection rates. [185633]

Mr. Hutton: The Department published evidence-based guidelines for the prevention and control of healthcare acquired infection in 2001, which included the standard principles covering the use of personal protective clothing and equipment.

It is for the chief executives of national health service trusts to ensure that nurses have enough suitable clothing and equipment to carry out their work effectively. The decision as to whether nurses' uniforms are laundered through the hospital laundry services or whether nurses clean the uniforms themselves is made locally.

Hospital Waste Incineration

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the volume of material arising from NHS hospitals which was incinerated *(a)* on site and *(b)* elsewhere in each year since 1997. [186178]

Ms Rosie Winterton: National Health Service trusts are legally autonomous bodies and they will tender for waste disposal services taking into account local requirements. Data is not collected centrally in relation to the precise method of disposal.

Insulin

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1434W, on insulin, if he will place in the Library details of contacts between his Department and companies that supply insulin. [184405]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost, or without breaching commercial confidentiality (exemption 13 of the open government code applies).

My noble Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (The Lord Warner), who has responsibility for pharmaceutical industry matters will write to the hon. Member with an overview of the current situation regarding the supply of insulin shortly. A copy of this letter will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 28 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 106W, whether the licensing process compared mortality rates, the development of diabetic complications and the quality of life of those using animal and synthetic insulin; and if he will make a statement. [184700]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All authorised insulins, whether human (synthetic) insulin or animal insulin, have been demonstrated to be efficacious in people with diabetes mellitus. As part of the licensing approval process for

any medicinal product, including insulins, the applicant has to provide evidence that the product meets appropriate standards of quality, safety and efficacy. These standards are set out in European Guidance documents, including, for example, "Notes for Guidance on Clinical Investigation of Medicinal Products in the Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus" (CPMP/EWP/1080/00). This will include clinical trial data of appropriate duration in patients with diabetes as set out in the guidance document. The primary purpose of the confirmatory studies involving the assessed insulin is to demonstrate a favourable effect on blood glucose control (this is considered clinically relevant in terms of risk reduction of diabetic complications).

Data on mortality rates, development of diabetic complications and quality of life are not necessarily required for the licensing process. Additionally, there are no requirements for comparative studies between animal and synthetic insulins as part of the licensing process. Therefore, the licensing process has not compared mortality rates, development of diabetic complications or the quality of life of patients using animal and synthetic insulins. After licensing, all drugs, including insulins, are continually monitored for safety. The decision to use one or other of the insulins rests with the physician in consultation with the patient.

The committee on safety of medicines and its sub-committee on pharmacovigilance (SCOP) have kept the safety of synthetic (human) insulins under close review and have considered the available data on a number of occasions. Most recently in 2002, the SCOP considered the findings of an independent review of controlled clinical trial data by the Cochrane collaboration. The conclusions of the Cochrane review were that there is no difference in blood glucose control or the incidence of adverse events between patients on synthetic insulin compared with patients on animal insulins. The SCOP confirmed its previous advice that there is no clear evidence of a safety problem specific to human insulin.

Intermediate Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 158W, on intermediate care, when the validation process of data regarding intermediate care beds and places will be completed. [186286]

Dr. Ladyman: The intermediate care data validation process is now complete and the information has been placed in the Library.

Kidney Dialysis

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people aged *(a)* 25, *(b)* between 26 and 50, *(c)* between 51 and 60, *(d)* between 61 and 70 and *(e)* 71 years have received kidney dialysis in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [186270]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the latest information from the 2002 renal survey for people who were receiving haemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis at 31 December 2002. Figures exclude patients who dialysed during 2002 but were either transplanted or died prior to 31 December 2002.

Equivalent information for other years is not available.

Age	*Number of dialysis patients at 31 December 2002*
Under 26 years	554
26–50 years	4,181
51–60 years	3,024
61–70 years	3,741
71 years plus	4,894
Total	16,394

Kidney Disease

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children are being treated for kidney disease. [185410]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There were 827 paediatric patients receiving renal replacement therapy for kidney failure in the United Kingdom in 2002, the latest year for which figures are available.

King's College Hospital Foundation Trust

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether, following the decision not to award King's College Hospital Trust foundation status, the elections held so far will be declared void. [185637]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* Section 4(1) of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 provides that a national health service trust may make an application to the independent regulator for authorisation to become a NHS foundation trust, if the application is supported by the Secretary of State. Section 4(4)*(a)* provides that once a NHS trust has made this application, the provisions of the trust's proposed constitution will have effect for the purpose of establishing an initial membership, electing a board of governors and appointing a board of directors, and enabling boards to make preparations for the performance of their functions. Applicant trusts are expected to implement their governance arrangements while the independent regulator considers their application.

The independent regulator has deferred consideration of the application made by King's College Hospital NHS Trust for authorisation on 1 July. The chairman of the independent regulator has asked the trust to submit further evidence by the end of the year, against which he will consider the application for authorisation. Therefore, prospective NHS foundation trust functions arising from that application continue to exist.

Litigation Expenditure

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer dated 13 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1098W, what legal actions involving NHS funds have been initiated over the last five years, excluding those for clinical negligence; and if he will make a statement. [185210]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The liabilities to third parties scheme (LTPS) is a risk pooling scheme for national health service trusts, primary care trusts and special

health authorities, which provides indemnity for non-clinical risks such as employers' and public liabilities. The scheme was introduced in 1999 and is operated by the NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA).

The table shows information provided by the NHSLA on the number of NHS resources spent on defending and initiating legal actions for non-clinical claims under the LTPS for the last five years.

£

	Defence costs	*Claimant costs*	*Damages*	*Total*
1999–2000	17,075	7,534	9,218	33,827
2000–01	35,686	265,166	664,608	965,460
2001–02	380,412	1,487,848	3,048,665	4,916,925
2002–03	1,815,517	3,974,607	9,608,353	15,398,477
2003–04	3,214,576	3,643,407	6,881,042	13,739,025
Total	5,463,266	9,378,562	20,211,886	35,053,714

Notes:
The amounts include funds from the LTPS and trusts' own funds for any excesses for which they may have been liable.
Trusts may insure outside of the LTPS scheme in certain circumstances. The amounts above do not include costs for insurance taken outside of the LTPS scheme.

Lost/Stolen Departmental Property

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the items that his Department has reported lost or stolen to the police from his Department's buildings and property since 2001. [185861]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table lists the items reported lost or stolen from departmental buildings since January 2001 which have been reported to the police.

Item	*Number*
Laptops	19
Projectors	2
Printers	3
Digital cameras	1
PC base units	4
Keyboard	1
Mouse	1
Monitors	4
External modem	1
Phone charger	1

Medical Instruments

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 7 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 160W, on medical instruments, how much of the figure shown for each year was spent on *(a)* hildebrandt vaginal irrigating tubes, *(b)* suction curettes diameter 28 cm graduated, (i) 4 mm, (ii) 6 mm, (iii) 8 mm, (iv) 10 mm, (v) 12 mm and (vi) 14 mm and *(c)* hose connections curved, 11 mm diameter; and if he will make a statement. [179298]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is only held on vacuum curettes at 8 mm, 10 mm and 12 mm graduation. This is shown in the table. The information on the other instruments requested is not held centrally. The figures provided are based on instrument sales via the national health service purchasing and supply national contracts. These contracts are not mandatory, and therefore some NHS trusts buy instruments from other sources, as possibly are the other instruments in which the hon. Member has expressed an interest. These figures do not, therefore, cover the total NHS spend.

	Amount (£)
2001–01	26,737
2001–02	26,525
2002–03	28,102
2003–04	31,265

Medical Secretaries

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take action to improve the remuneration of medical secretaries throughout the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [185010]

Mr. Hutton: Medical secretaries, along with other health workers, will receive a minimum 10 per cent. increase in basic pay over the three years 2003–04 to 2005–06. In addition, subject to a positive outcome of the planned second ballots by some national health service trades unions on the new pay system, many medical secretaries should also benefit under the assimilation arrangements provided by the new system.

The impact of "Agenda for Change" for all staff groups is currently being tested across 12 early implementer sites to ensure that the new system, which is underpinned by a job evaluation framework, provides a fair and comparable basis of employment for all staff, including medical secretaries.

Mental Health

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 27 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1836W, on mental health, at what level such information is collected; if he will collect the information centrally in respect of the period sought; and if he will make a statement. [184695]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national confidential inquiry (NCI) into suicide and homicide by people with mental illness collects information nationally on all people who complete suicide who were in contact with mental health services in the 12 months prior to death. In-patients are a priority for the NCI who collect information specifically related to those people who complete suicide whilst in in-patient care.

The NCI collects data on specific ligature points used for hanging; for example, bed curtain rails, hooks, handles, doors, bed heads and "other'. It does keep a list of "other' ligature points. The question about ligature points has been in the NCI questionnaire since 2000.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures are in place to ensure the safety of *(a)* patients and *(b)* the public when electrical power cuts disable automatic door release mechanisms in acute mental health wards; and if he will make a statement. [184934]

Mr. Hutton: National health service trusts are responsible for the safety procedures that apply when there are power cuts in acute mental health wards. NHS Estates produced guidance in 1993, under Health

Technical Memorandum (HTM) 2011 "Emergency Electrical Services—Management Policy", which is still extant, stating that each NHS site should have and be able to implement emergency procedures.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account is taken of the risk of suicide in guidance given for the building of acute mental health wards; and if he will make a statement. [184941]

Mr. Hutton: Health Building Note 35 (Part 1), published in 1996, is a guide to the accommodation requirements for acute mental health services. It focuses on acute units where patients may be disturbed or suicidal. It provides guidance on general functional and design requirements and stresses the need for the provision of a safe and therapeutic environment that helps patients feel at ease.

Midwives

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what actions his Department has taken to encourage a return to NHS practice by those who had previously worked in the NHS as midwives; how many such individuals have returned to practice in each year since 1992; what targets have been set in this area; and if he will make a statement. [185964]

Mr. Hutton: All midwives deciding to return to the national health service are eligible for a returners package including a £1,500 bursary to support them whilst they are retraining. There is also financial support for childcare, travel and books. The chief nursing officer has contacted former midwives by letter to encourage them to return to the NHS. To support this, the Department allocated £750,000 to workforce development confederations in 2003–04 to fund 500 return to practice places for midwives. To encourage returners, a new NHS careers return to practice guide for midwives was published in January 2004. Copies are available in the Library. In addition, the Department has funded the Royal College of Midwives, in collaboration with Open University, to design a flexible return to practice open learning programme.

Since the national return to practice programme commenced in 1999, over 17,000 former nurses, midwives and health visitors have returned to the NHS. Data for the period prior to 1999 is not available.

Milk

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what studies he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* reviewed concerning the presence of rocket fuel in milk. [182242]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 5 July 2004]*: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has monitored a number of environmental contaminants in milk. The FSA has not commissioned or reviewed studies on the presence in milk of rocket fuel.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the availability through the NHS of respite care for sufferers of myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME); what comparative assessment has been made of the level of respite care available in different regions; how much funding has been allocated on average per strategic health authority for the provision of respite care for sufferers of ME in this financial year; and what funding has been allocated to Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority for this purpose in this financial year. [185615]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not collect information on the provision of respite care for people with specific illnesses. No specific funding is allocated to the national health service for the provision of respite services. It is for primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

National Poisons Information Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether any of the poisons information specialists at the National Poisons Information Service and the West Midlands Poisons Unit, received income from agrochemical companies; what disclosure systems are in place, including for patients; and if he will make a statement. [184569]

Miss Melanie Johnson: No member of the medical, scientific (including poisons information specialists) and nursing staff of the National Poisons Information Service, Birmingham centre and the associated clinical unit, the West Midlands Poisons Unit, has ever received income or any other funds from agrochemical companies.

National Service Framework for Older People

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when his Department will publish its review of the April 2004 milestones for the National Service Framework for Older People; and if he will make a statement. [183661]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department will not be publishing a review of the April 2004 milestones in the national service framework (NSF) for older people. However, the Healthcare Commission is currently conducting an inspection of implementation of the NSF and will release its findings in 2005.

New Hospitals

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 13 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1100W, on new hospitals, what each of the 46 new hospital schemes entails. [185989]

Mr. Hutton: The table gives brief details for each of the 46 schemes as requested.

Trust	*Description*
North Cumbria Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust	Redevelopment of District General Hospital (DGH) scheme to replace much of the existing accommodation.

Trust	*Description*
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	New DGH hospital on Darent Valley site.
South Buckinghamshire NHS Trust	Rationalisation of DGH acute services onto two sites at Wycombe and Amersham.
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	Refurbishment and new-build of a DGH at Greenwich.
North Durham Health Care NHS Trust	New DGH for North Durham on existing Dryburn site
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust	Rationalisation of DGH acute services and refurbishment of existing hospital site in Halifax
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	Redevelopment of existing DGH on Wythenshawe site
Norfolk and Norwich NHS Trust	New DGH
Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust	New DGH together with refurbishment of some existing wards.
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	Rationalisation of services across the existing Barnet DGH site
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	New DGH
South Durham Healthcare NHS Trust	Redevelopment and refurbishment of existing DGH site in Bishop Auckland
King's Healthcare NHS Trust	New Clinical Block and refurbishment of some existing stock on DGH site.
Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust	New DGH
Leeds Community and Mental Health Services Teaching NHS Trust	Relocation of mental health services into seven, modern, purpose-built facilities enabling the closure of poor quality Victorian institutional design buildings.
Bromley Healthcare NHS Trust	New DGH
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	New three-storey building to accommodate gynaecology, obstetric and neonatal services at Hull Royal Infirmary
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust	New mental health hospital.
West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	Redevelopment of DHG site
South Tees Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	Extension of existing South Cleveland hospital to centralise acute hospital services onto single site.
St. George's Hospital NHS Trust	New Building for Neurosurgery and Cardiac Services
Rochdale Primary Care NHS Trust	New development on Rochdale Infirmary site.
Central Sheffield University Hospitals NHS Trust	New maternity facility
Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals NHS Trust	Consolidation of DGH acute services on a single site.
Queen Mary's Hospital Sidcup NHS Trust	Reprovision of Bexley Mental Health Services
Queens Medical Centre Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust	New ENT and Opthalmology Unit
West Sussex Health and Social Care Trust	Reprovision of Mental Health Services
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust	Reprovision of Mental Health Services
Oxleas NHS Trust	Reprovision of Mental Health Services
North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	Reprovision of Mental Health Services
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Trust	Reprovision of Mental Health Services
Cornwall Partnerships NHS Trust	New clinical oncology department at Bodwin
East London and The City Mental Health NHS Trust	Reprovision of Mental Health Services in Newham
Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust	New wing for the provision of all therapy and elderly care services.
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust	Centralisation of acute and maternity services at Wansbeck DGH
Royston, Buntingford and Bishop Stortford PCT	Hertford and Essex hospital redevelopment
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust	New heart centre
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust	Redevelopment of Hexham DGH
Guildford and Waverley PCT	NHS Local Care Centre for intermediate care, outpatient, diagnostic, mental health and community services linked with social service facilities and local GP facilities in Farnham.
County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	New Community Hospital in Chester-le-Street
Newbury and Community PCT	New Community Hospital
Mid Devon PCT	New Community Hospital in Tiverton
Swale PCT	New Community Hospital in Sheppey
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	Charing Cross Mental Health Unit
Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust	New Women and Children's Unit at Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	Phase IV development to Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Wigan

NHS Commercial Activity

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what controls regulate the distribution within NHS premises of commercial products to patients where the giving of permission to distribute generates an income stream for NHS trusts. [186179]

Mr. Hutton: Income generation schemes are those that rely on Section 7(1) of the Health and Medicines Act 1988. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State has delegated these income generating powers to all national health service trusts, including ambulance and mental health trusts, primary care trusts and strategic health authorities. Guidance, clearly setting out under what circumstances income generation powers can be used, was issued to the NHS in November 2001. A copy of the guidance is available in the Library.

NHS Direct (Isle of Wight/Hampshire)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many calls were received by NHS Direct in the Isle of Wight and Hampshire in each month since the facility opened; and what categories of information he collects about the types of *(a)* call received and *(b)* response given. [185804]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: The available information concerning calls received by the NHS Direct call centre serving Hampshire and the Isle of Wight since November 2001 is shown in the table.

Month and year	*Hampshire and the Isle of Wight—calls answered*
2001	
November	19,025
December	23,691
2002	
January	24,876
February	19,804
March	20,196
April	20,153
May	21,008
June	20,996
July	21,775

Month and year	Hampshire and the Isle of Wight—calls answered
August	22,497
September	19,742
October	21,184
November	21,156
December	25,090
2003	
January	24,542
February	18,723
March	25,342
April	25,425
May	23,553
June	23,391
July	26,776
August	24,054
September	21,564
October	23,592
November	25,697
December	25,364
2004	
January	25,192
February	21,994
March	24,809
April	24,514
May	24,844
June	22,732
Total	751,187

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who took the decision to locate the NHS Direct call centre which serves the Isle of Wight and Hampshire in Southampton; when the decision was taken; when the facility opened; how many full-time equivalent staff were employed there in each year since opening; what criteria were used in determining its location; what the cost of *(a)* the premises and *(b)* staffing is in the current financial year; whether the staff are directly employed by the national health service; how many are on each grade; what the cost was of furnishing and equipping the premises; and what other premises were considered. [185808]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* Due to an increase in call volumes and the success of the pilot NHS Direct service for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, the existing premises at Highcroft in Winchester, which had been the location of the initial call centre since March 1999, were considered to be unsuitable for the growth of the service. In February 2001, the NHS Direct management team within the Department, in consultation with external estates advisers and NHS Estates, decided to locate a new call centre at Berrywood Business Village, Hedge End. The selection criteria used for deciding the location of the new call centre included access by public and private transport and security for staff attending and leaving work. The new call centre was opened in September 2001. Other locations considered were Silver Hill in Winchester, Link 414 in Chandlers Ford, Easton Lane in Winchester and Belbins Business Park in Romsey.

The cost of furnishing and equipping the premises was £1.6 million. Current accommodation costs and capital charges are £750,000 per year.

There are currently 136 whole time equivalent (wte) staff employed by the NHS Direct special health authority at the call centre. 58 of the staff are nurses (G grade), 47 are health information advisers (administrative and clerical 5) and the rest are managers or support staff. Staffing costs for the current financial year are £4.53 million. Staff numbers in previous years were 125 (wte) in 2001–02, 140 (wte) in 2002–03 and 140 (wte) in 2003–04.

NHS Health and Safety

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the Government achieved their target of eradicating the fire safety backlog on the NHS estate by March 2003; [182450]

(2) what further progress has been made towards meeting his earlier target of making 90 per cent. of the NHS estate health and safety compliant by March; [182451]

(3) what percentage of the NHS estate was health and safety compliant and what the cost was of the health and safety repair backlog, in *(a)* March 2003 and *(b)* March 2004. [182452]

Mr. Hutton: Trusts that did not report full compliance will cover a wide variety of conditions, including that which is only just below standard. At 31 March 2003, 9 per cent. of patient-occupied floor area was below health and safety compliance and 7.10 per cent, below statutory fire safety standards.

Trusts manage high-risk deficiencies as a priority in order to ensure that premises are intrinsically safe and not of concern to local enforcement bodies.

The cost of the health and safety repair backlog is currently being validated and on completion I will write to my hon. Friend.

NHS Improvement Plan

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) for what reason there are targets in the NHS improvement plan for reducing deaths from some medical conditions but not others; and if he will make a statement; [183695]

(2) for what reason the NHS improvement plan target for reducing deaths from *(a)* heart disease, *(b)* stroke and *(c)* cancer is limited to those aged under 75 years. [183699]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 13 July 2004]:* Deaths from coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer account for around 65 per cent. of all deaths each year—346,792 in England and Wales in 2002.

Targets for these conditions are included in the NHS Improvement Plan, as they are the major killers and the Government wishes to focus on tackling those diseases, which will have the greatest impact on public health.

The impact of preventative and treatment measures in coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer is more likely to be demonstrated in changing trends of those aged under 75. These changes can only be demonstrated using robust data, which is suitable for international comparisons. The quality of assignment of cause of death is stronger for people under age 75 and we have focused the targets on them.

We are committed to ensuring that treatment should be available based on clinical need and there should not be discrimination of any kind. It is important to note

that monitoring activity is not restricted to the age range of the target and we will continue to monitor closely trends for those over the age of 75.

NHS IT Programme

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish the gateway review of the elements of the National Programme for IT in the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [185963]

Mr. Hutton: I have no current plans to do so.

The Office of Government Commerce Gateway process is an integral part of the assurance mechanism for ensuring that large-scale procurement projects and programmes meet prescribed planning and governance requirements and that they can progress successfully to the next stage. Gateway reports, in the form of advice guidance from experienced practitioners, are provided at key stages in a project or programme's development cycle. They are made direct to the senior responsible owner (SRO) and are confidential in order not to impair the value of the advice. The SRO has responsibility for ensuring that any recommendations are addressed before the project is permitted to proceed.

NHS Number

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he intends to make the NHS Number a general identifier as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998; and if he will make a statement. [185957]

Mr. Hutton: National health service numbers are assigned to all patients who receive NHS care, and underpin the development of electronic care records. Departmental officials have formed the view that the widespread use of the NHS number means that it is a "general identifier" within the meaning of the European data protection directive and the United Kingdom Data Protection Act and therefore formal regulations should be introduced to regulate its use.

NHS Overspend (South-east)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the NHS over-spend in the South East was in 2003–04. [185507]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Audited accounts information for 2003–04 will not be available centrally until autumn 2004.

NHS Professionals

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the budget of National Health Service Professionals was in financial year 2003–04; and what its main sources of revenue were; [184883]

(2) what audit arrangements are in place in respect of National Health Service Professionals; [184884]

(3) why it is his policy to exclude National Health Service Professionals from the process of audit by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency that is applied to commercial recruitment agencies; [184885]

(4) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* performance, *(b)* effectiveness and *(c)* value for money delivered by National Health Service Professionals. [184886]

Mr. Hutton: NHS Professionals was operating through various national health service bodies until 1 January 2004, when it was established as a special health authority (SHA) in shadow form. From 1 April 2004 it became a fully established SHA. The Department was NHS Professionals' main source of funding in 2003–04. Anticipated investment was £22 million in the financial year 2003–04. NHS Professionals will be audited by the National Audit Office for 2003–04 and accounts for the period it was in shadow form in 2003–04 will be published shortly.

The NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency will audit NHS Professionals' compliance with the standards laid down in the agency framework agreements in exactly the same way that it audits compliance by commercial agencies.

The Department has set up formal performance review arrangements with NHS Professionals. The benefits from the establishment of NHS Professionals will be achieved by reduced costs and higher standards in the recruitment and development of temporary staff. NHS trusts have already seen a reduction in temporary staffing costs and improvement in bank fill rates due to NHS Professionals. Local agency agreements have also saved an estimated £50 million over the past year.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence of fraud he has collated in the running of NHS Professionals; and if he will make a statement. [186142]

Mr. Hutton: No evidence of fraud has been collated in the running of NHS Professionals but any cases relating to individuals registered with NHS Professionals are dealt with by the national health service counter fraud and security management service (CFSMS).

NHS Professionals is in the process of drawing up a counter fraud charter with the CFSMS.

NHS Repairs

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Government achieved their target of reducing disrepair on the NHS estate by 25 per cent. between April 1999 and March 2004; what the total repair backlog on the NHS estate was in *(a)* March 2003 and *(b)* March 2004; and if this information is not currently available, when will he make it available. [182459]

Ms Rosie Winterton: NHS estates collects data on backlog maintenance from national health service trusts through its estates return information collection. The latest data relate to 2002–03 and this remains the subject of a statistical validation exercise, which will be completed shortly. Once the validation exercise is complete I will write to my hon. Friend.

NHS Staff

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average salary for NHS *(a)* chief executives and *(b)* chairmen was in each year since 1997. [182786]

Mr. Hutton: Information about the pay of national health service chief executives is not held centrally by the Department.

Information about the remuneration of NHS chairs has been held by the NHS appointments commission since its inception in April 2001.

The remuneration for NHS chairs since 2001–02 is shown in the table.

£

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
2001–02	20,420	18,154	16,017
2002–03	20,930	18,608	16,407
2003–04	21,453	19,073	16,827
2004–05	21,882	19,454	17,164

Remuneration for NHS chairs was handled by the Department until April 2001 when the NHS appointments commission was established. Remuneration for NHS chairs from 1997–98 to 2000–01 is shown in the table.

£

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
1997–98	19,285	17,145	15,125
1998–99	19,285	17,145	15,125
1999–2000	19,825	17,625	15,550
2000–01	19,825	17,625	15,550

For 2001–02, the remuneration of chairs of primary care trusts (PCTs) was:

Level 4: £12,967

Level 3: £10,373

Given the new responsibilities and anticipated time commitments of PCT chairs, their remuneration was increased to the same level, and on the same banding basis as NHS trusts, from 1 April 2002.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money was spent by the NHS on agency staff in Leicester South in each year since 1997. [186259]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Expenditure on total non-national health service staff—1997–98 to 2002–03

Expenditure (£)

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Leicestershire Royal Infirmary NHS Trust	585,888	897,878	1,600,196	—	—	—
Leicester General Hospital NHS Trust	710,045	917,586	1,223,520	—	—	—
Glenfield Hospital NHS Trust	139,214	343,663	448,662	—	—	—
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	—	—	—	4,673,825	6,734,372	8,218,180
Eastern Leicester PCT	—	—	—	n/a	106,895	151,238
South Leicestershire PCT	—	—	—	n/a	n/a	155,162

Sources:

1. Annual financial returns of NHS trusts, 1997–98 to 2002–03.
2. Annual financial returns of primary care trusts, 2001–02 to 2002–03.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff vacancies there were in the NHS in Leicestershire in each year since 1997. [186267]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Department of Health vacancies survey, 1999–2004

Vacancies in the Leicestershire Health Authority area by trust and by all staff groups

Three month vacancy rates and numbers

Leicestershire Health Authority (1999–2001) and Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA (2002–2004)	1999		2000		2001	
	3 month vacancy rate (per centage)	3 month vacancy number	3 month vacancy rate (percentage)	3 month vacancy number	3 month vacancy rate (percentage)	3 month vacancy number
GP				44		89
Consultant and other Doctors (excluding Doctors in training)	3.10	13	3–	3–		0
All nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff (excluding HA staff)	0.6	37	2.2	131	0.8	47
All scientific, therapeutic and technical staff (excluding HA staff)	0.6	11	0.9	17	0.1	2
All other staff (excluding HA staff)	0.1	5	1.1	41	0.1	3

Leicestershire Health Authority (1999–2001) and Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA (2002–2004)	2002		2003		2004	
	3 month vacancy rate (per centage)	3 month vacancy number	3 month vacancy rate (percentage)	3 month vacancy number	3 month vacancy rate (percentage)	3 month vacancy number
GP		123[1]		85[2]		
Consultant and other Doctors (excluding Doctors in training)	1.70	9		0	3.40	20

	2002		2003		2004	
All nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff (excluding HA staff)	3.0	285	2.8	281	1.7	192
All scientific, therapeutic and technical staff (excluding HA staff)	3.3	98	3.4	112	2.8	78
All other staff (excluding HA staff)	0.2	17	0.6	47	1.2	97

[1] In 2002,1 HA in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland did not respond to the survey. No figures for PCTs are available before 2003 as previous years vacancy numbers were collected from Health Authorities. Vacancy numbers for each year refer to the number of vacancies occuring in the 12 month period between 1 April and 31 March.
[2] Vacancy numbers for Leicestershire PCTs (3) 2000 data not available.
[3] 2000 data not available.

Nurse Employment

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the number of experienced senior nurses who are not currently employed and are available for recruitment as community matrons. [184565]

Mr. Hutton: Our work force modelling takes account of the 200,000 nurses whose Nursing and Midwifery Council registration has lapsed. There are established routes for nurses not currently working to return to the national health service. We expect that experienced nurses currently working in the NHS will fill the majority of the community matron posts after they have received the appropriate training and development.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurse training places there were in England in *(a)* 1979 and *(b)* 1997. [185967]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of training places for nurses and midwives in 1979 is not available. In 1996–97, there were 14,984 pre-registration training places for nurses and midwives.

Nurses' Uniforms

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what system of monitoring is carried out by NHS trusts to ensure nurses' uniforms laundered domestically are free from infection; and if he will make a statement; [186038]

(2) what the policy is in NHS trusts on the laundering of nurses' uniforms by individuals at home; and if he will make a statement; [186041]

(3) what proportion of nurses' uniforms in NHS trusts are laundered *(a)* at home and *(b)* under contract arrangements; [186042]

(4) what the policy is in NHS trusts on the wearing by nurses of their hospital uniform while travelling to and from their place of work. [186044]

Mr. Hutton: It is the responsibility of each national health service trust to determine its own policies regarding the supply, laundering and wearing of uniforms by nurses. The trust's chief executive has responsibility for ensuring that nurses have enough suitable clothing and equipment to carry out their work effectively. Generally, nurses would use protective clothing, such as aprons and gloves to prevent soiling of their uniforms. We are not aware of any evidence that uniforms are a significant source of hospital infections.

Information relating to the proportion of nurses' uniforms that are laundered at home or under contract arrangements is not collected centrally.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether HSG (95) 18 applies to the laundering of nurses' uniforms; and if he will make a statement; [186039]

(2) at what temperatures nurses' uniforms should be laundered to ensure they are free from bacteria; and if he will make a statement; [186043]

(3) what research his Department has carried out to establish whether domestic washing machines are capable of washing nurses' uniforms to the required hygiene standards; and if he will make a statement. [186201]

Mr. Hutton: Health Service Guidelines, reference (HSG(95)18), set out in detail the proper procedures for the handling of used and infected laundry and linen, including uniforms.

The Department has not carried out research related to domestic washing machines. However, the advice from microbiologists is that a wash at a domestic washer temperature of 60 degrees C, followed by a rinse cycle, is more than adequate to ensure the removal of bacteria.

Operations

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were carried out in NHS hospitals in each of the past five years. [181591]

Mr. Hutton: Recent trends in operations carried out in hospital both as in-patients and out-patients for General and Acute specialties are available in the statistical supplement—Chief Executive's Bulletin of May 2004 [table 3.5.5], which is available in the Library. Detailed information by different operations is available from hospital episode statistics also on the Department's website.

Orchards

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to exclude grazing animals from fruit orchards. [185744]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Maldon and East Chelmsford (Mr. Whittingdale) on 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1299W.

Paediatric Consultants

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female paediatric consultants work in the NHS, shown by (i) headcount and (ii) whole time equivalent. [185407]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of headcount and whole time equivalent consultants in the paediatric group working in the national health service broken down by gender is shown in the table.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS)—consultants within the paediatric group of specialties, by gender. England, as at 31 December 2003

	All consultants	*Male*	*Female*
Paediatric group			
Number	1,821	1,085	736
Whole time equivalents	1,650	1,008	642
of which:			
Paediatric cardiology			
Number	68	57	11
Whole time equivalents	61	53	8
Paediatrics			
Number	1,753	1,028	725
Whole time equivalents	1,589	954	634

Note:
The paediatric group comprises of specialties of paediatric cardiology and paediatrics.
Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Patientline

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what costs to patients are incurred by *(a)* registering with Patientline and *(b)* making a request for a bedside television set to be switched off; [186188]

(2) whether patients have been charged for *(a)* registering with Patientline and *(b)* making a request for bedside televisions to be switched off. [186189]

Mr. Hutton: There are no costs to patients for either registering with Patientline or making a request for a bedside television set to be switched off and no such charges have been levied in the past.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the services offered by Patientline, including costs to patients. [186190]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows the range of services provided by Patientline to patients and the cost of those services.

Services	*Cost*
Radio (typically six stations)	No charge at any time
Television (typically 16 channels)	Free for one hour per day and to children aged 16 or under at all times. TV viewing costs £3.20 to £3.50 for a day's viewing, with concessions for those aged 60 years or over, or those in hospital for longer periods.
Outgoing telephone calls	10 pence per minute (minimum 20 pence) for all local and national calls to fixed lines; charges for calls to mobiles, overseas numbers and special numbers vary.
Internet and email	4 pence per minute
Games	50 pence per game

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many requests have been made to Patientline for bedside television sets to be switched off. [186191]

Mr. Hutton: The Patientline service has been operational for over nine years and is currently being used by some 40,000 patients each day. We are advised by Patientline that during this time requests to turn the units off have never been significant; therefore the company has not recorded how many requests have been made.

All units are capable of being turned off by patients registered on the system, using the on/off switch located on the front of the terminal 2 units and all of those currently being manufactured. In the case of the earlier models—terminal 1 units—a sequence of buttons can be used. Terminals where there is no patient registered on the system can be switched off by Patientline staff at any time, if a request is made to do so.

Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what updated information has been received from pesticide companies by the National Poisons Information Service for their pesticide product database since 31 March 1998; what toxicological details it contained; and if he will publish the information. [184450]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Poisons Information Service (NPIS) requests and receives several thousand safety data sheets annually from pesticide companies. These data sheets are circulated monthly to all NPIS centres as the pesticide product database. The pesticide product database contains only safety data sheets, which are in the public domain. The NPIS Birmingham centre regularly requests from companies additional and detailed toxicological information on specific formulations, some of which is commercially sensitive.

Policies (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185104]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department published 17 regulatory impact assessments (RIAs) in 2002–03 and 18 in 2003–04. In preparing RIAs, Cabinet Office guidance states that Departments should cover the full range of potential impacts on all stakeholders—including environmental impacts where relevant.

The Department's NHS Estates Agency has published a guidance document, "Sustainable Development in the NHS" (June 2001, updated February 2003), to help hospital trusts identify environmental impacts when they are setting their policies and procedures in key areas, such as waste, energy, transport, water and procurement.

In addition the Department's Purchasing and Supplies Agency carries out environmental appraisals of its major policies and activities.

Portable Nebulisers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is in respect of the supply of portable nebulisers by the NHS free of charge. [185778]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Portable nebulisers are not available on National Health Service prescription from general practitioners, but are available free of charge, on loan from primary care and NHS trusts.

We think that it is most appropriate for them to remain as NHS property to monitor their usage and ensure that NHS resources are used most effectively.

Prescription Drugs

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients are receiving prescriptions for *(a)* Donepezil (Aricept), *(b)* Rivastigmine (Exelon) and *(c)* Galantamine (Remings). [185415]

Dr. Ladyman: No information is available on the number of patients who receive prescriptions for donepezil, rivastigmine and galantamine. However, the number of prescription items that were dispensed in the community in 2003 in England were:

	Number
Donepezil Hydrochloride	254,100
Galantamine	51,500
Rivastigmine	45,000

Primary Care Trust Mergers

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is regarding the use of financial savings made in one component trust to offset excessive expenditure in another where the managements of previously autonomous primary care trusts are merged to form a trust cluster. [185980]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* There is no national policy regarding the use of financial savings by each component trust where the management arrangements of adjacent primary care trusts (PCTs) are shared. This is a local issue, for consideration by PCTs with support from their respective strategic health authority.

Where the management arrangements for PCTs are shared, PCTs will continue to be considered separate for financial management purposes and consequently underspends generated in one trust cannot be automatically used to offset overspends in another trust.

Prisons

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether primary care trusts will be required to fund the post of prison healthcare officers; and if he will make a statement. [185135]

Dr. Ladyman: Within the framework set out in the NHS plan and the "Shifting the Balance of Power" initiative, decisions about funding for local health services, including those in prisons after the transfer of commissioning responsibility, are made by primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders.

Radiologists/Biomedical Scientists

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* radiologists and *(b)* biomedical scientists have been recruited into the NHS in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [183011]

Mr. Hutton: The data requested are shown in the table.

National health service hospital, public health medicine and community health services: biomedical scientists and medical and dental staff with a specialty in clinical radiology in England as at 30 September each year

Headcount

	Biomedical scientists	*All medical and dental staff with a specialty in clinical radiology*	*of which: Consultant*
1999	12,714	2,164	1,507
2000	12,379	2,303	1,585
2001	12,742	2,454	1,645
2002	13,117	2,538	1,702
2003	12,898	2,693	1,810

Sources:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census.

Since 1999, the number of biomedical scientists employed in the national health service has increase by 184 or 1.4 per cent., the overall number of qualified staff working in pathology in the NHS has increased by 1,466 or 9 per cent. and the numbers working in support to these staff has increased by 2,221 or 25 per cent.

In terms of the medical work force, the number of clinical radiology staff has increased by 529 or 24 per cent. and the numbers of consultant clinical radiologists specifically have increased by 303 or 20 per cent. since 1999.

Furthermore, training places for biomedical scientists are being increased considerably to ensure increases in the work force in future years. Latest figures from strategic health authorities (SHAs) suggest that in 2003–04, around 200 or 74 per cent. more biomedical scientist students were supported by SHAs than were the previous year.

We are also ensuring that trained specialists are available in the future by investing in training places. We have centrally funded 186 additional specialist registrar places in clinical radiology between 2002–03 and 2005–06.

Reciprocal Health Care Arrangements

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what reciprocal health care arrangements are in place between the UK and other EU states; how many people were treated under these arrangements in the UK in each of the last five years, broken down by region; and what the cost of this arrangement to the UK was for each of the past five years, broken down by region. [184370]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* Regulations (EEC) 1408/71 and 574/72 co-ordinate the social security and health care schemes of the European economic area countries (EEA). These regulations apply to employed or self-employed people and pensioners who are insured for health care under the state health system of a member state. The regulations provide, among other things, for health care for persons temporarily visiting another member state, referrals of patients specifically for treatment in another member state and health care for pensioners who relocate to another member state. Non-employed persons are also covered but only for health care during temporary visits.

Member states reimburse each other for treatments given to each others people. The following table shows costs for the last four years. Numbers of patients treated are not available since claims may cover several episodes of care for a single individual. No data are available on patients' United Kingdom region of origin.

Table 1: UK obligation under the (EEC) Regulation 1408/71—Resource estimates

£000

	Member states claims against the United Kingdom	*UK claims against member states*
1999–2000	176,400	26,500
2000–01	188,000	25,000
2001–02	231,900	31,300
2002–03	249,700	31,500

Notes:

1. Figures are based on latest available information and used in the 2002–03 Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB) outturn exercise. This information is compiled in line with the requirements of "Government Accounting 2000" and National Audit Office (NAO). Information for 1998–99 is not on a comparable basis.
2. Claims against UK are made in national currency and converted in sterling by using the quarterly mean exchange rates published by the Commission.

Refurbishment Costs

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of refurbishment of Department of Health owned buildings has been since May 1997. [184554]

Ms Rosie Winterton: For the seven years until 31 March 2004, the cost of refurbishment of the Department of Health's owned buildings has been as follows:

	£
1997–98	1,980,802
1998–99	1,271,733
1999–00	1,453,483
2000–01	652,456
2001–02	559,009
2002–03	1,874,284
2003–04	2,613,000
Total:	10,404,767

Seroxat

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reason the manufacturers of Seroxat were permitted to market that product in a 30 mg tablet size. [179677]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for East Worthing and Shoreham (Tim Loughton) on 21 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1268W.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many teenagers were treated for sexually transmitted diseases in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1996. [177794]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the replies I gave him on 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 709W and on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1067W. I regret, however, that investigation has revealed that the data previously provided, on 1 March at column 709W in respect of strategic health authorities, was incorrect. Revised data are shown in the table.

New diagnoses of selected sexually transmitted infections (STIs)[1] in teenagers (under 20 years of age) by strategic health authority (SHA) in England, 1995–2002

SHA	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	848	862	1,051	1,090
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	465	450	578	626
Birmingham and the Black Country	857	1,048	1,228	1,139
Cheshire and Merseyside	884	987	1,164	1,292
County Durham and Tees Valley	332	375	485	535
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	520	570	652	698
Cumbria and Lancashire	629	677	882	878
Dorset and Somerset	373	416	516	606
Essex	398	409	544	582
Greater Manchester	1,052	1,283	1,519	1,668
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	538	635	764	833
Kent and Medway	397	510	490	560
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	652	643	804	842
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	699	809	912	1,052
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	514	637	730	723
North Central London	535	678	706	940
North East London	596	696	858	950
North West London	837	861	955	1,016

New diagnoses of selected sexually transmitted infections (STIs)[1] in teenagers (under 20 years of age) by strategic health authority (SHA) in England, 1995–2002

SHA	1995	1996	1997	1998
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	738	837	947	947
Shropshire and Staffordshire	502	533	597	688
South East London	1,192	1,329	1,413	1,653
South West London	318	497	622	723
South West Peninsula	457	549	630	722
South Yorkshire	938	1,150	1,359	1,331
Surrey and Sussex	508	700	815	958
Thames Valley	621	797	885	1,054
Trent	1,409	1,523	1,909	1,864
West Yorkshire	939	925	1,128	1,385
England total	18,748	21,386	25,143	27,355

SHA	1999	2000	2001	2002
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	1,147	1,288	1,340	1,398
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	779	830	872	870
Birmingham and the Black Country	1,373	1,441	2,098	2,347
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,506	1,706	1,840	2,241
County Durham and Tees Valley	618	578	606	764
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	718	864	891	898
Cumbria and Lancashire	1,132	1,197	1,325	1,596
Dorset and Somerset	624	760	753	855
Essex	783	759	919	937
Greater Manchester	2,025	2,218	2,464	2,494
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1,184	1,325	1,117	1,212
Kent and Medway	627	626	571	689
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	887	1,239	1,072	1,185
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	1,117	1,222	1,295	1,463
North and East Yorkshire and Northern	639	678	912	1,278
North Central London	856	975	1,250	1,398
North East London	989	1,271	1,561	1,759
North West London	1,163	1,816	1,833	1,755
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	1,083	1,144	1,086	1,163
Shropshire and Staffordshire	812	879	985	1,051
South East London	1,805	1,755	1,850	1,871
South West London	906	1,228	1,253	1,476
South West Peninsula	811	880	886	980
South Yorkshire	1,454	1,544	1,567	1,847
Surrey and Sussex	990	1,122	1,185	1,484
Thames Valley	1,086	1,248	1,411	1,423
Trent	1,910	1,959	2,005	2,241
West Yorkshire	1,522	1,536	1,944	2,275
England total	30,546	34,088	36,891	40,950

[1] STIs for which age group data is collected: infectious syphilis, uncomplicated gonorrhoea, genital herpes, genital warts.

Source:
Health Protection Agency, KC60 returns.

Shared Services Special Health Authority

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to establish a shared services special health authority; and if he will make a statement. [182656]

Mr. Hutton: There are no plans to establish a shared services special health authority.

Slaughter Processes

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take steps to ensure that all meat or meat products on sale which are the result of a slaughter process where pre-stunning has been absent are required to be labelled accordingly. [182246]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is currently no requirement in United Kingdom law to provide the method of slaughter on labels. The Government recognise that some consumers may wish to have access to this information. This issue was one of the points raised by the Farm Animal Welfare Council's report on welfare at slaughter, the Government's response to which went out to public consultation. The Food Standards Agency will consider the responses to that consultation before deciding what action it might take on this issue. In the interim industry may wish to consider voluntary labelling to assist consumer choice in this area.

St. Helens and Knowsley Hospital Trust

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the revenue and capital budgets were for the St. Helens and Knowsley Hospital Trust for each year from 1997 to 2004. [184617]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available in the format requested.

Information on revenue budgets for the national health service trust is only available for 1998–99 onwards. The revenue budget for the St. Helens and Knowsley Hospital NHS Trust is shown in the table.

£

	Amount
1998–99	104,391,000
1999–2000	112,857,000
2000–01	124,978,000
2001–02	140,625,000
2002–03	139,610,000

Note:
The figures represent the total income or "turnover" of the trust.
Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of St. Helens and Knowsley NHS Trust 1998–99 to 2002–03.

Prior to 2003–04, capital budget was allocated to the Department's former regional offices. The operational capital budget for the St. Helens and Knowsley Hospital NHS Trust is shown in the table.

£

	Amount
2003–04	2,674,000
2004–05	3,053,000
2005–06	3,454,000

Strategic Health Authorities

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the *(a)* remit and *(b)* activities of strategic health authorities. [184152]

Mr. Hutton: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are the local headquarters of the national health service.

The main functions of SHAs are:

Creating a strategic framework to deliver the NHS Plan in their areas.

Managing the performance of NHS organisations in their areas.

Building capacity and supporting performance improvement across all local health agencies.

Surrey and Sussex Health Authority

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding Surrey and Sussex Health Authority received in 2003–04. [185518]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The final resource limit for Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority in 2003–04 was £126.8 million.

Tamworth

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact his Department's policies have had on *(a)* dealing with sickness rates and *(b)* promoting health in Tamworth constituency since 1997. [185837]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have put in place a programme of national health service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in all parts of the United Kingdom. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the Tamworth constituency.

For example:

Inpatient and outpatient waits

In June 2002, there were 261 people in the Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth Primary Care Trust (PCT) area waiting nine months or longer for inpatient treatment, including day cases. In May 2004, no one was waiting nine months or longer.

In June 2002, there were 16 people in the Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT area waiting 21 weeks or longer. In December 2003 there were none.

Accident and emergency waits

At Burton Hospitals NHS Trust, 93.3 per cent. of patients were admitted, transferred or discharged within four hours in the quarter to March 2004. The year average is 92.8 per cent., up from 89.2 per cent. in September 2002.

At Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust, 92.4 per cent. of patients were admitted, transferred or discharged within four hours in the quarter to March 2004. The year average is 94.3 per cent., up from 81.2 per cent. in September 2002.

Staffing

Between September 1997 and December 2003 the number of consultants at Burton Hospitals NHS Trust increased from 60 to 83. The number of nurses increased from 632 to 774 between September 1997 and September 2003.

Between September 1997 and December 2003 the number of consultants at Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust increased from 54 to 67. The number of nurses increased from 809 to 847 between September 1997 and September 2003.

Across the Burton, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT area, the number of general medical practitioners increased from 85 in September 2001 to 90 in December 2003.

Access to care

Figures for April 2004 show that all patients within Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT are able to be offered an appointment with a general practitioner within two working days and with a primary care professional within one working day.

In Burton Hospitals NHS Trust, 100 per cent. of people with suspected cancer are now seen by a specialist within two weeks of being urgently referred by their GP.

In Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust, 99.8 per cent. of people with suspected cancer are now seen by a specialist within two weeks of being urgently referred by their GP.

Between 1998 and 2001 in Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT there was a 35 per cent. decrease in the mortality rates for cardiovascular disease (Coronary Heart Disease, Stroke and related conditions) in the under 75s.

Allocations

From 2003–04 to 2005–06, Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT's allocation has risen by £32.2 million or 30.4 per cent.

New Capital

A new £20 million independent sector treatment centre is being created at Burton Hospital NHS Trust, which will allow extra capacity for orthopaedic and ophthalmology surgery cases across the county.

Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT is on course to build the new community hospital in Lichfield, ready for the summer of 2006. The enabling works have already been completed on site and the business case has been signed off. The overall cost is around £16 million. All the services presently available to the local population will be re-provided in the new Lichfield Hospital, with the exception of day surgery, which has transferred to the Sir Robert Peel Hospital in Tamworth.

Scanners

An additional computed tomography (CT) scanner was delivered to Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust in January 2004.

An additional magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner was delivered to Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust in April 2001.

A replacement CT scanner was delivered to Burton Hospitals NHS Trust in February 2001.

An additional CT scanner will be delivered to Burton Hospitals NHS Trust by December 2004.

An additional MRI scanner will be delivered to Burton Hospitals NHS Trust by December 2004.

Source of information:

Department of Health, Office of National Statistics.

Temporary Staff

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether, when hiring temporary clerical and administration staff, hospitals are required to comply with the national framework agreement. [185185]

Mr. Hutton: There is no mandatory requirement for national health service trusts to comply with the national framework agreement (NFA) set up by the NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency (PASA). The benefits of using the NFA are clear. NHS trusts are encouraged to use the NFA by PASA.

Trainee Doctors

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* whole-time equivalent and *(b)* headcount paediatric consultant specialists in kidney disease are working in the NHS; and how many vacant posts there are; [185411]

(2) how many trainee doctors specialising in paediatrics have been working in the NHS in each of the last seven years, broken down by gender; [185412]

(3) how many and what percentage of paediatric trainee doctors have gone on to take up consultancy posts in each of the last seven years. [185413]

Mr. Hutton: As at 31 December 2003, there were 1,589 whole-time equivalent and 1,753 headcount paediatric consultants working in the national health service. Data held by the Department do not distinguish how many of these consultants specialise in kidney disease.

As at 31 March, the three-month vacancy number for paediatric consultants was 43. The three-month vacancy rate was 2.7 per cent. This is lower than the average consultant three-month vacancy rate across all specialties, which was 4.7 per cent.

Table 1 shows the number of doctors in training in the paediatric specialty since 1997, broken down by gender.

Table 2 shows the cumulative total and percentage by year of first appearance as a consultant in the medical and dental workforce census.

Table 1: Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) Staff, Paediatric group training grades by gender and specialty, 1997–2003, England, as at 30 September

Number (headcount)

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Paediatric group	2,648	2,720	2,838	2,936	2,875	3,049	3,258
Of which:							
Paediatrics	2,626	2,682	2,807	2,909	2,836	2,998	3,217
Senior house officer	1,708	1,661	1,689	1,739	1,708	1,812	1,943
Of which:							
Male	708	675	645	640	651	713	812
Female	1,000	986	1,044	1,099	1,057	1,099	1,131
House officer	18	26	36	43	39	51	69
Of which:							
Male	11	10	20	22	14	17	18
Female	7	16	16	21	25	34	51
Registrar	900	995	1,082	1,127	1,089	1,135	1,205
Of which:							
Male	430	455	462	456	449	471	468
Female	470	540	620	671	640	664	737

Source:

Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Table 2: Cumulative total and percentage by year of first appearance as consultant in medical and dental workforce census

	As at September											
	1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
Expected CCST date financial year[1]	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1997–98 cohort[2]	42	41	63	61	76	74	80	78	84	82	86	83
1998–99 cohort	—	—	21	14	54	36	77	52	90	60	103	69
1999–2000 cohort	—	—	—	—	46	26	82	46	105	59	116	65
2000–01 cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	59	30	100	51	119	60
2001–02 cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	77	32	115	48
2002–03 cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	50	21

[1] Expected certificate of completion of specialist training (CCST) date can change. If data have changed and moved later it is possible for the same trainee to appear under multiple years. Totals of each year appearing should therefore not be taken.
[2] All cohorts consist of specialist registrars with an expected CCST date of within one year of the date of the planning extract collection.
Note: Paediatrics is the paediatrics group, which covers paediatrics, paediatric neurology, paediatric cardiology.
Source: Medical and dental workforce census and planning extract.

United Healthcare

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what dates special advisers from his Department have met with United Healthcare since 1 May 1997; where each meeting was held; and which of his special advisers took part in each meeting. [184105]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Special Advisers Paul Corrigan and Darren Murphy met with United Healthcare on 24 June 2002 at No. 10 Downing street. Paul Corrigan met with United Healthcare again on 23 July 2002 at Church House, Great Smith street.

Waiting Times

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list, for each of the last 10 years, the total number of patients in Tamworth constituency, or the nearest relevant unit of population, waiting for NHS operations for longer than *(a)* 18, *(b)* 15, *(c)* 12, *(d)* nine and *(e)* six months. [185836]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not collected centrally on a constituency basis, but is collected at a primary care trust level (PCT) and the earliest available data are shown in the table.

Patients waiting for elective admission: Commissioner based

			Patients waiting for admission by months waiting				
Organisation	Month-end	Total number of patients waiting for admission	6 to 8 months	9 to 11 months	12 to 14 months	15 to 17 months	Over 18 months
South Staffordshire Health Commission	March 1996	9,404	343	15	5	0	0
South Staffordshire HA	March 1997	11,326	1,190	248	20	1	0
South Staffordshire HA	March 1998	15,817	2,422	1,316	591	62	0
South Staffordshire HA	March 1999	13,584	1,963	1,164	529	143	0
South Staffordshire HA	March 2000	12,997	2,046	1,203	610	173	0
South Staffordshire HA	March 2001	12,633	1,887	1,179	522	119	0
South Staffordshire HA	March 2002	11,827	1,766	731	9	0	0
Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT	March 2003	3,081	383	114	0	0	0
Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT	March 2004	2,891	183	0	0	0	0
Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT	May 2004	2,998	233	0	0	0	0

Note:
In 2002, health authorities were abolished. Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT covers the Tamworth constituency. The data from March 2003 onwards are therefore not comparable with previous data.
Source: Department of Health form QF01.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account he takes in pursuing his plans for reducing bed occupancy in NHS hospitals, of the target to reduce waiting times to 18 weeks between GP referral and start of treatment. [186147]

Mr. Hutton: We have asked strategic health authorities and primary care trusts to take account of bed occupancy in their current capacity planning work to deliver 18-week waiting times.

Waiting Times

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which health professionals will not immediately be covered by the 18-week target from general practitioner referral to treatment set in the Spending Review. [185965]

Mr. Hutton: Currently, the 18-week target covers general practitioner referrals to consultants. Work is continuing on whether and how to extend the range of guarantees. Further details will be available in the technical guidance to the public service agreement, which will be published by Her Majesty's Treasury. Final guidance will be issued in the autumn.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans his Department has to reconfigure departmental waiting list statistics so that they measure total waiting time to treatment as outlined in the NHS improvement plan. [184326]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer on 15 July 2004]:* The national health service already measures total waiting time to treatment for cancer services with targets for maximum waiting times set in the "Cancer Plan" (2000).

The Government will shortly be setting out its plans for delivering the target outlined in the NHS Improvement Plan 2008, including how waiting times for diagnostic procedures and total waiting times will be measured.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 7 September 2004

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Beijing Platform for Action

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Minister for Women what her plans are for involvement in the Beijing Platform for Action, known as Beijing + 10. [187535]

Ms Hewitt: The celebration and evaluation of the 10 years since the Beijing Platform for Action will be an integral part of the UK Government's work on gender equality in 2005. The 49th Session of the Commission for the Status for Women (CSW) at the United Nations in March 2005 will review and appraise the implementation of Beijing over the last 10 years. The cross-Whitehall UK Government delegation will actively participate at CSW. We have already begun feeding into this process, completing a United Nations questionnaire on progress made since 1995 in the UK (available at www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk), which will feed into the UN Secretary-General's report. During the UK Presidency of the EU, July to December 2005, we will host a major European conference and a Ministerial Informal meeting to consider best practice across the EU in relation to national implementation of the Beijing Platform. The UK Government are a strong advocate of the Beijing Platform for Action and UN initiatives to further gender equality.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Divisions

36. **Norman Baker:** To ask the Leader of the House if he will seek to amend the practice of Divisions to allow abstentions to be recorded. [187676]

Mr. Woolas: I have no plans to do so.

Sitting Hours

Kevin Brennan: To ask the Leader of the House when he expects to publish proposals for revised sitting hours of the House. [187672]

Mr. Hain: The Modernisation Committee, which I chair, is conducting an inquiry into the sitting hours of the House. I hope that it will report its findings to the House by the end of the year.

Parliamentary Publications

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Leader of the House what representations he has received since 27 April from the Plain English Campaign regarding the language used in parliamentary publications. [187674]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend has received no representations from the Plain English Campaign since March of this year, when representatives of that organisation met with the Modernisation Committee as part of its inquiry into Connecting Parliament with the Public.

SCOTLAND

Immigration

7. **Pete Wishart:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met the First Minister to discuss Scottish immigration issues. [187632]

Mrs. McGuire: My right hon. Friend and I have regular meetings with Scottish Ministers and the Home Office to discuss the Government's asylum and immigration policies. I last met the Minister for Citizenship, Immigration and Nationality and the Minister for Communities on 2 June this year.

Infantry Regiments

8. **Mr. Alan Reid:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent discussions he has held with the Secretary of State for Defence regarding the Scottish infantry regiments. [187633]

Mr. Darling: My right hon. Friend and I have had recent discussions on a range of issues including the Scottish infantry regiments.

Consumer Debt

9. **Mr. Carmichael:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the level of consumer debt in Scotland. [187634]

Mrs. McGuire: Growth in personal debt across the United Kingdom is slowing down. Estimates of Scottish consumer indebtedness are not readily available. However, at the end of July 2004 the total UK personal debt was £1,014.5 billion.

Post Office Closures

10. **John Barrett:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry about the number of post office closures in Scotland. [187635]

Mr. Darling: My right hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland and I have regular discussions with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry about a variety of issues.

Civil Service Relocation

11. **Tony Worthington:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the dispersal of Government jobs to Scotland. [187636]

Mr. Darling: Decisions about the relocation of jobs within Government Departments have yet to be made but will be based on Departments' operational needs and individual business cases rather than the particular

needs of specific areas or geographies. However, I have made quite clear to other Government Departments the advantages Scotland offers as a location.

13. **Mr. Donohoe:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the impact of the Lyons review in areas in Scotland not named in the King Sturge report; and what active role his Department is taking towards public sector job relocation to Scotland. [187638]

Mr. Darling: Decisions about the relocation of jobs within Government Departments have yet to be made but will be based on Departments' operational needs and individual business cases rather than the particular needs of specific areas or geographies. However, I have made quite clear to other Government Departments the advantages Scotland offers as a location and have encouraged them to consider Scotland when reviewing relocation plans.

Small Business Regulation

12. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent representations he has received from small business organisations regarding regulation. [187637]

Mr. Darling: I met representatives from Chambers of Commerce throughout Scotland yesterday when a number of regulatory issues were discussed. Furthermore, my hon. Friend., the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, is a member of the Small Business Consultative Group chaired by the Scottish Executive and all meetings of this group have a standing agenda item on regulatory issues. The Government and the Scottish Executive are committed to ensuring that businesses do not face unnecessary regulatory burdens.

Scottish Parliament

14. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will take steps to provide an opportunity to enable the people of Scotland to decide whether they wish to retain a Scottish Parliament. [187639]

Mr. Darling: No. The Scottish Parliament represents the settled will of the Scottish people expressed convincingly in the referendum of 1997.

Postal Services

15. **Mr. Weir:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent representations he has received regarding postal services in Scotland. [187640]

Mrs. McGuire: My right hon. Friend and I receive a wide range of representations on Scottish matters.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187322]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office has one room set aside for smokers. No rooms are currently set aside for worship or for nursing mothers and pregnant women and no requests for such rooms have been received, but appropriate arrangements can be made if necessary.

Parliamentary Boundaries

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what indications he has received from the Boundary Commission for Scotland as to when it expects to deliver to him its report on Parliamentary Boundaries in Scotland. [186383]

Mr. Darling: It is a matter entirely for the Boundary Commission for Scotland when, before December 2006, it reports to me. The Commission is aware that, following the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004 receiving Royal Assent on 22 July, it is no longer under a duty to review the regional boundaries for the Scottish Parliament. In light of its progress so far, it seems likely that the Commission will report much sooner than its deadline, but the timing is a matter for it.

WALES

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether his Department has *(a)* a set retirement age that applies to all or most personnel and *(b)* a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186089]

Mr. Hain: Staff working in the Wales Office before June 2003 were on secondment or loan from other Departments—predominantly from the National Assembly for Wales. Their home departments therefore set the retirement age and any retirement taken would be from the home department rather than from the Wales Office.

Since June 2003 the Wales Office has operated the retirement policy of the Department for Constitutional Affairs for those staff who are not on loan.

Devolved Government

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he next plans to meet the First Secretary of the National Assembly for Wales to discuss the future of Devolved Government in Wales. [184032]

Mr. Hain: I have regular meetings with the First Minister to discuss a number of different issues that effect Wales, including the future of Devolved Government.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183845]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office does not have the executive responsibilities which would generally require publicity or public relations expenditure.

The Wales Office does employ three Press Officers, whose basic salary scales currently range from £23,764 to £31,003, £26,688 to £35,214 and £42,999 to £56,737.

Referendum Threshold

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether it is his policy that a turnout threshold be included in plans for a referendum on granting tax-raising powers to the Welsh Assembly. [183390]

Mr. Hain: No.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Automotive Emissions

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information she has sought about the emissions level that has been established for the automotive sector under the *(a)* German, *(b)* French, *(c)* Spanish and *(d)* Italian national allocation plans; what this represents as a proportion of actual emissions in 2002; and if she will make a statement. [186276]

Mr. Morley: We understand that the French, Spanish and Italians are proposing to adopt a narrow interpretation of the scope of the Directive that will exclude, inter alia, installations in the automotive sector from the scheme in those member states. We have already raised this issue with the Commission and will continue to press for them to resolve this issue as soon as possible.

The German allocation plan does not contain information on sectoral or individual installation allocations so it is not possible to provide an assessment of the emissions levels for their automotive sector. We are pressing Germany and other member states to publish the details of the projections used in their allocation plans to improve transparency in the assessment process.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she last met representatives of the automotive sector to discuss the UK implementation of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [186277]

Mr. Morley: Officials from Defra and DTI have met with representatives of the automotive sector on a number of occasions, including a meeting with the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) in February to discuss the draft National Allocation Plan. Defra officials have attended meetings of the DTI-led Vehicle Industry Policy and European Regulation (VIPER) meetings to discuss the implementation of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS).

Representatives of the automotive sector have also attended numerous Government seminars covering a range of issues related to the EU ETS.

Officials from Defra, DTI, Treasury and Number 10 are also due to be meeting with SMMT officials in early August to discuss the EU ETS.

Departmental Accounting Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who the Finance Director of *(a)* the Department, *(b)* the Office for Water Services and *(c)* the Forestry Commission is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183427]

Alun Michael: Defra was formed in June 2001. Currently the Finance Director is Andrew Burchell who took up his post in October 2001. He is a career civil servant who does not hold any CCAB recognised qualification.

Audit opinion on the Core Department's accounts for the last five years has been as follows:

Since the formation of Defra, the NAO's Opinion on published accounts has been as follows:

	Resource account	*Vote account*
2001–02	Qualified opinion	Not applicable
2002–03	No qualification	Not applicable
2003–04	Audit not yet completed	Not applicable

Ofwat's Finance Director is Roger Dunshea (joined Ofwat 1998) who does not hold any CCAB recognised qualifications. There have been no qualified opinions on the accounts in the last five years. The 2003–04 audit has not yet been completed.

Emissions Trading

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to *(a)* maintain UK emissions targets in relation to the EU Emissions Trading Scheme National Allocation Plan and *(b)* incorporate a proportion of benchmarking into allocations for individual installations under these proposals; and if she will make a statement. [186254]

Mr. Morley: The UK emissions targets in relation to the EU Emissions Trading Scheme National Allocation Plan are set out in the plan that was notified to the Commission in April 2004. We have pointed out that the figures in the plan are subject to further change for a number of reasons, including final updates to the emissions projections.

Generally, the allocation to incumbent installations (those in operation prior to 1 January 2004) is calculated based on historic emissions. The allocation to new entrant installations (those in operation subsequent to a January 2004) will be calculated using a standardised benchmarking methodology.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the percentage allocation of emission permits under the European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme to Northern Ireland's power stations will be at the same level as the Great Britain average. [186306]

Mr. Morley: The UK National Allocation Plan that was notified to the European Commission in April, stated that the UK had yet to make a final decision on whether the particular characteristics of the electricity

supply industry in Northern Ireland made it appropriate to split the power station allocation prior to distribution to installations.

We are continuing to discuss this with officials from Northern Ireland and intend to make an announcement later this year.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been made of the impact of UK implementation of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme on the competitiveness of vehicle manufacturing in the UK. [186278]

Mr. Morley: In the UK National Allocation Plan, sectors that are subject to international competition have been allocated according to projected need. The impact of the scheme on these sectors is expected to be similar to that of existing national policies. In those member states where more effort needs to be made to reach Kyoto targets, the impact of the scheme is expected, over time, to be that much greater.

We are aware of different proposed implementation in the French and Spanish allocation plans, which would result in the vehicle manufacturing industries in those member states not being included in the scheme. We are continuing to press the Commission to resolve this issue as soon as possible. The UK has also been lobbying the Commission to ensure their assessment of allocation plans is robust, consistent and transparent.

Flood Defences

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what specific resources have been allocated to river and coastal flood defences between 2005–06 and 2007–08; and if she will make a statement. [186569]

Mr. Morley: Defra funds most of the Environment Agency's flood defence activities and provides grant aid on a project-by-project basis to the other flood and coastal defence operating authorities (local authorities and internal drainage boards) to support their investment in improvement projects to manage flood and coastal erosion risk.

The Department plans to invest at least £564 million each year between 2005–06 and 2007–08 in the management of flood and coastal erosion risk and related expenditure. The amount for flood defence projects (as opposed to projects primarily for coastal erosion or other activities such as funding of the Storm Tide Forecasting Service) will be decided later this year.

Landfill

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* complaints, *(b)* court actions and *(c)* fines against landfill sites for problems related to (i) odours, (ii) water pollutions, (iii) air pollution and (iv) human health impact there were in each year since 1995, broken down by region. [184862]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency holds information on reported incidents of pollution on the National Incident Recording System and information on court actions and fines, separately on the National Enforcement Database. It is not possible to present the data in the form requested so a document setting out the available information will be deposited in the Library of the House.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Venezuela

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support the British Government offered to Venezuela following the floods in Caracas in December 1999; and if he will make a statement. [186412]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID provided over £770,000 to Venezuela following the floods in December 1999. This was mainly through the World Health Organisation, the United Nations Children's Fund and the British Red Cross. These funds went towards providing emergency assistance for those affected and initiating long-term rehabilitation for up to 10,000 families.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187316]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's two main UK offices at 1 Palace Street, London, and Abercrombie House, East Kilbride, both have a smoking room, a room set aside for worship (not designated for any specific faith) and a nursing mothers room. The provision of facilities such as those for religious groups and nursing mothers is a small but important contribution to our Commitment to creating a workplace which embraces diversity, one of DFID's core values.

Kenya

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of the international aid budget was spent in Kenya in each year since 1997. [187409]

Hilary Benn: The proportion of DFID's total aid budget which was spent in Kenya in each year since 1997 is set out in the first column of the following table. The second column gives the proportion of DFID's bilateral programme spent in Kenya. In addition to the funding disbursed under DFID's bilateral programme, we estimate that about £10 million is disbursed annually to Kenya through the contributions which we make to multilateral institutions.

Expenditure in Kenya as percentage of DFID programme

	Percentage of total programme	*Percentage of bilateral programme*
1997–98	1.4	2.8
1998–99	1.4	2.9
1999–2000	1.0	2.0
2000–01	1.8	3.7
2001–02	0.9	1.8
2002–03	1.3	2.4
2003–04	0.7	1.3

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the Kenyan Government on aid from the UK in relation to corruption within Kenya. [187410]

Hilary Benn: DFID is in regular contact with the Kenyan Government on the issue of corruption and its impact on our development assistance. DFID's Kenya Country Assistance Plan recognises that poverty reduction budget support is the Government of Kenya's preferred form of aid. It also makes clear that the level of British aid to Kenya, and whether or not we will provide bilateral poverty reduction budget support, will depend on the pace with which the Kenyan Government implements its Economic Recovery Strategy, especially in tackling corruption, preparing and implementing budgets that benefit the poor, and strengthening public financial management. Progress is not yet sufficient to enable us to provide such support. This point was most recently reinforced in a meeting with President Kibaki on 1 September.

We are particularly concerned about recent reports of corruption allegedly involving senior members of the Kenyan Government and have urged President Kibaki, in previous meetings, to ensure that appropriate and firm action is taken to investigate these reports, make the results public and take appropriate action against all those found to have acted corruptly. Some progress is being made, i.e. in the establishment of anti-corruption institutions, but it still remains to be seen whether this will lead to decisive action in the short-term.

We will, therefore, continue to use sector support and project aid where we believe that it can have a sustainable impact on poverty reduction and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in Kenya.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many contracts his Department had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186693]

Hilary Benn: None.

Political and Economic Liberalisation

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what research his Department has commissioned regarding connections between political and economic liberalisation and improvements in human security in developing countries. [186775]

Hilary Benn: DFID funded research in this area as part of a three year programme on 'Globalisation and Poverty Elimination' between 2000 and 2003. The website address is www.gapresearch.org

DFID currently funds the Crisis States Development Research Centre based at the London School of Economics. Website www.crisisstates.com.

Somalia

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support he is giving to humanitarian operations in Somalia. [186443]

Hilary Benn: So far in 2004 DFID has agreed to provide £2,941,534 for the following ongoing humanitarian operations in Somalia (DFID contribution in brackets):

African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) "Gedo Regional Health Care programme" (£287,521);

International Committee of the Red Cross "2004 Appeal" to provide humanitarian assistance—food, health, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene—to those affected by instability and conflict (£400,000);

International Medical Corps "Primary Health Care in Bay, Bakool and Hiraan regions" (£480,000);

Medecins sans Frontieres "Basic Health and Nutrition, Lower Juba" (£1,225,390)

Medecins Sans Frontieres "Primary Health Care, Middle Shabelle" (£424,013);

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) "Nutritional Supplementation to children and pregnant women" (£300,000);

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) "Expanded Programme on Immunisation, including Polio Eradication Initiative" (£300,000);

United Nations Office For The Coordination Of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): "Coordination Support Services" (£250,000);

United Nations Office For The Coordination Of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): "Humanitarian Response Fund" (£500,000).

The Somali population, due to instability and severe poverty, remains highly vulnerable to climatic and conflict generated crisis. DFID's continuing humanitarian assistance to Somalia will be based on assessed needs and will address immediate and critical problems in order to reduce suffering and save lives.

Sugar Protocol

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether under Common Agricultural Policy reform of the sugar protocol there are mechanisms in place to prevent short-term dumping on developing countries. [186323]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The European Commission presented a communication to the Agriculture Council on 19 July that set out their preferred option for reform. The communication proposes to substantially reduce sugar exports and export refunds, abolish intervention, reduce ELI production and the internal sugar price and grant a de-coupled payment to sugar beet farmers. The reform process will start in July 2005. This should make the regime more market oriented and reduce the quantity of EU sugar exported to third markets. If the option were to be agreed, the Commission estimate that the combined, aggregate effect of the proposals on support price and quota reduction would be a significant reduction in the level of EU production under quota, from 17.3 million to 14.5 million tonnes per year. In turn, as a consequence of the substantial reduction in the overall level of EU production, EU subsidised sugar exports dumping are projected to fall by around 2 million tonnes. The Commission communication will be the subject of discussion between the EU Member States over the coming months.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether under Common Agricultural Policy reform of the sugar protocol there are transitional arrangements for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. [186324]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The European Commission (EC) presented a Communication to the Agriculture Council on 19 July that set out their preferred option for reform. To address the impact on the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP)s, the European Commission will work with affected countries on the basis of an action plan to be produced by the end of 2004 to define appropriate trade and development measures. Tailor made programmes should help ACPs adapt and improve the competitiveness of their sugar industry where viable or help to support their diversification out of sugar. DFID welcomes this commitment in the Communication and are keen to help facilitate the dialogue between the EC and the ACP on this action plan. DFID is commissioning a study from the Overseas Development Institute that should help those countries affected determine their priorities for a transitional package.

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the Department is funding research into alternative uses for sugar, with particular reference to developing countries, in the light of Common Agricultural Policy reform of the sugar protocol. [186325]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has always stressed the need to take account of the impact that reform of the EU sugar regime will have on our developing country preferential suppliers. DFID is conscious that substantial reform will give rise to transitional problems for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP)s that currently benefit from preferential access to the EU market at existing price levels and for the Least Developed Countries (LDC)s seeking to develop an export trade to Europe under the EBA initiative.

In order to help inform the debate and ensure the impact on developing countries is taken sufficiently into consideration, DFID commissioned a study last year with LMC International and Oxford Policy Management, 'Addressing the Impact of Preference Erosion in Sugar on Developing Countries'. The study is divided into two sections. The first part assesses the economic and social impact on the ACP Sugar Protocol countries of the various reform scenarios suggested by the European Commission. The latter part of the study assesses alternative options for addressing the impact of preference erosion in sugar. The purpose of this analysis was to identify various options for debate by the ACP and the EU.

DFID has recently commissioned two further pieces of work on this issue. The first report has been commissioned with LMC International, 'EU Sugar Reform: the Implications for the Development of LDCs and should be finalised early next month. The second report has been commissioned from the Overseas Development Institute, 'Forthcoming changes in EU sugar/banana markets: a menu of options for an effective EU transitional assistance package' and should also be finalised next month. This report should help those countries affected by reform determine their priorities for a transitional package. This report will include some analysis of alternative uses for sugar.

Vietnam

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will outline his Department's strategy with regard to the Montagnard people of Vietnam since 1997; and if he will make a statement; [187268]

(2) how much *(a)* monetary aid and *(b)* aid in kind his Department has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to projects directly impacting on the Montagnard people of Vietnam since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [187269]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development's (DFID) engagement in Vietnam since 1997 has focused on supporting the Vietnamese Government in implementing its own strategies for poverty reduction. In their five-year plans, the Government of Vietnam has highlighted the severe poverty issues facing the Central Highlands where the majority of the Montagnard people live.

From 1997 to 2003 DFID's strategy focused on working with other donors. During this period DFID has developed two projects with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) which aim to improve the quality of services provided by the Vietnamese Government to poor people in four provinces of the Central Highlands region. The projects focus on greater participation by poor people in planning and monitoring services, which should ensure that the services provided are more appropriate and of better quality. In addition, DFID has funded UNICEF to improve water supplies to rural areas in three Central Highlands provinces.

In DFID's Vietnam Country Assistance Plan, 2004–06, a key strategic objective is to strengthen the Government's efforts to achieve development which is socially inclusive. In addition to the co-financed ADB projects mentioned above, DFID is currently addressing the development needs of the Montagnard people through co-financing a number of national programmes, which include Central Highlands provinces, districts and communes along with those in other poor areas of Vietnam. In education, our two national programmes with the World Bank, Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children and Primary Teachers Development Project, are strengthening the capacity of local government to improve the quality of primary education for all children. In transport, DFID is working with the World Bank to improve access to rural roads for poor people and building Government capacity to monitor and forecast associated recurrent budget costs. DFID also co-finance two United Nations Development Programme projects aimed at strengthening the capacities of the National Assembly and a number of provincial People's Councils, including several in the Central Highlands region.

The only programmes where DFID can explicitly disaggregate it's monetary aid, and aid in kind, for the Montagnard people are for our Rural Transport Programmes, and our Central Region Livelihoods Improvement Programme (CRLIP). Since 1997 our

Rural Transport Programmes have disbursed £512, 427 in the two Central Highland provinces of Dak Lak and Gia Lai. The CRLIP has pledged £2,766,667 to the Central Highland Province of Kon Turn.

The following table details monetary aid from DFID's national programmes that cover the Central Highlands provinces where most of the Montagnard people live in Vietnam.

Project title	*Allocation (£)*	*Project duration*	*Project location*
Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children (PEDC)	26,500,000	2003–09	38 provinces including four central highland provinces—Dak Lak, Gia Lai, Kon Turn, Lam Dong
Primary Teacher Development Project (PTDP)	8,256,000	2002–05	10 provinces including one central highland province—Kon Turn
Capacity Building for Central Region Poverty Reduction (CBCRPR)	1,800,000	2002–04	Four provinces including one central highland province—Kon Turn
Support to the Office of the National Assembly and People's Councils (ONA project)	330,000	2004–08	15 provinces including two central highland provinces—Dak Lak, Kon Turn
Support to the Committee for Economic and Budgetary Affairs (CEBA)	672,000	2003–08	11 provinces including one central highland province—Lam Dong
Vietnam: Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Programme—UNICEF Core Funding Project	2,880,000	1999–2002	14 provinces including three central highland provinces—Kon Turn, Gia Lai, Dak Lak

Water and Sanitation Goals

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much of the Departmental Expenditure Limits agreed up to 2007–08 will be spent in pursuit of the water and sanitation Millennium Development Goals targets *(a)* directly and *(b)* indirectly through (i) budget support and (ii) other programmes which require access to safe water and sanitation to be fully effective. [186127]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's support for the water sector is predominantly through our country programmes and support to multi-lateral institutions. This includes direct water sector activities, improvements attributed through assistance to other sectors such as health and education, as well as through our poverty reduction budget support, where expenditure reflects developing countries' own priorities and our assistance is coordinated with that of other donors. DFID works to assist countries to use their budgets to make the biggest impact on reducing poverty. DFID's Water Action Plan published in March 2004 and available on our website: www.dfid.gov.uk emphasises the importance of water and sanitation in all aspects of development.

DFID does provide significant support to the water sector; DFID's bilateral expenditure alone was estimated at £87 million in 2001–02. DFID is currently undertaking work to update it's estimates and project our likely expenditure on water-related activities through to 2007–08, both bilaterally and multilaterally, including the results of DFID's initial resource allocation round in autumn 2004.

Critically, during 2005, the international community will be reviewing progress against all the MDGs, including the water and sanitation targets, and there will be a special UN General Assembly discussion. Leading up to that, the UK and other parties will be reviewing what further action needs to be taken on water and sanitation at the UN Commission for Sustainable Development in April 2005.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Summer Recess Visitors

37. **Mr. Pike:** To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many people visited the House during the summer recess. [187678]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Up to and including 1 September, a total of 72,450 people had visited Parliament during the summer recess; 67,757 were on public (paying) tours and 4,693 were on Members' tours.

The total number of people who have pre-booked and paid for tours on 2, 3 and 4 September and during the conference recess is 6,795. Another 2,161 people have pre-booked, but not yet paid for tours.

Crèche Facilities

Harry Cohen: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission, what assessment the Commission has made of the need for crèche facilities to be made available for people attending official meetings with hon. Members in the House.(187677)

Sir Archy Kirkwood: It is important that visitors are made to feel welcome on the Parliamentary Estate. However, the Commission has not made any assessment of the need for crèche facilities to be made available for people attending official meetings with hon. Members. I should point out that very little use is made of the baby care and changing facilities we already provide, and that the reception desks have no record of any request for crèche facilities for visitors.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Advertising

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money was spent on advertising and promotional literature for his Department's initiatives, broken down by year since 1997. [183807]

Fiona Mactaggart: The amount spent by the Home Office on advertising and publications over this period is set out as follows. Printing and publishing costs were not centralised within the Home Office until 1999–2000 and it is not possible to produce spending figures prior to this. The figures for publications include all Home Office publications including command papers and other policy documents, as well as campaign related literature.

1996–97

Advertising spend was £5.23 million in a total communication budget of £8.328 million. Communication spend represents 0.13 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £6,416 million Campaigns included car crime, recruitment of special constables, fire safety and electoral registration.

1997–98

Advertising spend was £1.4 million in a total communication budget of £3.372 million. Communication spend represented 0.05 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £6,747 million. Campaigns included recruitment of special constables, fire safety, absent voting and electoral registration.

1998–99

Advertising spend was £1.8 million in a total communication budget of £4.194 million. Communication spend represents 0.00005 per cent. of total Home office public expenditure of £7,608,178 million.

Campaigns included smoke alarms, recruitment of special constables, crime partnerships and electoral registration.

1999–2000

Advertising spend was £5.65 million in a total communication budget of £10.08 million which included £2.626 million on publications. Communication spend represents 0.000012 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £7,996,184 million. Campaigns included chip pan safety, fire safety, recruitment of special constables, European parliament elections and electoral registration.

2000–01

Advertising spend was £28.36 million in a total communication budget of £35.637 million which included £3.128 million on publications. Communication spend represents 0.00039 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £9,068,695 million. Campaigns included fire safety, vehicle crime and the recruitment of police officers.

2001–02

Advertising spend was £14.4 million in a total communication budget of £25 million which included £2.995 million on publications. Communication spend represents 0.00023 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £10,820,813 million. Campaigns included fire safety, vehicle crime, internet child protection, drugs, recruitment of police officers and special constables, and postal voting.

2002–03

Advertising spend was £9.9 million in a total communication budget of £18.3 million which included £2.493 million on publications. Communication spend represented 0.00013 per cent. of total Home office public expenditure of £13,493,081 million. Campaigns included vehicle crime, internet child protection, drugs, the firearms amnesty and the recruitment of police officers.

2003–04

Advertising spend was £12.487 million in a total communication budget of £22,083 million which included £2.986 million on publications. Communication spend represents 0.00017 per cent. of total Home Office expenditure of £12,605,526 million. Campaigns included vehicle crime, internet child protection, drugs, recruitment of police officers and domestic violence.

Note:

Please note that the total public expenditure figures for 1996–97 and 1997–98 were compiled under a different accounting system to later years—and are therefore not directly comparable.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been served in Northampton in each year since their introduction. [186467]

Ms Blears: By 31 March 2004, as notified to the Home Office, one antisocial behaviour order has been issued within the Northampton borough council local government area. This was issued in June 2003.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were *(a)* applied for and *(b)* granted in the County of Durham in the last 12 months for which figures are available, broken down by magistrates court. [186439]

Ms Blears: The available information is given in the following table.

Number of ASBOs, as notified to the Home Office, for all courts in the County of Durham, by complainant and type of court, 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004

		By application			
		Applications by complainant			
Type of court	*Total applications*	*Local authority*	*Police*	*On conviction*[1]	*Total issued*
Magistrates court					
North Durham PSA	8	4	4	2	10
South Durham PSA	3	—	3	—	3
Crown court					
Durham CC				1	1
County court	—	—	—	—	—
Total	11	4	7	3	14

[1] Type of applicant not applicable.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in *(a)* the constituency of Bury St. Edmunds and *(b)* Suffolk since their introduction. [187192]

Ms Blears: The available information is given in the following table.

Number of ASBOs, as notified to the Home Office, for all courts in Suffolk, by area, 1 April 1999 to 31 March 2004

Area	*Total issued*
Suffolk	45
From 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 by pfa[1]	3
From 1 June 2000 to 31 March 2004 by local authority area	42
of which:	
Mid Suffolk DC	—
St. Edmundsbury BC	2

[1] Between 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data are available by police force area (pfa) only.

Note:
The constituency of Bury St. Edmunds comprises 16 wards of the District of Mid Suffolk and 14 wards of the Borough of St. Edmundsbury.

Community Safety

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to consult older people on issues of community safety. [186449]

Ms Blears: Within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, local authorities are required to work with the police to conduct a review of levels and patterns of crime and disorder. They are then required to consult widely with key agencies, community groups, charities (such as Help the Aged and Age Concern) and the community about these findings. Each of the 376 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships across England and Wales conduct resident surveys on a variety of issues to find out what people's concerns are, and then act on them as necessary. The survey covers a whole spectrum of residents from young people to older people.

In addition, the Fear of Crime Team within the Home Office have presented to, and facilitated, workshops at the Help the Aged National and Regional Senior Safety Conferences, developed and published a vulnerability strategy which identifies and addresses fear of crime issues among older people, and developed Fear of Crime reassurance cards, which challenge misperceptions about local crime issues. These cards are being disseminated to older people by Help the Aged handyvan fitters and neighbourhood wardens.

Community Sentences

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reporting procedures are for the performance of prison alternatives. [182285]

Paul Goggins: The National Probation Service (NPS) will shortly publish its annual report for 2003–04. In addition, each of the 42 operational areas of the NPS is required to produce its own annual report by the end of October.

The National Probation Directorate produces a quarterly Performance Report, which sets out the extent to which local probation areas are performing against targets and how the key strategic objectives are being delivered. The reports are available on the NPS website (www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/page34.asp).

The Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate publishes Probation Statistics for England and Wales on an annual basis. This presents statistics and trends relating to the work of the service, including the number of offenders under different types of supervision, the number of reports produced and staff in post. The most recent edition, published in January 2004, covers the year 2002 and is available on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/probation1.html). The web address also provides access to a number of Home Office Research Studies on themes relevant to the work of the NFS.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what plans the Government have to publicise successful outcomes of community sentencing; [182287]

(2) what plans he has to use the media to communicate information on community sentencing to the public; [182290]

(3) what measures *(a)* are in place and *(b)* he will introduce to demonstrate to the public that community sentences are serious penalties for offenders. [182294]

Paul Goggins: There is in place a communication strategy to improve public knowledge, understanding of, and confidence in, community sentences.

The Home Office and local Probation Areas are also working to increase the public's understanding and knowledge of the range of community sentences available to the courts. The aim is to demonstrate that community punishment can be tough and demanding, making sure that offenders put something back into the community. A national visibility scheme for community. The reparation marque 'Making Amends' identifies locations that have benefited from community work.

We will also promote public awareness of the new community sentences created by the Criminal Justice Act 2003, including Custody Minus and the new generic community sentence, as they come on stream next year.

Contingency Planning

Kali Mountford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on emergency planning arrangements in the UK. [184912]

Mr. Blunkett *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Hamilton, South (Mr. Tynan) on 27 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 844W.

Crime (Great Yarmouth)

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment has been made of the level of fear of crime among the people of Great Yarmouth. [186715]

Ms Blears: A Citizens' Panel is currently being conducted across Norfolk which includes questions about crime, the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour. The results will be broken down to district council level and will be published in December this year on the Norfolk Citizen Panel website, the address is: www.norfolk.gov.uk/citizenspanel/content/panellist_results.asp.

Departmental Expenditure/Staff

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* capital and *(b)* running costs of mobile phones in his Department were in each year since 2001. [185291]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The accounting policy of the Home Office is to only capitalise assets whose cost is greater than £5,000. Mobile phones purchased as part of a contract are treated as a revenue expense.

The running costs for each year since 2001 are as follows:

	£
2001	890,715.68
2002	1,260,983.99
2003	1,282,909.33

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time equivalent staff there have been in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies of the Department in each year since 1997. [182219]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table provides a reply to the question based on the civil service statistics staff levels since 1996.

These are full-time equivalent figures, based on civil service statistics, 1997 onwards available from the available civil service statistics. All figures are as at April.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Central Home Office and IND (excluding agencies)	9,358	8,037	7,711	9,270	13,020	13,550	16,540
Fire Service College	215	253	188	180	190	—	—
Forensic Science Service	1,185	1,238	1,638	1,780	2,190	2,420	2,660
United Kingdom Passport Agency	1,407	1,276	1,245	1,320	2,270	2,770	2,600
Prison Service	37,704	39,363	38,719	40,560	41,940	41,780	43,210
Home Office Total	49,869	50,167	49,501	53,110	59,610	60,520	65,010

In accordance with the policy objectives of the spending review and strategic plan commitments to staff cuts, we are streamlining departmental Head-Quarters (HQ) and reducing staff numbers by 30 per cent. in order to focus resources on the front-line. We are committed to similar reductions in the HQ of Corrections and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. Reducing our HQ staff numbers by 2,700 full-time equivalents will free up around £100 million in real terms to be spent on the front-line.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and sets of offices for which his Department is responsible. [186536]

Fiona Mactaggart: In the Departments seven main central London buildings there is *(a)* one smoking room in each building, *(b)* one building with a multi-faith room and one building with a Muslim prayer room, and *(c)* a designated room for nursing mothers and pregnant women in three of the buildings. This information is not held centrally for the remainder of the Home Office Estate.

English Language Training (Leeds)

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what English language training is available to *(a)* adult refugees and *(b)* adult asylum seekers in Leeds. [186736]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

These are matters for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Essex Police

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what change in funding Essex Police Authority has received in each year since 1997. [186315]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the table.

	General government grants[1] £ million	*Annual percentage change in general government grants Percentage*	*Specific grants and capital provision[2] £ million*	*Total £ million*	*Annual percentage change in all government grants Percentage*
1997–98	129.7		6.7	136.4	
1998–99	131.5	1.4	2.1	133.6	-2.0
1999–2000	134.8	2.5	3.1	137.9	3.2
2000–01	143.8	6.7	4.3	148.1	7.4

	General government grants[1] £ million	Annual percentage change in general government grants Percentage	Specific grants and capital provision[2] £ million	Total £ million	Annual percentage change in all government grants Percentage
2001–02[3]	151.9	5.6	7.9	159.8	7.9
2001–02[3]	147.9	—	7.9	155.8	—
2002–03	151.3	2.3	16.0	167.3	7.4
2003–04	155.9	3.0	17.7	173.6	3.7
2004–05	160.9	3.3	16.7	177.6	2.4

[1] General government grants comprise Home Office principal police grant, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Revenue Support Grant and National Non Domestic Rates. Figures include £2.0 million in 1999–2000, £1.25 million in 2000–01 and £14,000 in 2001–02 for the transitional costs associated with changes in boundaries of the Metropolitan Police District from April 2000.
[2] Includes funding from the Crime Fighting Fund, Rural Policing Fund, South East Allowance Payments, Basic Command Unit funding, Community Support Officer funding, Special Priority Payments, DMA Expansion Programme, Capital grant (including Supplementary Credit Approvals), Airwave (£4.6 million in 2002–03, £2.3 million in 2003–04 and £0.4 million this year) and the Premises Improvement Fund. Specific grants in 2004–05 are an estimate.
[3] Figures for 2001–02 are not directly comparable with 2002–03 due to the change in funding arrangements for National Crime Squad/ National Criminal Intelligence Service. Adjusted figures for 2001–02 are therefore included.

Female Prisoners (Substance Misuse)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of female prisoners have a substance misuse problem; and if he will make a statement. [186862]

Mr. Browne: The Prison Service relies on the findings of epidemiological studies to determine drug treatment need in female establishments. A survey carried out in 2001[1] showed that up to 60 per cent. of female prisoners had a drug problem. The same survey also suggested that over 33 per cent. of women in prison had patterns of hazardous drinking.

[1] Borrill, J., Maden, A., Martin, A., Weaver, T., Stimson, G., Farrell, M. and Barnes, T. Differential substance misuse treatment needs of women, ethnic minorities and young offenders in prison: prevalence of substance misuse and treatment needs. Online report 33/03, Home Office.

Harassment

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provisions are available for the psychiatric assessment of persons *(a)* under a stage one warning for harassment and *(b)* convicted of harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. [186529]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have been asked to reply.

As set out in the national service framework for mental health, any service user who contacts their primary health care team with a common mental health problem should have their mental health needs identified and assessed.

Anyone sent to prison is screened on first reception to identify any health-related, including psychiatric, problems that need prompt attention or more thorough investigation.

Home Detention Curfews

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been released on the home detention curfew scheme. [186563]

Paul Goggins: Information reported to the Home Office shows that there were 95,810 prisoners released on the Home Detention Curfew Scheme between January 1999 and 30 June 2004.

Job Losses (Civil Servants)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the reductions in the numbers of civil servants in his Department announced in the comprehensive spending review will be of special advisors. [185462]

Fiona Mactaggart: Special Advisers are appointed by Ministers, with the approval of the Prime Minister, in accordance with Article 3(2) of the Civil Service Order in Council 1995 (as amended).

The 2004 spending review published planned reductions in Home Office posts of 2,700 by 2008. The Home Office will report progress through its departmental report and on its website.

Litigation Costs

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to public funds was of the A *v.* West Yorkshire Police case. [185140]

Ms Blears: I understand from the chief constable of West Yorkshire Police that costs incurred by the force totalled £90,000, including costs for 'A', the cost of hearings and taking the matter to the House of Lords. Expenditure incurred by Treasury solicitors in this case totalled £66,638, including disbursements such as counsels' fees.

Paedophiles

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many people convicted of paedophile offences have had restrictions imposed on their ownership of credit and debit cards as part of their punishment; [185432]

(2) what provisions exist for limiting the use or issue of credit and debit cards to convicted paedophiles. [185433]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced a new civil preventative order; the sexual offences prevention order (SOPO). A court may make a SOPO against someone with a conviction or caution for a relevant sexual offence (those listed in schedules 3 or 5 to the Act) where it is satisfied that such an order is necessary to protect the

public or any particular member of the public from serious sexual harm from the defendant. A SOPO prohibits the offender from doing anything described in the order. This means protecting the public from serious physical or psychological harm caused by the defendant committing one or more of the offences listed in schedule 3.

It is possible that a court could make a SOPO that would limit the use of credit or debit cards by the offender, if it was thought that limiting this use would protect the public from serious sexual harm. For example, a SOPO could prohibit an offender from making online purchases. Such a restriction would have to be compatible with a defendant's rights under Article 8 of the Convention.

Statistics on the forms of prohibitions contained in SOPOs are not held by the Home Office.

In addition, the Home Office has been working closely with the Association for Payment Clearing Services (APACS), who have a clear policy that acquiring banks routinely monitor the transaction activity of their internet merchants, and that they will not knowingly do business with sites that sell content inciting, advocating or perpetuating violence against persons, including scenes of sexual assault. APACS have also been developing a range of work with the Internet Watch Foundation to assist in tracking and identifying illegal sites.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many contracts have been let by his Department in each financial year since 2001–02 to *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte and Touche, *(c)* KPMG and *(d)* Ernst and Young for advising his Department on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts; and what fees were paid in each case. [182262]

Fiona Mactaggart: From the best information available, the number of contracts let with these suppliers, and the fees paid, are as follows:

Fees £000

Supplier/Project	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
PricewaterhouseCoopers			
2 Marsham Street[1]	757	183	9
Criminal Records Bureau[2]	0	0	163
Passports[3]	0	0	63
Deloitte and Touche			
Secure Training Centres	0	252	153
HM Prisons Bronzefield and Peterborough[4]	0	0	18
KPMG			
Criminal Records Bureau	0	25	0
Ernst and Young			
n/a	—	—	—

[1] 2 Marsham Street—financial advice prior to contract close and arrangements to launch a variation bond

[2] Criminal Records Bureau—PricewaterhouseCoopers provided internal audit services, and KPMG provided financial advice and support

[3] Passports—Scoping Study for Development of Sampling Strategy (Fraudulent Passports). Note: This is the contract value.

[4] HM Prisons—advice on accounting treatment of Bronzefield and Peterborough

The use of external consultants helps the Department to successfully deliver projects across the office, particularly where the in-house resources are insufficient in number, or do not possess the specialised skills and expertise required.

The Department also benefits from strategic business advice and the transfer of skills and knowledge to staff.

Police (Northampton)

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage change there has been in the number of police officers in Northampton in each year since 1997. [186417]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002. BCU strength for 31 March 2004 will be published shortly.

The Northampton Area Basic Command Unit (BCU) includes Collingtree, Great Houghton, Hardingstone, Northampton and Wootton. Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Northampton BCU decreased by 0.3 per cent. (from 346 to 345). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the chief constable (Peter Maddison) and within the Northampton BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the divisional commander.

Police Officers (Restricted Duties)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours were worked per week, on average, by police officers working on restricted or recuperative duties in *(a)* England and *(b)* Essex in the last year for which figures are available. [186475]

Ms Blears: The Home Office does not publish data on restricted or recuperative duties for police officers in England and Wales.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers are *(a)* working on restricted recuperative duties, *(b)* unable to work night duty and *(c)* absent through sickness in (i) England and (ii) Essex. [186444]

Ms Blears: For the period 2002–03 a total of 1,364,067 officer days were lost to sickness absence—an average of 10.4 days per officer per year. For the same period, Essex constabulary lost 31,785 officer days to sickness absence—an average of 10.3 days per officer per year. This represents a fall in sickness absence from 1996–97 where the national rate was 12.8 days per officer per year—a reduction of over 18 per cent.

These figures were published in the annual Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary report for 2002–03.

The Home Office does not publish data on the number of police officers working on restricted or recuperative duties or who are unable to work on night duty.

Policies (Environmental Impacts)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many new policy proposals

or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185099]

Fiona Mactaggart: Central records are not kept of the number of policies for which environmental screenings are undertaken. However, advice on the need to screen policies for environmental impacts is contained on the Department's policy makers checklist and the ministerial website on the Department's intranet site states that policy submissions should contain a section on environmental considerations.

No formal environmental appraisals have been conducted on policy issues, although policy proposals which are likely to have a direct or indirect impact on business, charities and the voluntary sector are required to have a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). RIAs require examination of the potential impacts of relevant policy developments on all stakeholders including environmental impacts.

Assessments of environmental impacts are undertaken on building developments as required by planning authorities.

Prison

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the budget is for each prison library in 2004–05; and how many local authority-employed librarians work in prison establishments on a *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time basis. [187237]

Mr. Browne: The following table shows allocations to each prison establishment to purchase library services. The figures include maintenance of the book stock, exchange of stock within a year and off-site administration of the service.

Information on the number of local authority-employed librarians working in prison establishments is not held centrally. A survey conducted in February 2004 found that Public Library Authority (PLA) library managers delivered 2,608 on-site hours per week while PLA library assistants delivered 2,230 per week. This equates to 134 full-time equivalent library staff across the prison estate.

The Prison Service is currently working in partnership with the Public Library Authorities to develop a new and wider ranging specification for prison libraries that addresses the learning and skills agenda as well as providing information, advice and guidance. A new framework for resourcing the new service is also being developed.

Library budgets 2004–05

Establishment	£
Acklington	39,088
Albany	31,842
Ashwell	17,906
Askham Grange	7,302
Aylesbury	15,875
Bedford	22,013
Belmarsh	62,491
Birmingham	72,523
Blakenhurst	36,716
Blantyre House	12,364
Blundeston	20,563
Brinsford	19,730
Brinsford YJB	16,885
Bristol	21,117
Brixton	58,634
Brockhill	15,176
Buckley Hall	18,618
Bullingdon	42,588
Bullwood Hall	5,430
Bullwood Hall YJB	361
Camphill	38,845
Canterbury	19,123
Cardiff	16,089
Castington	17,648
Castington YJB	12,532
Channings Wood	28,399
Chelmsford	19,815
Coldingley	11,850
Cookham Wood	8,427
Dartmoor	24,469
Deerbolt	15,887
Dorchester	17,768
Dover	12,758
Downview	25,126
Drake Hall	13,385
Durham	22,940
East Sutton Park	6,217
Eastwood Park	19,951
Eastwood Park YJB	529
Edmunds Hill	813
Elmley	49,666
Erlestoke	14,054
Everthorpe	32,959
Exeter	10,585
Featherstone	15,797
Feltham	30,869
Feltham YJB	8,548
Ford	33,591
Foston Hall	23,830
Frankland	24,602
Full Sutton	28,606
Garth	37,723
Gartree	15,435
Glen Parva	20,273
Gloucester	20,062
Grendon/Spring Hill	16,020
Guys Marsh	17,549
Haslar	19,597
Haverigg	28,022
Hewell Grange	11,743
High Down	27,457
Highpoint	29,345
Hindley	11,233
Hindley	10,292
Hollesley Bay	5,078
Holloway	56,463
Holme House	55,948
Hull	60,309
Huntercombe	16,506
Kingston	14,072
Kirkham	25,645
Kirklevington	9,102
Lancaster Castle	5,803
Lancaster Farms	32,355
Lancaster Farms	8,499
Latchmere House	2,240
Leeds	36,278
Leicester	17,409
Lewes	30,049
Leyhill	15,602
Lincoln	20,726
Lindholme	24,872

Library budgets 2004–05

Establishment	£
Littlehey	22,854
Liverpool	30,591
Long Lartin	21,305
Low Newton	18,454
Maidstone	19,209
Manchester	158,515
Moorland	43,833
Morton Hall	36,364
New Hall	158,442
New Hall YJB	3,259
North Sea Camp	11,978
Northallerton	34,756
Norwich	40,987
Nottingham	34,053
Onley	51,758
Parkhurst	32,056
Pentonville	37,094
Portland	16,637
Preston	17,985
Ranby	47,480
Reading	21,975
Risley	15,140
Rochester	27,904
Send	14,283
Shepton Mallet	5,615
Shrewsbury	12,474
Stafford	14,367
Standford Hill	20,700
Stocken	22,741
Stoke Heath	10,306
Stoke Heath	9,274
Styal	11,305
Sudbury	25,933
Swaleside	35,296
Swansea	17,474
Swinfen Hall	33,953
The Mount	38,786
The Verne	14,944
Thorn Cross	8,387
Thorn Cross YJB	3,009
Usk/Prescoed	16,745
Wakefield	23,789
Wandsworth	124,646
Warren Hill YJB	22,254
Wayland	25,885
Wealstun	35,478
Weare	17,597
Wellingborough	28,321
Werrington YJB	9,498
Wetherby YJB	32,241
Whatton	21,085
Whitemoor	25,972
Winchester	29,418
Woodhill	36,932
Wormwood Scrubs	43,773
Wymott	34,154

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the 10-year custodial population projections referred to in paragraphs D18 and D19 of the Home Office Online Report 38/04. [187235]

Paul Goggins: Long-term prison population projections are produced for a seven year period. The latest published projections cover the period up to 2009. These were first presented in the April 2003 prison population monthly brief, published in September 2003, which can be found on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/prisons1 .html

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what review of the policy towards *(a)* prison workplace and *(b)* prisoner smoking is planned; and if he will make a statement. [185643]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: No departmental review of smoking in prison workplaces (where this is permitted) and prisoner smoking is planned. Governors are still operating under Instruction to Governors 16 of 1996, which instructs them where to ban smoking in prisons and gives them discretionary powers to extend this ban to other parts of the prison. Smoking policies are included in the Health and Safety Standard and are audited by the Prison Service Standards Audit Unit.

In 2003 the Department of Health and the Prison service published 'AQUITTED: Best practice guidance for developing smoking cessation services in prisons'. Extra funding of £500,000 has been made available for each of the three years up to 2006. The launch of 'AQUITTED' was supported by a programme of training seminars for staff of prisons and their local Primary Care Trusts. The effectiveness of the initiative is being evaluated and a report is expected in 2005.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated cost was of the new healthcare centre at HMP Holloway in the Department's budget on 1 January; what the latest estimate is of expenditure on the new centre; and how many *(a)* inpatient beds and *(b)* day centre places (i) were planned on 1 January and (ii) are planned for the new centre. [186109]

Paul Goggins: On 1 January 2003, the estimated capital cost of the new healthcare centre at Holloway prison was £5.85 million with 23 in-patient beds and 30 day centre places planned. The latest estimates for costs, in patient beds, and day centre places remain the same.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prisoners, *(b)* women in prison, *(c)* juveniles and *(d)* young offenders are held (i) over 50 miles and (ii) over 100 miles from their committal court town. [187060]

Paul Goggins: An individual prisoner's court details are recorded to show first court appearance, committal, remand, conviction or sentencing. Information specifically on committal court details could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. As at 7 July 2004, the latest date for which information is available, details were available for 70,213 prisoners, or 93 per cent. of the total prison population of 74,771, on that day. This information is shown in the following table.

Distance	Total population	Female population	Juvenile population	Young offender population
Under 50 miles				
Total number of prisoners	45,632	2,151	1,639	5,184
Percentage	65	52	63	65
50–100 miles				
Total number of prisoners	14,990	1,039	814	1,828
Percentage	21	25	31	23
100+ miles				
Total number of prisoners	9,591	930	167	944
Percentage	14	23	6	12
Total	70,213	4,120	2,620	7,956

Public Services Funding

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will identify for *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the agencies and task forces for which it is responsible each funding stream for public services in (i) the Isle of Thanet and (ii) Canterbury City local authority area. [181702]

Fiona Mactaggart: Home Office funding streams for the Kent area consist of the following:

General Police Grant
Capital Grant
Crime Fighting Fund
Rural Policing Fund
DNA Expansion Programme
Airwave
Basic Command Unit Fund
Community Support Officers
Special Priority Payments
South East Allowance
Building Safer Communities to CDRP partnership
Antisocial behaviour funding to CDRP partnership
Home Office Connecting Communities Project
Home Office Time Limited Development Fund

We do not hold information by local authority area, within each county.

Following the spending review, my right hon. Friends the Home Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister have announced a new Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (White Paper "Confident Communities in a Secure Britain", published on 19 July 2004) which will bring together a number of funding streams for community safety and improving public spaces.

Alongside the intention to bring together a number of funding streams, the Home Office strategic plan intends to further promote local audits of priorities for community safety and the resources used to prevent and respond to crime and other issues. In particular, an assessment of resources and needs will be a feature of new local area agreements covering community safety, in areas in which these agreements will be developed. The Home Office is looking to build on the existing work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Drug Action Teams who audit crime and drugs issues in local areas.

For reference, these are outlined on page 36 of the strategic plan.

Sellafield

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the off-site emergency plans, including evacuation plans, in place in West Cumbria for circumstances involving an accident or other incident resulting in a significant release of radioactivity from Sellafield. [187286]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

There are well tried and tested emergency plans to deal with a release of radioactive material from Sellafield's nuclear facilities. These plans are maintained under the licence condition arrangements for all such sites and have been reviewed and tested at regular intervals over many years. The off-site emergency plan, prepared by Cumbria county council in consultation with the emergency services and British Nuclear Group, has been published in accordance with the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001. The plan covers procedures, facilities and equipment, and includes evacuation arrangements. REPPIR is monitored and enforced by the Health and Safety Executive.

There is an ongoing programme of regular off-site exercises for civil nuclear installations such as Sellafield. These test the local off-site facility for each site, and involve a wide range of local and national agencies. The last such exercise at Sellafield was held on 24 September 2003 and this tested all aspects of Cumbria county council's off-site emergency plan which clearly covers evacuation aspects. The lessons of off-site nuclear exercises are taken forward locally through a standing local Emergency Planning Consultative Committee. Any issues of national relevance are taken forward through the Nuclear Emergency Planning Liaison Group, which is administered and chaired by DTI, and are fed as appropriate into central Government's contingency planning.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183904]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is set out in the following table:

Travel costs

£

	UK	Overseas	Total
1997			
Department	3,898,126.65	1,224,570.48	5,122,697.13
Agencies	7,620,389.45	42,316.98	7,662706.43
Total	11,518516.10	1,266,887.46	12,785403.56
1998			
Department	3,270,766.30	886,831.19	4,157,597.49
Agencies	8,290,722.40	50,802.42	8,341,524.82
Total	11,561,488.70	937,633.61	12,499,122.31
1999			
Department	3,187,174.89	1,441,260.08	4,628,434.97
Agencies	8,294,957.22	81,651.74	8,376,608.96
Total	11,482,132.11	1,522,911.82	13,005,043.93

Travel costs

£

	UK	Overseas	Total
2000			
Department	4,245,879.25	1,396,593.81	5,642,473.06
Agencies	9,133,124.06	63,087.76	9,196,211.82
Total	13,379,003.31	1,459,681.57	14,838,684.88
2001			
Department	6,348,417.71	2,077,311.00	8,425,728.71
Agencies	9,774,147.78	18,987.40	9,793,135.18
Total	16,122,565.49	2,096,298.40	18,218,863.89
2002			
Department	8,732,248.97	2,355,805.87	11,088,054.84
Agencies	10,467,841.11	36,290.14	10,504,131.25
Total	19,200,090.08	2,392,096.01	21,592,186.09
2003			
Department	12,406,053.11	4,449,971.03	16,856,024.14
Agencies	10,780,887.32	9,053.09	10,789,940.41
Total	23,186,940.43	4,459,024.12	27,645,964.55

The marked increases in travel costs since 2001 can be largely attributed to changes in strategy within the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) where increased staff numbers and the need to travel as a result of new policy initiatives and targets for improved IND performance. Other contributing factors have been related to providing advice to the organisers of the 2002 Football World Cup in Japan and Euro 2004 in Portugal and the creation of new units to support the police reform agenda.

Criminal Records Bureau only commenced operations in 2000.

Employees of the National Probation Service are not civil servants and their costs have therefore not been included in the above.

Under-age Drinking

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will issue guidance to police forces that parents should, where possible, be informed when alcohol is removed from their children under the under-age drinking legislation; and if he will make a statement; [186474]

(2) if he will investigate the impact of requiring the police to inform schools or colleges when alcohol is removed from pupils under the under-age drinking legislation; and if he will make a statement; [186479]

(3) if he will issue guidance to the police that police schools liaison officers should be made aware of which pupils have had alcohol removed from them by the police under the under-age drinking legislation; and if he will make a statement. [186480]

Ms Blears: There is no specific requirement for police forces to inform parents, schools or an education institute when alcohol is removed from children or pupils under the under-age drinking legislation. A decision to inform parents or an education institute is an operational matter for individual police forces. However, a child who commits an offence and is reported for the offence can be seen in the presence of his or her parent or a responsible adult.

Police forces would have their own arrangements for involving Social Services or an education institute if the child might be at risk. The role of the police school liaison officers in schools is a matter for the individual police force and the school.

There is a statutory requirement to educate children and young people about the effect of alcohol. All schools are encouraged to have systems in place to identify and support those young people for whom drugs (including alcohol) may be a problem. Where concerns have been raised schools can provide support either through the curriculum, pastoral system or through referral to more specialised agencies, perhaps co-ordinated through the Connexions Service.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many people were *(a)* cautioned and *(b)* found guilty of selling intoxicating liquor to a person aged under 18 in 2003; [184870]

(2) how many people were *(a)* cautioned and *(b)* found guilty under section 169 (2) of the Licensing Act 1964 in 2003. [184871]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* Figures for England and Wales 2002 show that 59 people were cautioned and 103 found guilty for "selling etc, intoxicating liquor to persons under 18 for consumption on the premises" (Licensing Act 1964, S169(1); Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983, schedule (section 3) para. 4(1).) and a further two cautioned for "wholesaler selling intoxicating liquor to a person under 18" (Licensing Act 1964, section 181A as added by Licensing Act 1988, section 17). Those cautioned and found guilty under section 169(2) of the Licensing Act 1964 in 2002 were nine and 18 respectively.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Katharine Gun

Lynne Jones: To ask the Solicitor-General what the costs have been to date to the Government of the prosecution of the Katharine Gun case. [156197]

The Solicitor-General: I can only provide details of the costs incurred to the Crown Prosecution Service for whom the Attorney-General and I have ministerial responsibility. The Crown Prosecution Service estimates that the prosecution costs in this case to date are in the region of £18,552. This figure comprises of counsel's fees. The CPS is unable routinely to assess and attribute its own overhead costs to individual cases.

Butler Report

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will place in the Library copies of *(a)* the account given to the Butler Committee on the Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction of the legal advice provided to the Butler Committee, to which reference is made at paragraph 379 of the Butler Report and *(b)* the letter from the Prime Minister's Private Secretary to the

Legal Secretary to the Law Officers, dated 15 March 2003, to which reference is made at paragraph 384 of the Butler Report. [186192]

The Solicitor-General: The account given by the Attorney-General to the Butler Committee of his legal advice was given in oral evidence to the Committee. As is clear from footnote 17 to the Butler Report, the account of the Attorney-General's advice was given in confidence without intending to waive the legal professional privilege to which the advice is subject. The substance of the letter from the Prime Minister's Private Secretary to the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers, dated 15 March 2003 is set out at paragraph 384 of the Butler Report.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Solicitor-General how many prosecutions for alleged child abuse were brought by the Crown Prosecution Service in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and how many resulted in a conviction. [183616]

The Solicitor-General: The following tables show aggregated information about child abuse cases that were finalised on the new Compass system during the year ending March 2004. No information is held for earlier periods, and could be obtained only through an analysis of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Table 1 shows the number of child abuse cases in magistrates courts, broken down into unsuccessful outcomes and convictions. Unsuccessful outcomes comprise: cases discontinued by the Crown Prosecution Service; cases written off because the defendant could not be traced by the police, had died or been found unfit to plead; cases discharged in the course of committal proceedings; cases dismissed because of no case to answer; and dismissals after full trial. Convictions are divided into guilty pleas and convictions after trial.

Table 2 shows the number of finalised child abuse cases recorded at the crown court. Unsuccessful outcomes in the crown court comprise: cases dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service before a jury was sworn, in which the judge ordered a formal acquittal; cases written off because the defendant could not be traced by the police, had died or been found unfit to plead; judge directed acquittals; and acquittals after trial. Convictions are divided into guilty pleas and convictions after full trial.

It should be noted that these figures are not collected from a specific list of offences. The identification of prosecution cases as child abuse is made by a member of CPS staff when a case is received from police, or within a subsequent review. Police officers and Administrators may also bring a child abuse case to CPS attention within the initial file submission.

Outcome of child abuse cases in magistrates courts 2003–04

	Number	*Percentage*
Discontinued	366	28.3
Written off	14	1.1
Discharged committals	21	1.6
Dismissed no case to answer	13	1.0
Dismissed after trial	53	4.1
Unsuccessful outcomes	*467*	*36.1*
Guilty Pleas	694	53.7
Convicted after trial	132	10.2
Convictions	*826*	*63.9*
Total	1,293	—

Outcome of child abuse cases in the Crown court 2003–04

	Number	*Percentage*
Judge ordered acquittals	145	16.5
Written off	6	0.7
Judge directed acquittals	25	2.8
Jury acquittals	111	12.6
Unsuccessful outcomes	*287*	*32.6*
Guilty pleas	446	50.7
Convicted after trial	147	16.7
Convictions	*593*	*67.4*
Total	880	—

Tom Cox: To ask the Solicitor-General on how many occasions in each of the last three years the Crown Prosecution Service has not proceeded with a prosecution of an assault committed *(a)* on a police officer and *(b)* by an inmate on a prison officer on the grounds that prosecution would not be in the public interest. [183928]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) central records do not include the level of detail required to answer the present question. Information at this level of detail could be obtained only by examining individual case files in each CPS office, which would incur disproportionate cost (Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, part 2, clause 9).

David McGee

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Solicitor-General what the cost to public funds was of the prosecution of Mr. David McGee; at what level in the Crown Prosecution Service the decision on what charges to proceed with was taken; and what other potential charges were considered. [170407]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service estimates that the prosecution costs in this case to date are in the region of £6,250. This figure comprises counsels' fees and witness expenses. The CPS is unable routinely to assess and attribute its own overhead costs to individual cases.

The decision to prosecute was made by a level E special casework lawyer within the Crown Prosecution Service, following advice from leading counsel.

The other potential charges considered were under section 4 of the Official Secrets Act 1989; section 3 of the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981; section 16 of the Theft Act 1968; and the common law offence of misfeasance in a public office.

Elmley Prison Officers (Case Costs)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Solicitor-General what the *(a)* legal costs of the defendants' two trials and *(b)* total

cost to the Crown Prosecution Service were in the case against Prison Officers Rowland, Kerry and Watkins at Elmley Prison. [166226]

The Solicitor-General: I can only provide details of the costs incurred by the Crown Prosecution Service, for which both the Attorney and I have ministerial responsibility.

The Crown Prosecution Service costs are approximately £146,878.04. However, this figure may be reduced as the Crown Prosecution Service is currently seeking a reduction in the amount of counsel's fees claimed.

The prosecution's costs are broken down in the following table:

	Prosecution's costs (£)
(a) Counsel's fees:	
at the magistrates' court to include the old style committal	12,978.35
for the preliminary hearing in 2001	27,766.19
the final invoice (being challenged) to include re-instituting proceedings and the trial	96,033.50
Total	136,778.04
(b) Experts' fees:	1,100.00
(c) charges for enhancement of the recordings of intercepted telephone calls and for their compilation and indexation on a compact disc:	9,000.00

The CPS is unable routinely to assess and attribute its own overhead costs to individual cases.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will place in the Library copies of the intelligence assessment briefings on Iraq of September 2002 and February 2003, to which reference is made in paragraph 367 of the Butler Committee Report on intelligence on weapons of mass destruction, HC898. [185192]

The Solicitor-General: The intelligence briefings of September 2002 and February 2003 referred to in paragraph 367 of the Review of intelligence on weapons of mass destructions were oral briefings given to the Attorney-General by the Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee.

Serious Fraud Office (Bribery)

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Solicitor-General from which *(a)* companies and *(b)* organisations the Serious Fraud Office have requested (i) co-operation and (ii) information with regard to investigations relating to the enforcement of anti-bribery legislation since 2000. [184168]

The Solicitor-General *[holding answer 15 June 2004]:* The information requested could be obtained only by examining individual case files in each dating back to 2000 and would incur disproportionate cost (Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, part 2, clause 9).

CABINET OFFICE

Counter-terrorism Grants

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how the Government calculates counter-terrorism grants to front-line responders, with particular reference to *(a)* police forces, *(b)* fire brigades and *(c)* ambulance services. [184599]

Mr. Blunkett: I have been asked to reply.

Of the emergency services, only the police carry out counter-terrorism work. Funding for police counter-terrorism and other national-security functions is predominantly funded through mainstream funding mechanisms rather than direct grant. However since 2002–03 the Home Office has provided additional funding to the Police Service to enable it to respond to the increased threat posed by international terrorism since September 2001. In 2004–05 this will amount to £84 million. The allocation of this funding to individual forces is determined following full consultation between individual police forces, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Home Office.

Funding for counter-terrorism has to be considered within the wider context of funding for national security in the round, which will rise from £980 million in 2001 to over £2.1 billion in 2007, including the doubling of the size of M15.

In addition, an extra £20 million per year from 2005–06 will be allocated to the Civil Defence Grant. This will double to £40 million per year, the contribution the Government previously allocated to local authorities.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Tannery Arts Ltd.

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the compulsory purchase order placed on Tannery Arts Ltd.'s premises. [187473]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We are exploring the feasibility of establishing an academy on the site of the former Laburnum primary school following a proposal from the London borough of Hackney and the UBS Investment Bank. There is strong need for new school places in Hackney.

Provision of a suitable site is a matter for Hackney council and they have begun a compulsory purchase order process on land next to the Laburnum school given the restricted nature of that site. This is entirely a matter for them.

We are conscious of the concerns raised about the future of Tannery Arts and discussions are taking place. It would be premature to say anything more at this stage. However, the academy would play a key role in transforming educational opportunities and standards for young people in the area.

Adult Education (Great Yarmouth)

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Great Yarmouth in each of the last five years. [186716]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Norfolk Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the following table:

£000

	April 2001 to July 2001[1]	*August 2001 to July 2002*	*August 2002 to July 2003*
Basic skills	874	2,145	2,936
Key skills	358	524	1,022

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Advertising

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money was spent on advertising and promotional literature for his Department's initiatives, broken down by year since 1997. [183805]

Mr. Miliband: The information is as follows.

1. Expenditure details from the Department's central advertising and public budget, for advertising and promotional work is listed as follows:

	Expenditure (£ million)
1997–98	11.0
1998–99	13.4
1999–2000	9.9
2000–01	14.6
2001–02	11.7
2002–03	14.1
2003–04	15.5
2004–05 expenditure (budgeted)	15.3

2. Financial information for any other advertising and promotional work from outside of the central marketing team could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Alderman Blaxill Secondary School, Colchester

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received about the closure of classrooms at Alderman Blaxill Secondary School, Colchester, following the discovery of asbestos; what action he is taking to ensure that the school has sufficient operational classrooms for the new school year; and if he will make a statement. [187012]

Mr. Miliband: I am not aware of any representations having been received regarding the matter referred in the question other than your letter to the Secretary of State dated 21 July 2004. Essex LEA is working closely with the school to ensure that suitable accommodation is available to the Alderman Blaxill Secondary School for the new school year. The bulk of schools capital is now allocated by formula to authorities and schools so that they can address their local priorities, including accommodation issues. Prioritisation of need should be through an open, rigorous and consultative asset management process, based on assessments of the needs of all schools. This Government have increased their support for capital investment in schools from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £3.8 billion this year and this will increase further to over £5 billion by 2005–06.

Autism

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research he has commissioned regarding the school exclusion rates of *(a)* autistic students and *(b)* students with Asperger's Syndrome; and if he will make a statement on his policy on whether autistic students should remain in mainstream schools. [186943]

Margaret Hodge: The statistics published by the Department do not record the types of special educational need (SEN), such as autism and Asperger's syndrome, which excluded pupils with SEN have. The most recent provisional statistics, for 2002/03, do show that children with SEN, both those with and without statements of SEN, account for two-thirds of permanent exclusions and that children with SEN were nine times more likely to be permanently excluded than those without SEN. As part of the SEN strategy "Removing Barriers to Achievement", published in

February, we are carrying out research into exclusions and children with SEN, including those with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs), and we will act on its findings.

Research by the National Autistic Society in 2000 suggested that children with ASDs, including Asperger's syndrome, were far more likely to be excluded than their peers. The Society is represented on our Autism Working Group which produced Good Practice Guidance on ASDs in 2002. This guidance aims to raise awareness of the disorders and to give good practice pointers to schools, local education authorities and others to help develop and audit their autism provision. It is available to assist schools make the reasonable adjustments to their policies and practice with respect to children with ASDs required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, which they need to consider when meeting their duty not to discriminate against disabled pupils, without justification, by excluding them because of behaviour caused by their disability.

Children with autism display a range of strengths and difficulties of differing levels of severity and complexity. Those with SEN statements should be placed in a setting where their profile of needs can be met. The Good Practice Guidance recommends that LEAs, either singly or in regional groupings, should develop a range of provision in mainstream, special and specialist schools so that children with statements can be placed appropriately with the placement being monitored and changed as necessary.

Child Care

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Government's policy is on extending child care provision; and what plans the Government have to extend child care provision. [186813]

Margaret Hodge: Between 1997 and 2004 the Government aimed to create around 900,000 new child care places to help 1,600,000 children. By March 2004 some 1,000,000 new child care places had been created helping some 1,800,000 children. The Government have a target to create a further 250,000 new child care places for at least 450,000 children by March 2006 and to increase the stock of registered child care places across England by at least 10 per cent. by March 2008.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Government's policy is on the promotion of the National Childcare Strategy; and what plans the Government has to extend the strategy. [186814]

Margaret Hodge: The National Childcare Strategy is promoted, as part of the Government's Sure Start programme, through a variety of channels and campaigns, targeting parents and those working with parents and children. These include: articles in the daily, local and specialist press; leaflets available in locations such as health centres, Job Centres and Post Offices, and sent to Sure Start programmes, health visitors, midwives and employment advisers; publications such as the "Choosing Childcare" booklet; and National Sure Start Month held each June. Children's Information Services (CISs) in each of the 150 local authorities provide detail and advice to parents on Childcare and other Sure Start programmes in their areas.

The Government are continuing to expand and strengthen Childcare provision. Our PSA Target is 10 per cent. growth in the stock of registered places between 2004 and 2008. The Department for Education and Skills "Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners" (published on 8 July) makes clear that much of the future expansion will be provided on school premises, or in integrated children's centres, so child care becomes part of a web of personalised services, including good quality health and family support, that best suits families and their children. We will link the free early education entitlement for 3 and 4-year-olds more effectively with the hours of child care for which parents pay, to offer integrated education and care for a full day, while extended schools—both primary and secondary—will provide, or host, a wide range of services, including child care and a range of family learning and parental support, on-site.

In addition, the Chancellor confirmed in his "Spending Review" 2004 statement that the Government will publish a plan in the pre-Budget report later this year outlining our vision of choice for parents and high quality provision for young children for the period up to 2015.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate the Government have made of the number of *(a)* child care places and *(b)* childminders that will be created by the Neighbourhood Nurseries initiative. [186815]

Margaret Hodge: The Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative will provide 45,000 integrated care and education places for children under the age of five living in the most disadvantaged areas of the country. Currently over 42,600 places are being delivered through 1,218 nurseries. We expect the 45,000 place target to be reached in the next few months.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what estimate the Government has made of how many registered child care places there were in (i) St. Helens and (ii) the UK, broken down by region, in each year since 1997; [186827]

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (2) how many local authority nurseries there were in each year since 1997, *(a)* broken down by region and *(b)* in St. Helens; [187364]

(3) what estimate the Government has made of the number of nurseries which have closed in each year since 1997 *(a)* broken down by region and *(b)* in St. Helens. [187365]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested. The available information on the numbers of day nurseries or full day care facilities for St. Helens and the regions are shown in the following tables.

With the introduction of the National Day Care Standards and the transfer of responsibilities for registration and inspection to Ofsted, child care providers are now classified according to whether they are full day care, sessional day care, childminder, out of

school day care or crèche day care places. Previously, child care providers were classified according to whether they were day nurseries, playgroups and pre-schools, childminders, out of school clubs or holiday schemes. Therefore, figures for 2003 are not directly comparable with figures for earlier years because they are collected on a different basis.

Statistics on the number of child care facilities registered in England were published on 22 July 2004 in a report by Ofsted "Registered Childcare Providers and Places in England, 30 June 2004". The report is available on the Ofsted website, www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications.

Number of day nurseries[1,2] in St. Helen local authority area and by Government Office Region: 1999–2001

	Position at 31 March each year			
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
St. Helens	[3]50	[3]20	[3]60	n/a
North East	190	190	220	n/a
North West and Merseyside				n/a
North West	840	910	940	n/a
Merseyside	240	200	250	n/a
Yorkshire and Number	700	690	710	n/a
East Midlands	560	660	550	n/a
West Midlands	870	900	970	n/a
Eastern	570	610	600	n/a
Greater London				n/a
Inner London	610	650	680	n/a
Outer London	550	600	620	n/a
South East	1,100	1,240	1,400	n/a
South West	770	900	910	n/a
England	7,000	7,500	7,800	n/a
Of which:				
Local authority provided	400	400	460	n/a

n/a = Not available.

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10 or 100 as appropriate. Figures may not add to totals due to founding.

[2] Data Source: Children's Day Care Facilities.

[3] Figures as reported by the local authority.

Number of full day care facilities in St. Helens local authority area and by Ofsted Region, position as at 31 December 2003

	Number
St. Helens	30
East of England	1,000
East Midlands	800
London	1,600
North East and Yorkshire	1,400
North West England	1,400
South East England	1,900
South West England	1,200
West Midlands	1,300
England	10,600

Note:
Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
Source:
Ofsted

Children's Information Services

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children's information services *(a)* have been opened and *(b)* are planned to be opened in (i) St Helens and (ii) England, broken down by region. [186810]

Margaret Hodge: Since the introduction of the National Childcare Strategy in 1998 each local authority in England has been required to have a Children's Information Service (CIS). However, in some cases bordering local authorities have provided a joint service. There are currently 146 CISs in England. St Helens has one CIS. The table below breaks down by region the local authorities in England that operate a CIS.

Children's Information Services in England

East Midlands
- Derby City
- Derbyshire
- Leicester City
- Leicestershire
- Lincolnshire
- Northamptonshire
- Nottingham City
- Nottinghamshire
- Rutland

East of England
- Bedfordshire
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (two LAs)
- Essex
- Hertfordshire
- Luton
- Norfolk
- Southend on Sea
- Suffolk
- Thurrock

North East
- North East
- Darlington
- Durham
- Gateshead
- Hartlepool
- Middlesbrough
- Newcastle
- North Tyneside
- Northumberland
- Redcar and Cleveland

South Tyneside
Stockton-on-Tees
Sunderland

North London

Barking and Dagenham
Barnet
Brent
Camden
City of London
Enfield
Hackney
Hammersmith and Fulham
Haringey
Harrow
Havering
Islington
Kensington and Chelsea
Newham
Redbridge
Tower Hamlets
Waltham Forest
Westminster

South London

Bexley
Bromley
Croydon
Ealing
Greenwich
Hillingdon
Hounslow
Kingston upon Thames
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton
Richmond upon Thames
Southwark
Sutton
Wandsworth

North West

Blackburn with Darwen
Blackpool
Bolton
Bury
Cheshire
Cumbria
Halton
Knowsley
Lancashire
Liverpool
Manchester
Oldham
Rochdale
Salford
Sefton
St. Helens
Stockport
Tameside
Trafford
Warrington
Wigan
Wirral

South East

Brighton and Hove
Buckinghamshire
East Sussex
Hampshire
Isle of Wight
Kent
Medway
Milton Keynes
Oxfordshire
Portsmouth
Reading, West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest CIS (3 LAs)
Slough
Southampton
Surrey
West Sussex
Windsor and Maidenhead
Wokingham

South West

Bath and NE Somerset
Bournemouth
Bristol
Cornwall
Devon and Torbay (two LAs)
Dorset
Gloucestershire
Isles of Scilly
North Somerset
Plymouth
Poole
Somerset
South Gloucestershire
Swindon
Wiltshire

West Midlands

Birmingham
Coventry
Dudley
Herefordshire
Sandwell
Shropshire
Solihull
Staffordshire
Stoke on Trent
Telford & Wrekin
Walsall
Warwickshire
Wolverhampton
Worcestershire

Yorkshire and Humberside

Barnsley
Bradford
Calderdale

Doncaster
East Riding of Yorkshire
Kingston upon Hull
Kirklees
Leeds
North East Lincolnshire
North Lincolnshire
North Yorkshire
Rotherham
Sheffield
Wakefield
York

City Academies

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received about the effectiveness of city academies in tacking social deprivation. [186468]

Mr. Miliband: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills receives many representations on a variety of issues. The academies programme is specifically designed to address the intractable problems of poor standards of teaching and learning, under-achievement and low aspirations in the most socially and economically deprived parts of the country.

It will take time for the new leadership, buildings and curriculum to turn things round. However, of the three academies with GCSE results in 2003 the number of 5A*–C grades rose to 21 per cent. and 35 per cent. respectively from 7 per cent. and 25 per cent. in 2002, and the other had results broadly comparable with its predecessor schools. Academies are also improving behaviour and attendance.

Civil Service Recruitment

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the anticipated impact is of staff reductions in his Department on the delivery of services to *(a)* children under five, *(b)* school age children, *(c)* young people, *(d)* 14 to 19-year-olds, *(e)* adults and *(f)* families. [187096]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department is undertaking a radical transformation in its role and ways of working to deliver the ambitious agenda for reform set out in the Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners. Putting people at the heart of public services, building on the existing significant progress and substantial achievement, these changes will enable us to reduce the department's staffing levels and provide strategic leadership to the system, working with our partners and delivering resources to the front line to ensure the further improvements we are determined to secure in the services that we provide for children, young people adults and families.

School Computers

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils per computer there were in schools in *(a)* Norfolk and *(b)* Great Yarmouth in each year since 1996. [186705]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not available centrally.

Figures for England, which were derived from a sample of schools, are shown in the following table.

Average number of pupils[1] per computer (used solely or mainly for teaching and learning purposes) by type of school, England

	Maintained		
Year end March	*Primary*	*Secondary*	*Special*
1996	19.0	9.0	4.0
1997	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	17.6	8.7	4.5
1999	13.4	8.4	3.7
2000	12.6	7.9	3.7
2001	11.8	7.1	3.2
2002	10.1	6.5	3.4
2003	7.9	5.4	3.0
2004	7.5	4.9	3.1

n/a = Not available.
[1] Full-time equivalent numbers of pupils.

The latest provisional data on ICT in schools was published in Statistical First Release 'Survey of Information and Communications Technology in Schools 2004', which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Departmental Administrative Costs

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures he is taking to reduce his Department's central administrative costs. [187488]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The 2004 Spending Review White Paper (Table 7.1) shows that the administrative costs of the Department (including Ofsted) will fall from £276 million in 2005–06 to £262 million in 2007–08. This reduction will be principally achieved by reducing staffing by 1,460 posts in the Department by April 2008, but will also reflect other improvements arising from the Efficiency Review.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the Department spent on press officers in each year since 1996–97, broken down by grade. [184322]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is set out in the following table.

	Staff numbers	*Spend (£000)*
1996–97	19: SCS × 1, SIO × 6.5, IO × 11.5	702
1997–98	20.5: SCS × 1, G7 × 1, SIO × 7.5, IO × 10, AIO × 1	729
1998–99	29.5: SCS × 2, G7 × 2, SIO × 11.5, IO × 10, AIO × 3	969
1999–2000	28: SCS × 2, G7 × 3, SIO × 10, IO × 11, AIO × 2	997
2000–01	28: SCS × 2, G7 × 3.5, SIO × 13.5, IO × 6, AIO × 3	1,307
2001–02	28: SCS × 2, G7 × 4.5, SIO × 9.5, IO × 10, AIO × 2	1,097
2002–03	23.4: SCS × 2, G7 × 3, SIO × 9.5, IO × 7, AIO × 2	1,314
2003–04	18.5: SCS × 2, G7 × 4, SIO × 4.5, IO × 6, AIO x2	1,120

Key:
SCS—Senior Civil Service
G7—Grade 7
SIO—Senior Information Officer
IO—Information Officer
AIO—Assistant Information Officer

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money the Department spent on *(a)* advertising and *(b)* public relations in each year since 1996–97. [184323]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* Expenditure for both advertising and public relations is listed as follows:

£ million

	Advertising	*Public relations*
1996–97	8.0	0
1997–98	11.0	0
1998–99	16.8	0.6
1999–2000	12.4	0.1
2000–01	29.7	0.8
2001–02	20.5	1.7
2002–03	11.3	2.4
2003–04	19.5	1.9

As can be seen from the figures, spend on advertising fluctuates from year to year. Some campaigns will run over financial years and billing will fall in the later period. The increase in Public Relations (PR) relates to an increase in the use of external organisations to contact those elements of our key audiences that prove more difficult to reach through traditional advertising methods. Examples of this are in the promotion of adult basic skills, Aimhigher and Connexions. Since 2001–02, the Department has changed its approach by concentrating on having fewer, larger, more focused communications, such as that for adult basic skills (to help adults improve their reading, writing, language and maths) instead of numerous smaller campaigns.

Departmental Press Officers

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many press officers are employed in his Department. [187158]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department for Education and Skills has 17 press officers.

Departmental Staffing

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to reduce staffing levels within his Department. [187489]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave on 14 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 624W, to the right hon. Member for West Dorset (Mr. Letwin).

Departmental Stress Policy

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the introduction of a stress policy in his Department. [187092]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department and the Trade Union Side are agreed on the importance of addressing workplace stress. My Department is working closely with the Trade Union Side to develop a stress policy based on the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards of good management practice.

Departmental Theft

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many mobile phones owned by his Department have been reported lost or stolen since 2001. [186681]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Our records show that, since January 2001, twenty-six mobile telephones owned by my Department have been reported stolen and eight reported lost.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the items that his Department has reported lost or stolen to the police from his Department's buildings and property since 2001. [186676]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following table details the items that the Department for Education and Skills has reported lost or stolen to the police from the Department's buildings and property since 2001.

Financial year	*Item and quantity*	*Approximate value per item (£)*	*Total approximate value (£)*
2001–02	Laptop PC (1)	1,150	1,150
2002–03	0	0	0
2003–04	CD Player/Radio (1)	100	100
	CDs (6)	10	60
2004 to date	0	0	0
Total	8 items	n/a	1,310

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the equivalent monetary cost of theft to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Executive Agencies affiliated to his Department has been in each year since his Department was established. [186682]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table provides details of the equivalent monetary cost of theft to the Department for Education and Skills in each year since the Department was established in June 2001. We do not record similar data for any Executive Agency.

Financial year	*Cost of theft (£)*
2001–02	9,087
2002–03	4,910
2003–04	1,101
2004 to date	5,858
Total	20,956

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187314]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following table shows the number of rooms which have been set aside in each of the five Department for Education and Skills buildings for *(a)* smokers *(b)* worship and *(c)* nursing/pregnant women.

Site/Building	Smokers room	Worship room	Nursing/Pregnant women's facilities
Darlington	1 1	1 (non denominational)	1 room
London:			
Caxton House	1	1 Muslim prayer room and 1 non denominational	1 room and use of the first aid room
Sanctuary Buildings	1	1 Muslim prayer room and 1 non denominational	1 room
Sheffield	1	1 (non denominational)	1 room
Runcorn	3	1 (non denominational)	Nursing chairs provided within on-site Nursery

Early Excellence Centres

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Early Excellence centres *(a)* have been opened and *(b)* are planned to be opened in (i) St. Helens and (ii) England, broken down by region. [186809]

Margaret Hodge: There is one Early Excellence Centre (EEC) in St. Helens based at Legh Vale school in Haydock ward.

No further EECs will be developed. The Government are establishing children's centres across England many of which will be developed from existing EECs.

There are 107 EECs in England six of which are special projects. The special projects are run by RNIB which works with four EECs (two in London and two in the South East) and NHS Newborn which works with two London based EEC's.

A list of EECs in England, broken down by local authority region follows:

Annex A

Local authority	Number of Early Excellence Centres
Bath and NE Somerset	1
Bedfordshire	2
Birmingham	2
Blackpool	1
Bolton	1
Bradford	1
Bristol	2
Bury	1
Cambridgeshire	2
Camden	1
Cornwall	2
Coventry	1
Croydon	1
Cumbria network	1
Derby	1
Derbyshire	1
Devon	2
Dorset	1
Durham	1
Ealing	1
Gateshead	1
Gloucestershire	1
Greenwich	1
Hackney	1
Hammersmith and Fulham	2
Hampshire	2
Haringey	1
Harrow	1
Herefordshire	1
Hertfordshire	1
Hillingdon	1
Isle of Wight	2
Islington	2
Kent	1

Annex A

Local authority	Number of Early Excellence Centres
Kingston upon Thames	1
Kirklees	1
Lambeth	1
Lancashire	4
Leeds	1
Lewisham	1
Liverpool	1
Luton	2
Manchester	1
Middlesbrough	1
Newcastle	1
Newham	1
Norfolk	1
North East Lincolnshire	1
North Tyneside	1
Northamptonshire	1
Northumberland	1
Nottinghamshire	1
Oxfordshire	2
Peterborough	1
Plymouth	1
Portsmouth	1
Reading	1
Richmond-upon-Thames	1
Rotherham	2
Somerset	2
Southampton	1
South Tyneside	1
St Helens	1
Stockport	1
Sunderland	1
Surrey	1
Sutton	1
Swindon	1
Tameside	1
Tower Hamlets	1
Wakefield	1
Waltham Forest	1
Warwickshire	2
Westminster	1
West Sussex	1
Wigan	2
Wiltshire	2
Wirral	2
Wokingham	1
Wolverhampton	1

Note:
Six special projects are operated by NHS Newborn and RNIB. The RNIB project works with four EECs (two in North West and two in South East). The NHSP Newborn initiative works with two EECs in London.

Early-years Initiatives (Funding)

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been made available to *(a)* Sure Start projects, *(b)* Early Excellence centres, *(c)* Neighbourhood Nurseries and *(d)* other early years

initiatives in the London borough of Enfield in each year since their inception; what the projected funding is over the period of the Spending Review; and if he will make a statement. [187007]

Margaret Hodge: The London borough of Enfield has one Sure Start local programme, five neighbourhood nursery projects, and no Early Excellence Centres. In addition grant was paid for a range of early year's initiatives within the Childcare Grant until 2003, and under the Sure Start General Grant between 2004–06. The funding for each initiative since its inception is as follows:

Edmonton Sure Start local programme (revenue)

	£
1999–2000	42,000
2000–01	924,000
2001–02	1,300,000
2002–03	1,300,000
2003–04	1,300,000
2004–05	1,300,000
2005–06	1,300,000

Note:
The programme was also allocated £1,250,000 capital funding.

Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative (revenue)

	£
2003–04	133,500
2004–05	531,600
2005–06	297,600
2006–07	90,300

Note:
2006–07: £90,300 (funding agreed for this year due to slippage of last project). The authority has also been allocated £327,298 capital.

Childcare Grant 1998–2003

£

Source data	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Childcare Grant	72,000	249,000	312,950	596,030	613,560
National Recruitment Campaign	—	—	—	28,300	28,690	29,000
Childminder Start-Up Grant	—	—	—	25,900	40,100	31,500
Outdoor Play Equipment	—	—	—	—	29,610	—
Unlocking Barriers for Training	—	—	—	—	114,102	79,893
Daycare Expansion	—	—	—	—	24,100	15,070
Toy Libraries/Musical Instruments	—	—	—	—	50,680	32,460
Capital for Playgroup Conversion	—	—	—	—	—	19,950
Foundation Stage	—	—	—	—	94,448	94,448
SENCO Training	—	—	—	—	13,774	11,806
SENCO Low Incidence	—	—	—	—	—	18,903
Capital Funding	—	—	—	—	—	115,700
Total	72,000	249,000	367,150	991,534	1,062,29 0

General Sure Start Grant funding 2004–06

£

Source data	*2004–06*
Delivery Support Fund	1,031,179
Children's Information Service	193,947
Workforce Development (Recruitment and Training)	699,462
Nursery Schools Development	—
Extended Schools	79,000
New Childcare Places (Revenue) Disadvantaged Areas	236,685
New Childcare Places (Revenue) Other Areas	86,462
New Childcare Places (Capital for out of school Childcare)	51,232
New Childcare Places (Capital for Playgroup Conversion)	99,000
New Childcare Places (Capital for Playgroup Conversion) Other Areas	36,387
SEN and Inclusion (Children with Special Needs and Disabled Children)	273,258
Children's Centre's (Revenue)	1,033,220
Children's Centres (Capital)	2,225,058
Support Childminder Scheme	105,367
Total	6,150,257

The Chancellor announced in the Spending Review that the Sure Start Unit will be allocated £1,167 million, £1,483 million and £1,667 million for 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08 respectively for England. At this stage it is not possible to say how much will be allocated to individual local authorities.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of *(a)* girls and *(b)* boys in receipt of free school meals achieved (i) Level 2 or more at Key Stage 1 in (A) reading, (B) writing and (C) mathematics, (ii) Level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 for (1) English, (2) mathematics and (3) science, (iii) Level 5 and above at Key Stage 3 in (x) English, *(y)* mathematics and *(z)* science, (iv) five or more A*-C GCSE/GNVQ and (v) no passes at GCSE/GNVQ in each year since 1997; and what the percentages were for those not in receipt of free school meals. [185807]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 22 July 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for North Swindon (Mr. Wills) on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1424W.

A copy of the Statistical First Release 04/2004 was placed in the Libraries in response to this question.

Food Education

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether food skills training is provided in primary school teachers' initial teacher training. [187458]

Mr. Miliband: All trainee teachers must demonstrate the standards set out in "Qualifying to teach", which represent the minimum that trainees must know, understand and be able to do to be awarded qualified teacher status. Although the standards as they apply to

primary school trainees do not specify food skills training, they require that they should be familiar with the National Curriculum Framework for personal, social and health education, which at Key Stage 2 includes teaching about the benefits of healthy eating. Once employed within schools, teachers can look to professional development programmes to develop food technology skills.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what action is being taken to help primary school teachers to teach cookery in addition to the Food in Schools programme; [187459]

(2) what action his Department is taking to improve food education in schools; [187460]

(3) how many primary schools have the *(a)* necessary equipment and *(b)* purpose built facilities to enable pupils to prepare and cook food; [187461]

(4) how much schools have spent on average for each pupil in each of the last 10 years on food education in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools. [187462]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: On 6 September, the Government published the Healthy Living Blueprint for Schools. A copy is being placed in the House of Commons Library. The Blueprint and a supporting website will help teachers access support, advice and information to create a healthy school environment. It includes food education within the National Curriculum, and wider opportunities through, for example, cookery and growing clubs.

In addition to the Food in Schools programme, there are food technology teachers in Technology Specialist Schools and food technology Advanced Skills Teachers who support their feeder primary schools in food education as part of their outreach work.

The Department does not collect detailed information about expenditure on equipment or per pupil for individual subjects; or on facilities for food education in primary schools. This year, the Government have increased its support for capital investment in schools to £4.5 billion. This includes direct capital funding to every primary school, which a school could allocate for food technology facilities.

Fraud

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate his Department has made of the cost of fraud to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Executive Agencies affiliated to his Department in the last year for which figures are available. [186683]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The total amount of departmental funds under investigation in the financial year 2003–04 was £177,300. All cases of fraud or alleged fraud were investigated by the Department's Special Investigations Unit. Fully trained, professionally qualified fraud examiners staff this unit.

The Department has no Executive Agencies.

General Teaching Council/Teacher Training Agency

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will break down the 2002–03 administration cost of the Teacher Training Agency by main budget heading. [187400]

Mr. Miliband: Part 14 of the TTA's Financial Statements 2002–03 outlines a total of 5 budget lines contributing to a total administration expenditure of £10.479 million of which: staff costs totalled £6.651 million and other administration costs totalled £3.828 million.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of the General Teaching Council was in 2002–03, broken down by main budget heading. [187399]

Mr. Miliband: The total expenditure incurred by the GTC in 2002–03 totalled £11.237 million of which staff costs were £3.559 million. Other costs totalled £7.678 million.

A more detailed breakdown of the figures can be found on page 20 of the GTC's Annual Report and Accounts 2002–03.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many staff were employed in the *(a)* Teacher Training Agency and *(b)* General Teaching Council in 2002–03; and what the staff costs were in each case. [187401]

Mr. Miliband: The Teacher Training Agency employed an average of 193 staff during the financial year 2002–03. The total staff costs for the year were £6.651 million.

The General Teaching Council for England employed an average of 109 staff during the financial year 2002–03. The total staff costs for the year were £3.559 million.

The staff costs included temporary staff and secondees, and are disclosed in the organisations' accounts.

Graduate Employment

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research his Department has commissioned regarding the number of university graduates who enter graduate jobs within six months of graduating. [186942]

Alan Johnson: The Department's main data source for monitoring the destination of graduates is the First Destination Survey (FDS), which is collected annually by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). This records the employment position of graduates six months after graduation, including the type of work obtained by those graduates entering employment. These figures are published by HESA annually in 'First Destinations of Students leaving Higher Education Institutions', a copy of which can be found in the House Library.

Following a comprehensive review, the FDS has been expanded for 2002–03 to cover students completing part-time courses and to collect additional information on the student's employment.

Higher Education (Newcastle upon Tyne)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 18-year-olds were accepted for entry to higher education through UCAS in the City of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in each year since 1995. [186860]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and covers 18-year-old applicants accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses. Figures are given in the table.

18-year-old applicants domiciled in the Newcastle-upon-Tyne LEA, accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses

Year of entry	*Number*	*Percentage*
1995	607	22.2
1996	603	21.0
1997	527	16.4
1998	593	18.0
1999	553	17.2
2000	609	18.9
2001	754	23.3
2002	826	24.4
2003	872	25.1

Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and population figures based on projections from the Government Actuary's Department and the Office for National Statistics.

IT Training

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to improve *(a)* IT training and *(b)* access to the internet for older people. [186794]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information is as follows:

(a) DfES colleagues are currently working with partners, developing a strategy to take forward the commitments to ICT user skills made in the White Paper, 21st Century Skills, realising our potential, which include designating ICT as a Skill for Life.

A project called "Cybrarian" is currently being developed which aims to help reduce the digital divide by facilitating access to the Internet and to learning opportunities for those who currently do not, or cannot, use the Internet. This may be because of a lack of skills or confidence, or because of physical or cognitive disabilities.

(b) DfES has established a network of 6,000 UK online centres to help those who have not used computers or the Internet before, or who do not have access to a computer of their own. These centres provide free or low cost access to ICT and the Internet, with support from staff on hand to help individuals get started. One of the target groups is older people. Everyone in England should be able to find a UK online centre near to their home. Around 3,000 are based in libraries and the rest are located to provide easy access for all.

Learner Satisfaction Survey

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much was spent by the Learning and Skills Council on producing the Learner Satisfaction Survey in 2003; [186602]

(2) what funding methodology was used for setting budgets for local learning and skills councils in 2003–04; [186604]

(3) how much money has been allocated to each local learning and skills council in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06. [186605]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: These are matters for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom the Council's Chief Executive will write to the hon. Gentleman with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Learning Difficulties/Disabilities (Coventry, South)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Coventry, South students in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools suffer from learning (i) difficulties and (ii) disabilities. [187299]

Margaret Hodge: Learning difficulties and learning disabilities are covered within the definition set out in section 312 of the Education Act 1996 which states that children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

(a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age

(b) have a disability which prevents and hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local authority.

The table shows numbers of pupils with SEN in Coventry, South.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: number of pupils with special education needs (SEN)—January 2004 (provisional)

Coventry, South parliamentary constituency[2]	*Maintained primary*	*Maintained secondary*
Total pupils	7,780	7,410
Pupils with statements of SEN	80	150
Percentage	1.0	2.0
Pupils with SEN but without statements[3]	1,340	1,270
Percentage	17.3	17.1

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
[3] Includes children at "School Action" and "School Action Plus" as described in the SEN Code of Practice.

Minimum Pupil Numbers

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to require small schools to have a minimum number of pupils. [186476]

Mr. Miliband: We have no plans to require small schools to have a minimum number of pupils.

Decisions on proposed changes to schools, including opening and closing, are taken by each area's local School Organisation Committee, or an independent schools adjudicator, and the Department's guidance makes clear that they must not assume a school must be of a certain size to be a good school. LEAs have a statutory duty to ensure sufficient and efficient school provision in their area and we will expect them to take parental preferences into account in their planning process. LEAs must also ensure that each area offers high quality education in a cost effective way.

New Schools (Great Yarmouth)

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools were opened in the Great Yarmouth constituency between 1979 and 1997; and what proposals have been made for building new schools within the Great Yarmouth constituency since 1997. [186706]

Mr. Miliband: Information is only available for new school openings since 1988. Between 1988 and 1997 no new schools were established in Great Yarmouth. Since 1997, approval has been given for four new Primary schools, namely:

School name	*Reason for opening*
Herman Community Primary School	Amalgamation of Herman First and Herman Middle School
Peterhouse Community Primary School	Amalgamation of Peterhouse First and Peterhouse Middle School
Martham Foundation Primary School	Amalgamation of Martham First School and Nursery and West Flegg Middle School
Belton Voluntary Community Primary School	Amalgamation of Waveney First School and Breydon Middle School

Proposals for the new schools were approved by the local School Organisation Committee on 6 December 2002 and they are due to open this coming September.

Plans for any future organisation of schools are a matter for the local authority.

Education (Northampton, South)

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* education support staff there were in Northampton, South in each year since 1992. [186462]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the full-time equivalent number of regular teachers and support staff employed in maintained sector schools in Northampton, South constituency for each year from 1997 to 2003, the latest year available. Data are not available at constituency level prior to 1997.

	Teachers	*Support staff*[1]
2003	851	683
2002	860	659
2001	858	633
2000	765	464
1999	756	446
1998	749	397
1997	763	398

[1] Includes teaching assistants, administrative staff, technicians, medical and other child care and education support staff.

Source:
Annual School Census.

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will break down achievement at each key stage in 2003 in Northampton by ethnicity, subdivided into those *(a)* in receipt of and *(b)* not in receipt of free school meals. [186509]

Mr. Miliband: The requested information has been placed in the Libraries.

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size in Northampton, South for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools was in each year since 1997. [186521]

Mr. Miliband: The requested information is given in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: Average size of classes taught by one teacher[2] Northampton, South parliamentary constituency[3]

	Primary			*Secondary*		
Position in January each year: 1997 to 2004 (provisional)	*Number of pupils*	*Number of classes*	*Average class size*	*Number of pupils*	*Number of classes*	*Average class size*
1997	7,400	270	27.1	6,930	330	21.3
1998	7,340	270	27.4	6,790	300	22.9
1999	7,360	270	27.4	6,890	290	23.5
2000	7,310	270	27.1	7,010	290	23.8
2001	7,170	270	26.3	8,480	380	22.5
2002	7,170	290	25.2	7,840	330	23.8
2003	7,440	300	25.0	7,320	320	22.7
2004[4, 5]	9,500	370	25.8	5,700	260	22.0

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Classes as taught during the one selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.
[3] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
[4] Difference in figures from 2003 to 2004 is due to some schools within Northampton, South parliamentary constituency changing status from middle deemed secondary schools to primary school status.
[5] Provisional.

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

Offender Education

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time teachers and tutors are in post at each (i) prison and (ii) young offender institute. [187216]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: There are currently 405 full-time teachers and tutors in post in prisons and 271 in Young Offenders Institutions. For part-time teachers the figures are 225 in prisons and 103 in Young Offenders Institutes.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many prison education tutors have *(a)* resigned and *(b)* been made redundant in each of the last five years; and how many vacancies there are for these staff. [187217]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This information is not held centrally by HM Prison Service. Learning and skills in prisons are delivered by 28 educational providers in 137 prisons.

Matters relating to the employment status of tutors are the responsibility of the contractors.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has for the Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit within his Department. [187218]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The OLSU continues to play a key role in managing improvements to offender learning and skills, working in partnership with a range of Departments and agencies across Government; including the Learning and Skills Council and the prison and probation services. From April 2004, the role of the unit extends to learning and skills for offenders in the community, as well as in custody.

As we develop plans for improving future delivery of learning and skills for offenders, the unit expects to work increasingly closely with the Learning and Skills Council and other regional partners. As part of the Government's commitment to moving resources closer to the front line of delivery, we will consider how the unit's regional advisory staff could work most effectively within the regions for the future.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what role the regional Learning and Skills Councils will have in the *(a)* commissioning and *(b)* delivery of offender education in (i) prisons and (ii) the community; [187220]

(2) whether the new contracts for prison education will provide funding for *(a)* staff development, *(b)* lesson planning, *(c)* marking of students' work and *(d)* pastoral education. [187215]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The DfES is working closely with the Learning and Skills Council, the Prison Service, the Probation Service, the Youth Justice Board and JobCentreplus on new arrangements to support improvements in the learning and skills of offenders in the community as well as those in custody.

The Learning and Skills Council already works in partnership at local level with probation services in order to deliver learning and skills to offenders under supervision in the community. From next year, starting in the three development regions of the north east, north west and south west, the LSC will also assume lead responsibility for planning and funding, education and work related skills training for offenders in custody.

The precise balance between local, regional and national commissioning in arrangements for the future service for offenders, and the detailed content of any new contracts, will be agreed as we develop a new delivery framework over the next year.

This work is still at an early stage. We expect the LSC to ensure flexibility in contracting arrangements, and to adopt a funding formula which will promote consistency in the funding of offender learning across all regions. In the meantime, in order to ensure stability, we are extending the current prison education contracts in broadly their existing form.

Pensioner Education

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to improve access to education for pensioners. [186451]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Our plans were set out in the White Paper "21st Century Skills; Realising Our Potential" published in July 2003. We are committed to safeguarding a wide range of opportunities for pensioners. This is why we have agreed a budget with the Learning and Skills Council of £207.4 million in 2004–05 for adult and community learning secured through local education authorities, compared with £206 million in 2003–04. 28 per cent. of learners on these courses are aged 65 or over.

PFI/PPP Contracts (Financial Advice)

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many contracts his Department had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186690]

Mr. Miliband: There are no records of contracts with the organisations listed, or of any payments to them, for these purposes.

Pre-school Education

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the Government's policy is on pre-school education access; and if he will make a statement; [186803]

(2) whether the Government expects to meet its target of providing free part-time nursery education places to all three and four year old children by September; and if he will make a statement; [186808]

(3) what plans the Government has to expand access to pre-school education; and if he will make a statement. [186802]

Margaret Hodge: In 1997 access to free nursery education was effectively a postcode lottery. We have since invested more than £11 billion as part of an unprecedented expansion of early years provision. From 1 April 2004, six months ahead of the original target, we have amended the regulatory framework to

require all local authorities to ensure there is sufficient provision to deliver a free part time nursery education place for all three and four-year-olds whose parents want one. Provisional data from the January 2004 Early Years Census, published in May, confirmed that around 93 per cent. of three-year-olds and virtually all four year olds were already benefiting from some free provision. The Department's Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners, presented to Parliament in July (Cm 6272) outlined our plans to transform and build on the basic free entitlement by enabling parents to use it more flexibly as part of a wider integrated offer of education and child care.

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many free *(a)* nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Great Yarmouth in each of the last seven years. [186713]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in Norfolk local education authority area are shown in the table.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by three and four-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers Norfolk local education authority area, 1997–2003

Position in January each year	Three-year-olds	Four-year-olds
1997	1,500	8,200
1998	1,800	8,400
1999	1,900	8,500
2000	1,900	8,900
2001	2,000	8,400
2002	4,800	8,400
2003	6,100	8,400

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-old children.
[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two-and-a-half hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

The latest figures on provision for three and four-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical First Release, "Provision for Children Under Five Years of Age in England—January 2004", which is available on the Department's website: www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/

From April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three-year-olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Primary Schools (Non-teaching Grant)

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will ring-fence a specific grant in 2005–06 for planning, preparation and assessment time for primary school teachers. [186308]

Mr. Miliband: I refer the Member for Gloucester to the written statement I laid before the House on 13 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 55WS, on school funding for 2005–06. On the same day there was also a press notice issued by the Department (DfES press notice 2004/0137), which included a statement welcoming the school funding settlement by those school workforce unions represented on the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group.

The written statement to the House sets out how we have considered, with our partner signatories, the costs of implementation of the National Agreement. It announces what funds will be available to schools to implement the Agreement in 2005–06.

Prison Education

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when his Department will *(a)* release full details of the new contracts for prison education, *(b)* begin accepting tenders, *(c)* make decisions on which tenders will be successful and *(d)* announce a start date for the new contracts. [187238]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We announced in January that we would not re-tender prison education contracts. With the creation of the new National Offender Management Service and the drive to get more resources to front-line services, we are looking to incorporate offender learning and skills more fully into mainstream further education provision.

The Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit and the Learning and Skills Council are working with the Prison and Probation Services to develop a new integrated service, initially in three development regions in England. The outcome of this work will inform the national implementation of a new, fully integrated service to offenders from September 2006.

In the meantime, in order to ensure stability as we develop the new service delivery arrangements, Prison Service officials are negotiating extensions to existing contracts from September 2004.

Pupil Exclusions

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils were excluded from schools in *(a)* Great Yarmouth and *(b)* Norfolk in each year since 1997. [186710]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The available information is given in the table.

Exclusions data for 2000/01, 2001/02 and 2002/03 are known to have been under-reported by some schools. The Department carried out a checking exercise, but this was at LEA level only. As a result this information is not available at parliamentary constituency level for the three most recent years.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1] number and percentage of permanently excluded pupils 1997–98 to 2002–03[2,3]

	Primary		Secondary	
	Number	Percentage[4]	Number	Percentage[4]
Great Yarmouth parliamentary constituency				
1997–98	10	0.09	20	0.59
1998–99	10	0.07	30	0.76
1999–2000	5	0.03	10	0.14
2000–01	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2001–02	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2002–03[5]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1] number and percentage of permanently excluded pupils 1997–98 to 2002–03[2,3]

	Primary		Secondary	
	Number	Percentage[4]	Number	Percentage[4]
Norfolk LEA				
1997–98	40	0.05	100	0.25
1998–99	30	0.04	130	0.31
1999–2000	20	0.03	60	0.14
2000–01	20	0.03	40	0.10
2001–02	20	0.04	50	0.12
2002–03[3]	10	0.02	50	0.10

n/a = Not available.

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

[3] Provisional.

[4] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the number (headcount) of pupils, excluding dually registered pupils.

[5] Less than 5.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary pupils on average were (i) permanently excluded from school and (ii) unable to access a place in school in each of the last five years in (A) the London borough of Enfield, (B) Inner London and (C) England; and if he will make a statement. [187005]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Requested information on the number and percentage of excluded pupils is given in the tables.

Maintained primary schools[1]: Number and percentage of permanently excluded pupils, 1997/98 to 2002/03 (provisional)[2]

	Enfield LEA		Inner London		England	
	Number	Percentage[3]	Number	Percentage[3]	Number	Percentage[3]
1997–98	10	0.04	150	0.06	1,540	0.03
1998–99	10	0.02	110	0.05	1,370	0.03
1999–2000	[4]	0.01	80	0.03	1,230	0.03
2000–01	10	0.02	80	0.04	1,440	0.03
2001–02	10	0.02	80	0.03	1,450	0.03
2002–03[5]	10	0.02	60	0.03	1,300	0.03

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. There may be discrepancies between the sum of constituent items and the totals as shown.
[3] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the number (headcount) of pupils, excluding dually registered pupils.
[4] Less than 5.
[5] Provisional.
Source:
Annual Schools Census.

Maintained secondary schools[1]: Number and percentage of permanently excluded pupils, 1997/98 to 2002/03 (provisional)[2]

	Enfield LEA		Inner London		England	
	Number	Percentage[3]	Number	Percentage[3]	Number	Percentage[3]
1997–98	70	0.39	570	0.48	10,190	0.33
1998–99	70	0.36	500	0.41	8,640	0.28
1999–2000	70	0.34	410	0.33	6,710	0.21
2000–01	70	0.32	430	0.34	7,310	0.23
2001–02	60	0.31	390	0.30	7,740	0.24
2002–03[4]	50	0.22	390	0.30	7,690	0.23

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. There may be discrepancies between the sum of constituent items and the totals as shown.
[3] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the number (headcount) of pupils, excluding dually registered pupils.
[4] Provisional.
Source:
Annual Schools Census.

We do not hold information centrally on the numbers of excluded pupils unable to access a place in school. However, from September 2002 all local education authorities (LEAs) have been committed to providing suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixteenth day of their exclusion. Since then all but a handful of LEAs have met this commitment. Currently only two LEAs are not meeting it and the Department is working with them to help them achieve it.

Pupil Expenditure (Great Yarmouth)

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public money was spent per pupil in the Great Yarmouth constituency in each year since 1997. [186709]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is submitted to the Department according to local education authority areas rather than constituency level. The figures provided are for Norfolk LEA and are shown in the following table:

Net current expenditure (after recharges) per pupil

	Total
1997–98	2,380
1998–99	2,470
1999–2000	2,570
2000–01	2,850
2001–02	3,180
2002–03	3,400

Notes:
1. Net current expenditure (NCE) includes expenditure within schools and also that incurred centrally by the LEA. This is divided by the number of pupils educated in mainstream schools to calculate a unit cost.
2. Section 52 is collected at local authority level, not constituency level, so the figures provided are for Norfolk LEA.
3. 1999–2000 figures reflect the return of GM schools to local authority maintenance.
4. The outturn 2002–03 tables captured the data in a fundamentally different way to the previous years. Categories were aligned with the Consistent Financial Reporting framework and the spending by LEAs was no longer split by school sector. This change in calculation is identified by the dotted line. The 2002–03 figure is calculated by taking all the LEA expenditure, excluding CERA and Youth and Community, and dividing it by the FTE pupil numbers in maintained pre-primary, primary, secondary and special schools.
5. Data as reported by Norfolk LEA as at 22 July 2004.
6. Figures are reported in Cash Terms and are rounded to the nearest £10.
7. The financial data are taken from Norfolk LEAs' Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's RO1 statement previously. 2002–03 data remains provisional and is subject to change by the LEA.
8. Pupil data are drawn from the Annual Schools Census adjusted to be on a financial year basis.

Pupil Referral Units

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to permit academically-orientated students who have been expelled from mainstream education and who are in Pupil Referral Units to study in academic surroundings to complete their education. [186941]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As part of their legal responsibilities, LEAs are able to make arrangements for all students within Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), including those who have been excluded, to attend other educational establishments (for example Further Education Colleges) in order to complete their education. This is in addition to the core curriculum that must be provided within PRUs. LEA's responsibilities are emphasised in the new guidance "Guidance for LEAs on PRUs and Alternative Provision", which will be issued in the autumn, but is already accessible by them in draft form.

School Budgets

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action he is taking to give head teachers more control over school budgets. [186470]

Mr. Miliband: Governing bodies and head teachers are already free to deploy the resources allocated to them through local education authorities' school funding formulae in accordance with their own assessment of their schools' needs and priorities. From April 2006, individual schools will receive guaranteed three-year budgets and this will give them even more control of their own resources by enabling them to take a much more strategic approach to their budgets.

In addition to recurrent funding, each maintained school in England is also allocated direct capital funding which it can use for its investment priorities. This year, a typical secondary school will get about £85,000 of its own capital, and a typical primary school about £25,000.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to conduct research into how school budgets are spent. [186471]

Mr. Miliband: The DfES is actively involved in a programme of research into how schools use their budgets. This includes a detailed analysis of school expenditure patterns from the Consistent Financial Reporting data, which will provide schools with an indication of how their own expenditure compares to the overall national picture. This work complements the existing Schools Financial Benchmarking web site that allows schools to compare their income and expenditure with other similar schools.

As well as analysis of expenditure information, qualitative analysis will be carried out in schools to identify the process by which schools allocate their resources to develop better advice.

Finally there is a work stream in progress developing measures of school efficiency and productivity. These methods look specifically at the relationship between the way in which a school allocates its resources and the outcomes it achieves given the context in which it operates.

School Refurbishment (Great Yarmouth)

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been given to *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in the Great Yarmouth constituency for the refurbishment of school buildings since 1997. [186711]

Mr. Miliband: We do not hold information in the form requested. The bulk of capital funding is allocated to local education authorities (LEAs) and schools by formula so that they can decide their priorities for investment in line with locally decided asset management plans. It is therefore for them to decide the balance of investment between primary and secondary schools.

The Department allocates capital funding at local authority and school level. The following table sets out the capital support provided by the Department to Norfolk LEA and its schools since 1996–97.

Capital allocations to Norfolk and its schools

	£000
1996–97	4,786
1997–98	4,907
1998–99	9,199
1999–2000	10,589
2000–01	25,545
2001–02	21,219
2002–03	[1]123,526
2003–04	39,292
2004–05	[2]106,619

[1] Includes £92 million of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits.
[2] Includes £60 million of PFI credits.

School Start Date

Barbara Follett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to allow children to start primary education in the September of the calendar year in which the child has its sixth birthday. [187529]

Mr. Miliband: We have no plans to change from the current statutory provisions which require that children start primary education in the term after their fifth birthday.

Science and Innovation Consultation

Mr. Pollard: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the potential benefits to *(a)* science in schools and *(b)* biology fieldwork following the science and innovation consultation; and if he will make a statement. [186465]

Alan Johnson: The Government's Science and Innovation 10-year Investment Framework sets out our comprehensive strategy for tackling skills shortages in the science, engineering and technology. We outlined how we would improve science teaching and learning in schools by providing additional incentives to recruit more people to train to be science teachers, making better use of specialist science support staff and, subject to the advice of the School Teacher Review Body, enabling science Advanced Skills Teachers to be paid more. We also outlined the importance of a science curriculum that inspires young people, with opportunities for exciting science practical work in and outside the classroom.

To improve teacher confidence in using fieldwork, we have funded the Field Studies Council in association with the Geographical Association, the Association of Science Education and the Open University to develop a training course for geography and science teachers. Complementary courses on fieldwork will also be offered through the new national network of Science Learning Centres. Our Growing Schools programme supports teachers to educate pupils about food cultivation, farming, and understanding the natural environment, as well as how to use the outdoors for teaching subjects across the curriculum.

Secondary School Targets

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations the Department has received regarding its new secondary school targets. [186469]

Mr. Miliband: The DfES has received no formal representations on the new secondary school PSA targets since their announcement on 12 July.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (Great Yarmouth)

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent in Great Yarmouth on measures within the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. [186720]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not held in this format.

Norfolk county council will spend an estimated £45 million on special educational needs in 2004–05. This includes the amount delegated to schools and the authority's central spend on special needs. In addition, Norfolk has £1,352,236 available in 2004–05 through the Schools Access Initiative.

Strategic Area Reviews

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of strategic area reviews was in 2003–04; and how much is budgeted for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [186603]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) was established in 2001 to plan and fund post-16 education and training. LSC led strategic area reviews were introduced in April 2003 and are an integral part of this planning role. No extra funding was allocated to carry out these reviews and it is therefore not possible to disaggregate their specific cost from the overall cost of the wide range of planning activities carried out by local LSCs.

Student Grants/Loans

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will place in the Library the survey referred to in his answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 53–54W, on student grants. [186849]

Alan Johnson: The specially commissioned survey referred to in the answer of 10 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 53–54W, was collected from local education authorities in England and Wales and completion of it was on a voluntary basis. The response rate means that the survey results cannot be used safely at the level of individual LEAs, although we can use it nationally when also combined with income data from other sources. That is how we constructed the estimate of the proportion of students anticipated to receive the full grant of £2,700. However because of the data quality issues it is not possible to publish the raw survey data itself.

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what monetary sums were transferred to the Scottish Office further to the sale of portfolios of student loans in *(a)* 1998 and *(b)* 1999. [182984]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 8 July 2004]:* The sums paid to the Scottish Office in respect of the two student loan debt sales were as follows:

	£
1998	110,186,867.85
1999	110,000,778.97

Sure Start

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Sure Start programmes *(a)* have begun and *(b)* are planned in (i) St. Helens and (ii) England, broken down by region. [186811]

Margaret Hodge: Five Sure Start local programmes have been established in St. Helens since 1999. No further Sure Start local programmes will be developed. As part of our policy to mainstream Sure Start principles, the Government are establishing children's centres across England, many of which will be developed from existing Sure Start local programmes.

524 Sure Start local programmes have been established in England; these break down by region as follows.

Region	Number
East of England	24
East Midlands	44
London	96
North East	62
North West	108
South East	33
South West	31
West Midlands	58
Yorkshire and Humber	68

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans the Government have to extend Sure Start beyond the 20 per cent. most deprived wards; and if he will make a statement. [187362]

Margaret Hodge: Sure Start benefits children, parents and communities across the country, delivering free early education for all three and four-year-olds, improving the quality and affordability of child care, and creating at least 250,000 new child care places by 2006. Sure Start children's centres are being established initially in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards and areas where pockets of disadvantage exist in England. By March 2008 we will have up to 2,500 children's centres which will cover all the 20 per cent. wards and beyond. The Government's long-term aim is to develop a children's centre in every community.

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been allocated to the Great Yarmouth constituency under the Sure Start scheme. [186712]

Margaret Hodge: A total of £8,101,348 Sure Start funding has so far been allocated to the constituency of Great Yarmouth, comprising £3,136,535 capital and £4,706,921 revenue towards the development of two Sure Start local programmes, two neighbourhood Nurseries and two Children's Centres. The combined programmes will provide Sure Start services for around 1,596 children and families in the six most disadvantaged wards in the constituency. These figures does not include local authorities funding for child care and nursery education allocated to Norfolk county council.

Teachers

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the impact in Nottingham of reductions in numbers of teachers and teaching assistants on the introduction of planning, preparation and assessment time for all teachers. [187084]

Mr. Miliband: Individual schools will decide how they introduce planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time for all teachers from September 2005. That is because schools make changes in their staffing levels every year in response to a range of issues including changing pupil numbers, new school priorities and the resources available to them.

The calculation of the Education Formula Spending Share has a floor and ceiling component which ensures that all authorities see a minimum increase per pupil which is in part funded by having a ceiling which imposes a maximum increase per pupil. In 2004–05 Nottingham City local education authority received the ceiling increase (6.8 per cent. per pupil and percentages provide for average cost of implementing PPA time).

I refer also to the written statement I laid before the House on 13 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 55WS, on school funding for 2005–06. On the same day there was also a press notice issued by the Department (DfES press notice 2004/0137), which included a statement welcoming the school funding settlement by the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (made up of the majority of the school workforce unions and other partners).

The written statement to the House sets out how we have considered, with our partner signatories, the costs of implementation of the National Agreement. It announces what funds will be available to schools to implement the Agreement in 2005–06.

At local level, the funding allocation for each local education authority for 2005–06 will be announced in the provisional local government finance settlement in the autumn. However, every authority will receive an increase in the Schools Formula Spending Share of at least 5.5 per cent. per pupil. Primary and nursery schools will receive a minimum funding increase per pupil of 5 per cent. and secondary schools of 4 per cent. where pupil numbers do not change.

We will continue to monitor trends in the schools workforce through the Annual Schools Census each January. There are now 427,800 full-time equivalent teachers—28,600 more than in 1997 and the highest number since 1981—and the number of support staff has increased to 241,700, having more than doubled since 1997. These figures illustrate the trend of the significant increases in teachers and support staff since 1997.

The next School Workforce Volume will be available in the autumn.

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the most recent estimate is of the average total salary of a *(a)* primary school teacher and *(b)* secondary school teacher in (i) Enfield, (ii) Inner London and (iii) England; and if he will make a statement. [187003]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the average salary of full-time teachers employed in maintained nursery/primary and secondary schools in Enfield local education authority, Inner London and England in March 2002, the latest information available.

£

	Nursery and primary	Secondary
Enfield LEA	29,700	32,070
Inner London	30,880	33,660
England	27,600	29,550

Source:
The Database of Teacher Records. Figures cover all grades and include all allowances.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what level of proficiency participants in *(a)* the Post Graduate Certificate of Education, *(b)* Teach First and *(c)* the Graduate

Teacher Programme need to reach with regard to (i) ICT and (ii) special educational needs to be deemed to have met the course requirements. [186421]

Mr. Miliband: Before they can be recommended for qualified teacher status, all trainee teachers, whatever training route they follow, must demonstrate that they have achieved the professional standards for QTS set out in "Qualifying to teach". This applies to all the standards, including those related to ICT and special educational needs.

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary teacher vacancies there were at the start of each of the last five academic years in (i) the London borough of Enfield, (ii) inner London and (iii) England; what the percentage salary rate was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [187006]

Mr. Miliband: The tables show teacher vacancy numbers and rates in maintained nursery/primary and secondary schools in the London borough of Enfield, inner London and England in January of each year since 1999. January 2003 is the latest year available.

	Nursery and Primary				
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Vacancies[1]					
Enfield	19	13	29	27	16
Inner London	367	355	510	321	153
England	1,374	1,420	2,110	1,796	1,114
Rates[2]					
Enfield	1.9	1.2	2.7	2.5	1.8
Inner London	3.8	3.6	5.4	3.4	1.6
England	0.8	0.8	1.2	1.0	0.6

	Secondary				
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Vacancies[1]					
Enfield	9	15	33	33	21
Inner London	140	197	367	267	194
England	939	1,246	2,586	2,447	2,050
Rates[2]					
Enfield	0.7	1.3	2.7	3.0	1.8
Inner London	1.9	2.6	4.8	3.5	2.6
England	0.5	0.7	1.4	1.3	1.1

[1] Advertised vacancies for full-time permanent appointments (or appointments of at least one term's duration). Includes vacancies being filled on a temporary basis of less than one term.

[2] Vacancies as a percentage of full-time qualified teachers in post.

Source:

DfES annual survey of teachers in service (Form 618g)

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many full-time equivalent teachers have been employed in Suffolk in each of the last 10 years. [187194]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the full-time equivalent number of regular teachers in the maintained schools sector in Suffolk local education authority in each January since 1994. 2003 is the latest year available.

	Number
2003	5,700
2002	5,660
2001	5,490
2000	5,450
1999	5,450
1998	5,380
1997	5,330
1996	5,330
1995	5,360
1994	5,270

Source:

DfES annual survey of teachers in service (Form 618G).

Westgate College, Newcastle

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what bids he has received for Westgate College, Newcastle under the Building Schools for the Future programme; when he expects to make a decision; and what funding mechanism he expects to use. [186834]

Mr. Miliband: While I can confirm that West Gate Community College is included in Newcastle-upon-Tyne's proposal for the renewal of its secondary school estate to be funded in wave 1 of Building Schools for the Future, the authority is still working with my officials to develop its proposals in detail.

We hope to confirm approval of Newcastle's proposals later this year, at which point the relevant funding mechanisms will also be confirmed.

Working Age People (Qualifications)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the change in *(a)* basic skills and *(b)* proportion of working age people (i) with no qualifications, (ii) qualified to level 2 and (iii) qualified to level 4 has been in the constituency of Newcastle-upon-Tyne Central since 1997. [186838]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: *(a)* The 2003 Skills for Life survey provides the latest estimate of literacy and numeracy levels for England, the North East and the Tyne and Wear Learning and Skills Council area in particular. At present it is not possible to estimate levels of need for the Newcastle-upon-Tyne area although such figures will be available via DfES's website this autumn. The Skills for Life survey maps skill levels to the National Standards for Adult Literacy and Numeracy and is not directly comparable with previous estimates of basic skills need. This means we are unable to look at changes in basic skills levels since 1997.

The survey highlights that 22 per cent. of North East respondents were classified at Entry Level 3 or below for literacy (below a GCSE grade G). The figure for England as a whole is 16 per cent. If the North East's population is approximately 2.6 million, this would mean that over 500,000 people would have literacy skills at entry level 3 or below. For Tyne and Wear LSC area, 22 per cent. of respondents were at Entry Level 3 or below for literacy.

For numeracy, 55 per cent. of North East respondents were classified at Entry Level 3 or below for numeracy. This compares with a figure of 47 per cent. for England as a whole. If the North East's population is 2.6 million,

this would mean that approximately 1.4 million people would have entry level 3 or below numeracy skills. 50 per cent. of respondents were at Entry Level 3 or below for Tyne and Wear LSC area.

Available data show that between the launch of the Skills for Life strategy in April 2001 and July 2003, Learning and Skills Council funded learners in the North East achieved some 35,000 Skills for Life qualifications, 18,000 within the Tyne and Wear Learning and Skills Council area. These figures are in addition to achievements funded through the Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit and the Department for Work and Pensions.

(b) The following table shows the proportion of working age[1] people (i) with no qualifications, (ii) qualified to level 2 and (iii) qualified to level 4. Figures are given for the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Central Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA), the Tyne and Wear local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area, and the North East Government Office Region (GOR). Data comes from the Local Area Labour Force Surveys conducted annually from 1999–2000 to 2002–03.

[1] Working age population refers to males aged 16 to 64 and females aged 16 to 59.

	Qualification level (percentage)[1]				
Geography	*No qualifications*	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4 and above*	*Level 2 and above*
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Central PCA					
Change from 1999–2000	*-3*	*-1*	*+3*	*+9*	*+11*
2002–03	11	18	26	36	79
2001–02	11	17	23	35	76
2000–01	13	17	26	32	75
1999–2000	13	19	23	27	69
Tyne and Wear LLSC					
Change from 1999–2000	*-3*	*-1*	*+1*	*+4*	*+3*
2002–03	17	23	20	21	63
2001–02	19	22	19	19	61
2000–01	21	23	18	19	60
1999–2000	20	24	19	17	60
North East GOR					
Change from 1999–2000	*-3*	*0*	*+1*	*+3*	*+3*
2002–03	18	23	19	19	61
2001–02	20	22	19	19	60
2000–01	21	23	18	19	59
1999–2000	21	23	19	17	58

[1] Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many staff at each grade in his Department have opted out of the Working Time Regulations; and what the average number of hours these staff work per week is. [187097]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department is committed to reducing the number of employees who work in excess of the Working Time Directive maximum to an absolute minimum. 64 staff have signed a formal opt out from the Working Time Directive. The following table shows the number of staff at each grade:

Grade	*Number*
Administrative Officer	7
Executive Officer	22
Higher Executive Officer	15
Higher Executive Officer (Development)	2
Senior Executive Officer	10
Grade 7	7
Senior Civil Service	1
Total	64

The average number of hours that these staff work per week is not kept centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Book Selling

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect of the ending of the Net Book Agreement in 1995 on *(a)* authors, *(b)* publishers and *(c)* booksellers; and if she will make a statement. [185676]

Mr. Sutcliffe: A recent report, "The Benefits from Competition: some Illustrative UK Cases" (available at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/economics/economics_paper9.pdf), prepared for DTI by Professor Steve Davies of University of East Anglia and his team, explored the impact of removing the Net Book Agreement as one of six case studies on the impact of enhanced competition.

The Davies Report concluded that the ending of the Net Book Agreement was largely beneficial as prices, at least for the more popular books fell, more channels to market have increased competition and access and choice of books, and the feared adverse side effects for small booksellers and book production did either not occur or were smaller scale than expected.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the likely effect of the proposed removal of the

Recommended Retail Price from book sleeves on *(a)* authors, *(b)* publishers and *(c)* booksellers; and if she will make a statement. [185677]

Nigel Griffiths: After consultation with industry, we are not aware of any proposals to remove the current system of displaying pricing on books.

Innovation

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action the EU is taking to improve its policy on encouraging innovation. [186503]

Ms Hewitt: The EU has been encouraging innovation within the framework of the Lisbon strategy. The EU Innovation Scoreboard (published each year www.cordis.lu/scoreboard/) shows progress against this. The European Commission has carried out a public consultation on its draft Innovation Action Plan (http://www.europa.eu.int) and a revised version is due to be published in November 2004. The EU's sixth Framework Programme already provides a mechanism for funding collaborative research and provides substantial financial support to support research activity aimed at improving the EU's innovation performance. The Commission has published a Communication (Com (2004) 353) on 16 June 2004 (www.cordis.lu) setting out its ideas for the seventh Framework Programme, due to start at the end of 2006 and the UK will endeavour to ensure that this is structured in ways which further reinforce the EU's support for innovation.

Age Discrimination

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to eliminate age discrimination in the workplace. [186857]

Jacqui Smith: The Government are preparing legislation outlawing unjustified age discrimination in employment and vocational training in accordance with the Employment Directive (2000/78/EC). This legislation will come into force on 1 October 2006. In addition, the Government are promoting the business benefits of an age diverse workforce through the Age Positive campaign. The campaign uses publications, research, press, events, awards initiatives and its website to get the message across. They also encourage employers to adopt the voluntary "Code of Practice: Age Diversity at Work, A Practical Guide for Business".

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what the Government's policy is on preventing age discrimination; and if she will make a statement; [186938]

(2) what the Government's policy is on *(a)* direct and *(b)* indirect discrimination by employers against the employment of workers over the age of 50. [186947]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

Through the Age Positive campaign the Government are combating age discrimination in the workplace. Age Positive is vigorously promoting the business benefits of an age diverse workforce by encouraging employers in both the public and private sector to adopt the voluntary Code of Practice: Age Diversity at Work, A Practical Guide for Business.

The Age Positive campaign is promoted to employers and individuals through advertising, the website and press features in national, local and specialist publications. It features existing good practice by employer champions, research, and strongly promotes to employers at exhibitions and workshops. Age Positive awards help to widely publicise the achievements of businesses and individuals who overcome ageism in employment.

Legislation will come into force to outlaw unfair discrimination on the grounds of age in employment and vocational training in 2006. We are currently developing proposals for draft legislation. This will cover both direct and indirect discrimination and will apply to all those in employment or vocational training and not just those aged 50 and over.

As the White Paper 'Fairness for All' has outlined, the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) will provide institutional support for the provisions on age discrimination, working closely with partner organisations and key stakeholders to provide advice and assistance. The CEHR will be able to advise individuals of their rights under the legislation, and provide support for some people to bring their cases before the courts. In addition, the CEHR will have the powers to conduct an investigation into a named party where it has reasonable suspicion that the person is not complying with the statutory requirements of the age legislation. If unlawful discrimination or harassment is found, the CEHR will be able to require the discrimination to stop.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how she expects the 2006 age discrimination legislation to be implemented; and which bodies will have responsibility for implementation. [186944]

Jacqui Smith: We will consult on regulations to outlaw age discrimination in employment and vocational training, which will come into force on 1 October 2006. The CEHR will enforce this legislation and promote awareness and best practice in relation to equality of opportunity for people of different ages more generally, providing information, advice and in some strategic cases, legal representation. The CEHR will not be fully operational until the end of 2006 at the earliest.

Biomass Energy Industry

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many planning applications for the construction of biomass power stations are being considered; and how many have been granted permission. [185847]

Mr. Timms: Proposals to construct and operate generating stations with a capacity greater than 50 megawatts (MW) in England and Wales require the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989. No application has been made to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for consent to construct a biomass power station.

Generating stations below 50 MW fall to be determined by the local planning authority under the normal planning regime.

Departmental Policies (Middlesbrough, South and Cleveland, East)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, including statistical information relating as directly as possible to the constituency, the effect on Middlesbrough, South and Cleveland, East constituency of her Department's policies and action since 8 June 2001. [184733]

Jacqui Smith: The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) promotes a wide variety of areas' policies and are working with businesses, employees and consumers to drive up UK productivity and competitiveness to deliver prosperity to all. To achieve this the Department is involved in a number of regional programmes, with some being delivered through the Small Business Service (SBS), One North East and Business Links.

Although Department for Trade and Industry policies as a whole lead to increased prosperity and competitiveness throughout the country it is not possible to assess their impact at an individual constituency level. Some examples of specific initiatives benefiting Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency are included in the information set out as follows:

Business Support

In his Budget statement the Chancellor announced a number of steps to help small businesses including an increase of capital allowances to 50 per cent. and raising VAT registration threshold to 58 per cent., all of which helps small businesses in your constituency. The Chancellor also announced that the Employer Training Pilot, run in Tyne and Wear for the last 15 months, would be made available to businesses throughout the north east. This will help businesses to improve workforce skills by providing training tailored to their needs.

Since the spring of 2001, the Business Link has assisted a total of 1,397 businesses to increase productivity and wealth in the Redcar and Cleveland council area. These businesses have been helped in a wide variety of disciplines including workforce development, finance, marketing and regulation.

In addition in the same area since the spring of 2002 316 businesses have been helped to start up. Business Link has helped would-be entrepreneurs to develop over 1,700 pre-start business ideas, stimulating an enhanced enterprise culture. From June 2001 to June 2004 190 Tees Valley Business Link customers have accessed a range of public funding (e.g. Innovation Action Fund and West Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Trust New Deal for Communities funding).

From April 2002 to date in the Tees Valley area, 69 Department of Trade and Industry grants exceeding £14 million in total value have been awarded. These include Selective Finance for Investment in England—and its predecessors Enterprise Grant and Regional Selective Assistance (RSA)—and SMART. The projects being supported are expected to generate investment in excess of £138 million, creating over 1,600 jobs and safeguarding 695. These grants are administered by One North East and the Small Business Service on behalf of the Department for Trade and Industry.

European Funding and Tees Valley

In the north east, the European Social Fund Objective 3 Programme commenced in July 2000 and continues to 31 December 2007. The Programme funds organisations which seek to help individuals (employed and unemployed) to improve their skill levels and obtain employment. Funds can be accessed through co-financing organisations (CFOs) or through the Programme Secretariat. The Tees Valley Learning and Skills Council and Job Centre Plus are Co-Financing (CFO's) funded projects with a total value of £19 million. There is an additional £34 million available to support Co-Financing (CFO) projects in Tees Valley from 2004–07. Between 2001–04 under direct bidding arrangements projects from the Middlesbrough area received a total of £18.6 million.

The North East of England Objective 2 Programme (2000–06) provides a total of £434 million in support in the north east. Within this £267.97 million is made up of £69.62 million in Priority 1 and £198.35 million in Priority 2 and is available for a wide range of business support activity including generic business support, technology and transfer access to finance. Tees Valley benefits from regional projects as well as those aimed directly at the sub-

Cross Government coordination

The Department for Trade and Industry has led the coordination of area specific initiatives with other Departments, such as the foot and mouth grants from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Farm Business Advisory Service and recently the targeted use of Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) support to increase the uptake of business support in the disadvantaged areas of east Cleveland.

ECGD

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Export Credits Guarantee Department's administration costs were in each of the last five financial years *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down into (i) staff costs, (ii) accommodation costs, (iii) consultancy costs and (iv) IT costs. [186840]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The following table lists ECGD's administration costs by year for the last five financial years.

£000

	Administration costs	Breakdown of administration costs				
		Staff costs	Accommodation costs (rent)	Consultancy costs	IT costs	Others
1999–2000	23,218	13,548	1,506	515	3,516	4,133
2000–01	27,746	14,136	3,152	758	4,377	5,323
2001–02	29,371	15,523	3,262	628	5,403	4,555
2002–03	26,546	14,022	3,373	1,031	4,388	3,732
2003–04	30,226	14,806	3,645	833	5,676	5,266

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what savings in administration costs the Export Credits Guarantee Department is required to achieve in 2005–06; and what the projected savings in such costs for the next five financial years are. [186841]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: DTI is to invest £10 million into ECGD over the two years from April 2005 to improve ECGD's efficiency and effectiveness (I refer you to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's announcement about the future of ECGD on 1 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 22WS). The intention is that the cost savings achieved by ECGD during this period will be sufficient to ensure that the premium reduction of up to £5 million per annum can be sustained after April 2007.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether it is her practice to offer Export Credits Guarantee Department cover in Government to Government defence export and sales agreements; and what the total amount of cover outstanding on such agreements is. [186848]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: UK companies are eligible for support from ECGD under Government to Government contractual arrangements which could result in the UK company incurring a loss as a consequence of the overseas' Government's failure to pay.

The total amount of cover outstanding in respect of Government to Government contracts underwritten after 1991 currently stand at around £1,060 million.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to what extent a capitalised trading fund will give the Export Credits Guarantee Department autonomy from HM Treasury and her Department. [187094]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: As a Trading Fund, ECGD will have greater operational freedom to manage its financial affairs.

HM Treasury's future role will be more focused on strategic oversight, while the Shareholder Executive within the DTI will offer Ministers advice on aspects of the Department's corporate governance, financial targets and performance as a Trading Fund.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry under what terms the £10 million investment in the Export Credits Guarantee Department from her Department's shareholder executive can be spent; and if she will make a statement. [187095]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The £10 million to be invested by the DTI over two years from April 2005 will be spent to improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of ECGD. The intention is that the cost savings achieved will be used to ensure that the premium reduction of up to £5 million per annum (as detailed in the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's Trading Fund announcement of 1 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 22WS) can be sustained after April 2007.

ECGD's new Chief Executive is currently preparing a detailed plan for these cost reductions.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate what the average reduction in the Export Credits Guarantee Department premium rates will be in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* the subsequent five financial years; and if she will make a statement. [187098]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: As my right hon. Friend , the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry announced on 1 July, *Official Report*, column 22WS, ECGD will seek to reduce its premium rates to customers by up to £5 million per annum from April 2005. This is around 6 per cent. of its current premium income.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the terms of reference of the Export Credits Guarantee Department business plan are. [187099]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's announcement of 1 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 22WS, is the basis of the terms of reference for ECGD's business plan. The plan will explain how ECGD will meet the key aims and objectives for the ECGD Trading Fund set out in that statement.

Eco-Labelling

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her Department's policy is on the European eco-label. [185328]

Mr. Timms: The Government have played a full part in building up this scheme at EU level and we fully support the aims of this high-quality voluntary label, which helps to promote products with genuinely lower environmental impacts.

Defra administers the scheme in the UK and consults the DTI on matters such as the proposed technical criteria for the product groups covered by the scheme. Defra also consults other Departments and the Devolved Administrations, as well as business and other stakeholders. It has publicised the scheme in a number of ways, including currently an electronic newsletter for business about the use of environmental claims and labelling, and a free guide to consumers about reliable green labels.

Employment Protection

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to expand employment protection to those aged 65 years and over. [186960]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The great majority of employment protection legislation already applies to workers aged 65 and over. We are reviewing upper age limits on statutory redundancy payments and general unfair dismissal claims in the light of responses to the public consultation on age discrimination carried out last year.

English Partnerships

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what total tonnage of hazardous waste was *(a)* treated and *(b)* disposed of by English Partnerships projects in each of the last five years; what tonnage in each year was (i) consigned to landfill and (ii) decontaminated through onsite remediation; and what the projected tonnages are for 2004–05 in each case. [187161]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply.

English Partnerships does not itself record the tonnages of materials—hazardous or otherwise—treated or disposed of from projects where it has a core interest. To collate such information from records maintained by partner regional development agencies (who usually lead on coalfields projects) and contractors across the country could only be achieved at a disproportionate cost.

However, a sense of the scale of activity involved may be drawn from the following estimated numbers of projects contributing to EP's "area of land reclaimed" outputs in each of the last five years. The bulk of activity is through EP's well developed business and projects in the National Coalfields Programme and land reclamation works for sites in the Urban Regenaration Companies' and Millennium Communities' areas.

	No. of projects involving treatment of disposal of hazardous/contaminated material in any given year[1]	
Year	*National Coalfields Programme*	*Other projects*
1999–00	19	1
2000–01	25	0
2001–02	17	0
2002–03	15	1
2003–04	10	5

[1] For most sites remediation works carry over a number of years and will therefore appear more than once in the totals.

These totals are expected to increase in 2004–05 and beyond as EP's involvement in large scale brownfield site assembly increases in line with its business focus as set out in the Sustainable Communities Plan.

Enterprise Insight

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what targets have been set by her Department for the number of new start up small businesses which will be created with help from Enterprise Insight. [186341]

Nigel Griffiths: Enterprise Insight has a target of raising enterprise awareness amongst the 14–25 age group, measured by survey before and after Enterprise Week.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the *(a)* objectives and *(b)* organisational structure of Enterprise Insight. [186342]

Nigel Griffiths: Enterprise Insight is fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in the UK, by stimulating and encouraging enterprise attitudes, culture and values primarily in young people and those who influence them.

Enterprise Insight was created in 2000 as a company limited by guarantee. The three founder members are: the British chambers of commerce, the Institute of Directors and the CBI. The Federation of Small Businesses is also a member.

An advisory board provides guidance on Enterprise Insight's operations and campaign functions. Members of the advisory board include some of the UK's principal enterprise education and awareness delivery organisations.

Environmental Business Growth Action Programme

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many projects have been funded under the Environmental Business Growth Action Programme by regional development agencies in *(a)* England and *(b)* the West Midlands. [184146]

Jacqui Smith: The Environmental Business Growth Action Plan is administered by the Environment Agency and is restricted to supporting SMEs in the eligible West Midlands Objective 2 area. Through European Structural Funds the Action Plan has supported four projects with a total value of some £5.4 million:

Groundwork UK 'Bridge-It';

Technology and Innovation Centre 'Enviroinnovate';

EBG Action Plan Measure 1.4; and

EBG Action Plan Measure 1.11.

Equal Opportunities/Pay

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what mechanisms her Department has put in place to monitor *(a)* sex discrimination, *(b)* race discrimination, *(c)* disability discrimination and *(d)* unfair dismissal affecting her Department's staff; and if she will make a statement on her Department's performance in promoting equal opportunities within (i) her Department and (ii) the bodies for which it is responsible. [186697]

Ms Hewitt: As an equal opportunities employer, my Department regularly monitors all processes and policies to identify any potential sex, race or disability discrimination. Mechanisms include collection, publication and discussion of equality data; training for human resources staff; frequent consultation with staff equality groups; and involvement of the DTI Equality and Diversity team in HR policy and process development.

All departmental procedures that may lead to dismissal comply fully with the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance procedures. The procedures include the opportunity for an individual to appeal against their dismissal to a senior officer within the Department, to the civil service appeal board and at an employment tribunal. Dismissals, and the outcome of any related appeals, are monitored at a senior level.

Good progress is being made in promoting equal opportunities within the Department while our priorities for future action are laid out in our Diversity Strategic Plan.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information the Government have collated on the percentage of *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector organisations which have committed to carry out equal pay reviews. [186876]

Ms Hewitt: The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) commissioned Incomes Data Services to carry out research on equal pay reviews. Their findings were published in the EOC's report 'Monitoring Progress on equal pay reviews' in March 2004. The report concluded that 57 per cent. of public sector organisations had conducted, were in the process of conducting, or had plans to conduct an equal pay review by the end of 2004. This compares with 31 per cent. of private sector organisations.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information the Government have collated on the percentage of public sector organisations which have *(a)* committed to and *(b)* declined to carry out equal pay reviews. [186877]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) commissioned Incomes Data Services to carry out research on equal pay reviews. Their findings were published in the EOC's report 'Monitoring Progress on equal pay reviews' in March 2004. The report concluded that 57 per cent. of public sector organisations had conducted, were in the process of conducting, or had plans to conduct an equal pay review by the end of 2004. It was found that 32 per cent. had no plans to conduct an equal pay review. As pay reviews are voluntary, there is no mechanism for recording organisations who have 'declined' to carry out an equal pay review.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information the Government have collated on the percentage of *(a)* public sector and *(b)* private sector organisations with over 500 employees which have carried out equal pay reviews. [186878]

Ms Hewitt: The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) commissioned Incomes Data Services to carry out research on equal pay reviews. Their findings were published in the EOC's report 'Monitoring Progress on equal pay reviews' in March 2004. The report concluded that:

(a) 20 per cent. of public sector organisations with 500 employees and over had carried out an equal pay review; and

(b) 13 per cent. of private sector organisations with 500 employees and over had carried out an equal pay review.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information the Government have collated on the percentage of *(a)* public sector and *(b)* private sector organisations with less than 500 employees which have carried out equal pay reviews. [186879]

Ms Hewitt: The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) commissioned Incomes Data Services to carry out research on equal pay reviews. Their findings were published in the EOC's report 'Monitoring Progress on equal pay reviews' in March 2004. The following table summarises their findings in relation to the percentage of public sector and private sector organisations with less than 500 employees, which have carried out equal pay reviews.

	Number of employees	*Percentage completed equal pay reviews*
Private sector	25–99	15
	100–499	17
	25–499	16
Public sector	100–499	13
	25–499	15

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information the Government have collated on the percentage of *(a)* public sector organisations and *(b)* private sector organisations which have carried out equal pay reviews. [186880]

Ms Hewitt: The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) commissioned Incomes Data Services to carry out research on equal pay reviews. Their findings were published in the EOC's report 'Monitoring Progress on equal pay reviews' in March 2004. The report concluded that 18 per cent. of public sector organisations and 14 per cent. of private sector organisations had carried out an equal pay review.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's policy is on tackling occupational segregation in relation to the gender pay gap; and if she will make a statement. [186902]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Occupational segregation has been identified as one of the key causes of the gender pay gap. We know that women are concentrated in just two industrial sectors within low-paid occupations. Men in comparison are spread much more evenly across the labour market in typically higher-paid occupations. They also typically hold more senior positions within the labour market than women.

The Government aims to break down the barriers of occupational segregation as part of a raft of measures to tackle the pay gap. It aims to increase young women's awareness of the importance of education and career choices; address the problems women face getting access to appropriate training or re-skilling and inform employers about their potential in various male-dominated sectors such as information technology, engineering and science.

We have set up Sector Skills Councils and Learning and Skills Councils to address industry specific training needs and to broaden post-16 learning opportunities. These are addressing occupational segregation issues through various research and initiatives. E-skills Sector Skills Council for example launched initiatives in the South East such as 'Go 4 IT' workshops, Computer

Clubs for Girls and IT Beat, to challenge girls' perceptions of Information Technology (IT). These target schools and young teen publications after a 2001 MORI poll found girls formed negative images of IT between 11 to 13-years-old.

Other examples of government initiatives include: A new Science Engineering and Technology (SET) resource centre to be set up aimed at working with SET employers; raising the profile of women in SET; funding pilot schemes such as mentoring and networking; and providing help for SET women returners.

The government are also taking an active interest in the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), general formal investigation (GFI) into occupational segregation and the correlation with skills and pay gaps in the UK. The report is due in the autumn and will inform government policy in this area.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the Government has to change legislation on equal pay; and if she will make a statement. [186912]

Ms Hewitt: The Government is continuing to take action to improve the way equal pay legislation works in practice. From 1 October 2004, subject to Parliamentary approval, we shall be introducing changes to the way in which employment tribunals deal with the complex equal value cases. The aim is to streamline tribunal procedures and help to prevent very long running cases. The key features of the new procedures include the early exchange of information, the use of tribunals with specialist knowledge and new case management powers.

We also intend to amend the Equal Pay Act to remove the "no reasonable grounds" defence in section 2A(1)(b) of the Equal Pay Act 1970 and limit the circumstances in which a tribunal could refuse to consider an equal value claim. Subject to Parliamentary approval, the legislation is due to come into effect on 1 October 2004, at the same time as new tribunal procedures for equal value cases. These form part of a wider package of measures to speed up and simplify equal pay cases, such as amendments that were made to the Equal Pay Act in 2003 to introduce the Equal Pay Questionnaire, and make changes to time limits and payment of arrears.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's policy is on the promotion of equal pay. [186913]

Ms Hewitt: The Government continues to lead the way in undertaking equal pay reviews. We believe that the best way to achieve lasting change is through working alongside the business community, employers, trade unions and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) to drive forward action on equal pay and to promote voluntary pay reviews. We have toughened our equal pay review target to 45 per cent. of large organisations having carried out equal pay reviews by 2008.

The EOC published a revised Code of Practice on Equal Pay, which recommends equal pay reviews as the best way of ensuring that a pay system delivers equal pay. By helping employers to check the pay gap in their organisation and by encouraging good equal pay practice, the Code reinforces the Government's commitment to promoting equal pay and closing the gender pay gap.

In addition to pay discrimination, occupational segregation has been identified as another cause of the gender pay gap and the Government is putting in place a range of educational and employment measures to address this. The EOC is conducting an investigation into occupational segregation and we await the results of this with interest.

The Government has provided funding to the EOC to prepare a model for voluntary pay reviews and have also provided funding to trade unions to train representatives in equal pay issues in the workplace. Over 400 representatives have now been trained and as a result a number of unions and employers are now carrying out joint training on how to do an equal pay review.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's policy is on implementing the recommendations in the Equal Opportunities Commission's 2002 Equal Pay Task Force Report; and if she will make a statement. [186914]

Ms Hewitt: The Government welcomed the Equal Opportunities Commission's (EOC) Equal Pay Task Force report in 2001 as a springboard for action to tackle the gender pay gap. It remains our belief that the best way to achieve lasting change is through working alongside the business community, employers, trade unions and the EOC to drive forward action on equal pay and to promote voluntary pay reviews. This is being reinforced by a Government target of 45 per cent. of large organisations to undertake pay reviews by April 2008.

The Government have continued to lead the way in undertaking pay reviews. All Government departments and agencies, have now completed pay reviews and submitted action plans. Recent figures from the EOC show that 45 per cent. of large employers had completed an equal pay review, were in the process of completing one or were planning to do so in 2004. Among those that had carried out a pay review or were planning to do one, 41 per cent. said that government policy and publicity had influenced them.

We provided funding to the EOC to prepare a model for voluntary pay reviews, including a separate system for small businesses, and these were produced in 2002 and 2003.

The Government are also encouraging voluntary pay reviews by funding the TUC's Equal Pay Partnership Project. The project aims include: setting up a panel of recognised experts in the field of equal pay who have the confidence of both employers and unions; encouraging companies and organisations to undertake voluntary equal pay reviews; offering technical support to unions and employers; and building on the TUC Equal Pay project which has trained over 400 union equal pay representatives from government funding of £295,000.

We are working with the EOC to promote pay reviews in specific sectors. The Government also welcomes the EOC's investigation into modern apprenticeships and

the concentration of men and women in different professions. An interim report was published in May 2004.

As regards legal change, in April 2003 the Equal Pay Act was enhanced with changes to time limits and payment of pay arrears, and amendments so that the statutory questionnaire procedure for discrimination claims can apply to equal pay claims. The EOC produced a revised statutory Code of Practice on equal pay which was laid in Parliament and came into force in December 2003. From October 2004, subject to Parliamentary approval, we shall be introducing changes to the way in which Employment Tribunals deal with complex cases involving the question of whether jobs are of equal value. We also intend to amend the Equal Pay Act to remove the 'no reasonable grounds' defence in section 2A(1)(b) of the Equal Pay At 1970 to limit the circumstances in which a tribunal could refuse to consider an equal value claim.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many pay discrimination lawsuits have been filed each year since 1997, broken down by region. [186916]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table shows the number of pay discrimination applications that have been registered with the Employment Tribunals Service since 1997. A regional breakdown of pay discrimination cases could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

	Main jurisdiction
1997–98	1,845
1998–99	5,018
1999–2000	2,391
2000–01	6,586
2001–02	5,314
2002–03	3,077
2003–04	3,217

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many pay discrimination lawsuits on the grounds of gender discrimination have been filed in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [186917]

Ms Hewitt: The following table shows the number of equal pay applications that have been registered with the Employment Tribunals Service since 1997. A regional breakdown of equal pay cases could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

	Main jurisdiction
1997–98	1,845
1998–99	5,018
1999–2000	2,391
2000–01	6,586
2001–02	5,314
2002–03	3,077
2003–04	3,217

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate the Government have made of the average length of time taken to process pay discrimination lawsuits in the last period for which figures are available. [186918]

Ms Hewitt: The Employment Tribunals Service (ETS) does not report on the average length of time taken to process applications made to the Service. However, ETS has a target of 85 per cent. for cases to come to a first hearing within 26 weeks of an application being received. In 2003–04 75 per cent. of pay discrimination cases which went before a Tribunal (i.e. were not settled or withdrawn) achieved this target.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate the Government has made of the cost to businesses of pay discrimination lawsuits in each year since 1997. [186919]

Jacqui Smith: The DTI has not made an estimate of the cost to business of equal pay claims to employment tribunal, which comprise about 3 per cent. of all Tribunal cases.

The Department and the Employment Tribunal Service carried out a sample survey of employment tribunal claims—the Survey of Employment Tribunal Applications 2003. But there were not enough equal pay claims in the sample to allow a reliable estimate of the costs to business of equal pay claims in the period, or to extrapolate to other years.

The survey of employment tribunal applications contains a sample of all discrimination cases in 2002–03—race, sex, disability and equal pay claims—which would be large enough to allow an estimate of the average cost to business of such discrimination claims. This average mean cost has been calculated as £5,813. However, this estimate would not be representative of the cost to business of equal pay claims, since equal pay claims tend to be of longer duration than the average discrimination claim. Nor, on the other hand, would it include the lower costs of the many cases that are settled, for example there were 578 ACAS conciliated settlements of equal pay cases in 2003–04.

European Space Agency

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much in pounds sterling she calculates has been under-returned to the UK over the last four years under the funding agreement with the European Space Agency. [186752]

Ms Hewitt: The European Space Agency (ESA) began a new set of return statistics on 1 January 2000. The cumulative UK under-return for the four years 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2003 was €41.2 million (£29 million). At 31 December 1999 when the earlier set of ESA return statistics were terminated, UK over-return stood at €94.0 million (£66 million). The British National Space Centre is working closely with ESA officials to ensure that the return requirements for the UK as set out in the ESA Convention are fully met.

Flexible Working

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the percentage of employees who work some form of flexible working arrangement in each of the last three years; and if she will make a statement. [186666]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Labour Force Survey, conducted by the Office for National Statistics, asks respondents about their agreed work arrangement. The number of employees who reported that they work some form of flexible working (defined as part-time, flexitime, annualised hours, term time working, job sharing, compressed working week, zero hours contract) was 41.0 per cent. in 2001, 41.5 per cent. in 2002 and 42.0 per cent. in 2003. If the definition of flexible working is narrowed to exclude part-time working, the respective figures are 21.6 per cent. in 2001, 22.0 per cent. in 2002 and 22.4 per cent. in 2003. Figures for 2004 will be available in early 2005.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the demand for flexible working patterns; and if she will make a statement. [186667]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI has collected evidence on the demand for flexible working patterns from a number of sources. The first DTI Flexible Working Employee Survey was carried out between September 2003 and February 2004. The survey indicated that 13 per cent. of all employees had requested a flexible working pattern since April 2003. The percentage of employees with children aged under six years who requested a flexible working pattern (and for whom their employer is legally obliged to consider the request) was higher, at 24 per cent. Of all employees who requested flexible working arrangements, 38 per cent. requested to change to a part-time working arrangement; 25 per cent. requested flexi-time; 13 per cent. requested reduced hours for a limited time; 10 per cent. requested to work from home on a regular basis and 8 per cent. requested a compressed working week.

The second Work-Life Balance Study—employees' survey, carried out during January and February 2003, asked employees whether they worked particular flexible working patterns. If they did not (or had not in the past year), they were then asked whether they would like to. Table 1 shows the percentages of these employees who said they would like to take up particular flexible working practices.

Table 1: Demand for specific flexible working practices

Flexible working practice	*Percentage who would like to take up the flexible working practice*
Work part time	22
Work only during school term time[1]	33
Job-share	17
Work flexitime	49
Work a compressed working week	34
Work annualised hours	25
Work reduced hours for a limited period	36
Work from home on a regular basis	29

[1] In addition, representative of employees with dependent children aged under 19 (base: 747 employees).

Note:

All percentages are representative of employees who have not used the particular flexible working practice in past year with current employer (base: >1,463 employees).

Source:

Palmer, T. (2004) Results of the first Flexible Working Employee Survey. Employment Relations Occasional Papers, DTI.

Both the results of the first Flexible Working Employee Survey and the Work Life Balance study reports, which provide greater analysis, are available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/inform.htm under 'EMAR Publications'. Both surveys are to be repeated, with the second Flexible Working Employee Survey expected to be available in 2005; the third Work-Life Balance study is due to be conducted in early 2006.

Fraud

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has commissioned on fraud in large businesses; and what measures she has taken to prevent such fraud in the UK. [186663]

Jacqui Smith: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not commissioned any research into fraud in large businesses. But the Department has engaged in a considerable range of activity post Enron as the Secretary of State announced to the House on 29 January 2003 in a speech on strengthening corporate governance.

A number of those measures are now taken forward in the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Enterprise) Bill which is currently before Parliament. The Bill amends the current regime for investigating companies. It contains provisions giving investigators a new power to get relevant information from anyone and strengthening their document-gathering powers, while retaining the existing protection for legally privileged material and banking confidentiality. There is also a provision giving investigators the power to require entry to, and remain on, a company's business premises without obtaining a warrant. This will make it easier to require documents and other information and to see the business in operation.

The Bill will also increase the independence of the regulation of the audit profession and give the independent regulator, the Financial Reporting Council, the powers and resources it needs to do its job more effectively. Further the Bill will enable company auditors to carry out their duties more effectively by entitling the auditor to require information and explanations from a wider group of people than at present, in particular from employees.

The Financial Reporting Review Panel will be given a power to require companies to provide it with the information it needs to carry out its investigations. This body currently reviews the annual accounts and reports of public and large private UK companies. The Bill will allow the Government to extend this to reviewing the interim reports of listed companies. The FRRP will also take a more proactive approach to enforcement.

I would also like to draw the hon. Member's attention to the proposal by the Home Office to establish the Serious Organised Crime Agency. This body will be part of a comprehensive strategy to target organised criminals. It will exploit hi-tech 21st century technology to uncover the new wave of crime bosses whose lucrative illegal enterprises range from drug trafficking and people smuggling through to fraud and money laundering.

The Government has recently completed a consultation on legislation to reform the law of fraud. The Government proposals for change are based mainly on the Law Commission Report on Fraud published in 2002. The main proposal is for the general offence of fraud which can be committed in three different ways: by false representation, by wrongfully failing to disclose information, or by abuse of office. In each case the behaviour must be dishonest, and must aim at securing a gain for the defendant or a loss for another.

Additionally the Government sought the views of business and other interested parties on the best means of creating and maintaining effective partnerships to reduce opportunities for crime against business and to enhance the contribution that business could make to crime reduction in England and Wales.

Gershon Review

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the estimated savings are from the efficient devolution of business support products from the Central Department to the regional development agencies as part of Sir Peter Gershon's efficiency review into public services. [185110]

Jacqui Smith: As stated in Peter Gershon's report on his independent review of public sector efficiency "Releasing Resources to the Front Line", the Regional Development Agencies have agreed to deliver 2.5 per cent. efficiencies per year in the Spending Review period, at least half of which will be cash-releasing back into the Single Programme budget, which brings together allocations from all the Departments that fund them. DTI as the lead sponsor Department, will work with the Regional Development Agencies to identify further efficiencies where possible. The Regional Development Agencies will be expected to identify efficiencies in delivering on the additional responsibilities that have been devolved to them. These additional responsibilities include the delivery of regional and local Business Link services and the grant for Research and Development. The Regional Development Agencies will report to my Department on how these savings are to be achieved.

Inward Investment

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment the East Midlands has received from *(a)* Germany, *(b)* Sweden, *(c)* France, *(d)* USA, *(e)* Canada, *(f)* Singapore, *(g)* India, *(h)* Australia and *(i)* Belgium in each year since 1997. [187222]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from Germany, Sweden, France, USA, Canada, Singapore, India, Australia and Belgium to invest in the East Midlands region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our Annual Reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year.

These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Germany	1	0	4	2	1	4	3
Sweden	1	0	0	1	3	0	0
France	0	0	5	0	0	3	2
USA	9	9	8	8	11	11	14
Canada	0	0	2	0	1	2	0
Singapore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
India	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Australia	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Belgium	0	1	1	0	0	0	1

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment the region of Yorkshire and the Humber received from *(a)* Japan and *(b)* China in each year since 1997. [187223]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from Japan and China to invest in the Yorkshire and Humberside region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our Annual Reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year.

These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Japan	0	5	1	1	3	2	2
China	3	1	1	0	2	0	0

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment the West Midlands has received from *(a)* France, *(b)* Germany, *(c)* Sweden, *(d)* Belgium, *(e)* USA, *(f)* Canada, *(g)* Japan, *(h)* Singapore, *(i)* India and *(j)* Australia in each year since 1997. [187224]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from France, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, USA, Canada, Japan, Singapore, India and Australia to invest in the West Midlands region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our annual reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year.

These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
France	7	5	8	14	8	4	7
Germany	11	12	13	17	6	4	9
Sweden	2	0	2	4	1	0	0
Belgium	1	1	0	3	3	0	0
USA	33	33	48	31	42	18	17
Canada	5	5	6	6	7	8	5
Japan	9	6	11	4	7	2	11
Singapore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
India	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Australia	0	1	1	2	3	4	1

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment the South West of England received from *(a)* Japan and *(b)* USA in each year since 1997. [187225]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from Japan and USA to invest in the South West region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our annual reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year. These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	Japan	*USA*
1997–98	0	9
1998–99	0	8
1999–2000	10	13
2000–01	5	20
2001–02	6	14
2002–03	7	8
2003–04	4	19

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment the South East of England received from *(a)* Belgium, *(b)* USA, *(c)* Germany, *(d)* China, *(e)* South Korea, *(f)* Japan and *(g)* Australia in each year since 1997. [187226]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from Belgium, USA, Germany, China, South Korea, Japan and Australia to invest in the South East region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our annual reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year.

These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Belgium	0	3	0	0	0	0	1
USA	33	40	64	107	69	67	62
Germany	5	3	7	13	12	3	4
China	0	0	0	3	1	1	1
S. Korea	0	0	1	1	1	3	5
Japan	5	6	4	10	3	4	2
Australia	0	2	1	1	2	1	5

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment the North East of England received from *(a)* China, *(b)* Japan, *(c)* South Korea, *(d)* Taiwan, *(e)* Australia, *(f)* the USA and *(g)* Belgium in each year since 1997. [187227]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia, USA and Belgium to invest in the North East region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our annual reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year.

These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
China	0	0	0	9	9	13	11
Japan	7	5	6	4	6	5	7
S. Korea	0	0	0	1	2	0	1
Taiwan	4	2	2	0	2	1	1
Australia	0	1	0	0	3	1	1
USA	21	13	18	9	13	13	10
Belgium	0	1	0	0	3	0	0

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment the North West of England received from *(a)* Japan, *(b)* USA and *(c)* Belgium in each year since 1997. [187279]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from Japan, USA and Belgium to invest in the North West region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our annual reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year.

These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	Japan	*USA*	*Belgium*
1997–98	5	39	2
1998–99	4	37	3
1999–2000	5	42	2
2000–01	2	16	3
2001–02	1	14	0
2002–03	6	27	2
2003–04	5	21	1

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment London received from Belgium in each year since 1997. [187280]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from Belgium to invest in the London region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our Annual Reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year.

These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	Belgium
1997–98	0
1998–99	1
1999–2000	3
2000–01	1
2001–02	1
2002–03	0
2003–04	0

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much inward investment the East of England received from *(a)* USA, *(b)* Belgium and *(c)* China in each year since 1997. [187281]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 1997 UK Trade and Investment recorded the following number of inward investment projects from USA, Belgium and China to invest in the eastern region. Figures for 1997–98 to 2002–03 have been updated since the publication of our Annual Reports that have been laid in the Libraries of the House in each financial year. These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

	USA	*Belgium*	*China*
1997–98	23	0	0
1998–99	25	1	0
1999–2000	17	0	0

	USA	Belgium	China
2000-01	21	1	0
2001-02	28	0	0
2002-03	11	1	0
2003-04	25	3	1

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how the Government measures inward investment. [187282]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government measure Inward Investment in two ways.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) statistics are collected and published by Office of National Statistics (ONS). FDI is a financial measure collected primarily to measure balance of payments, and internationally comparable statistics are published by the statistical offices of other countries and by international bodies.

Information on the number of projects and jobs created by region of investment and country of origin are recorded by UKTI based on information provided by companies at the time of the decision to invest in the UK. There is no requirement to notify UKTI, so only those projects where UKTI and its regional partners were involved, or which have come to their notice will be recorded.

Information on inward investment is also available from a range of commercial sources.

Iraq

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate her Department has made of the total value to date of the contracts awarded to British businesses in Iraq since the start of the occupation. [186335]

Ms Hewitt: British companies are not obliged to give details of contracts won and there is no central organisation that publishes such information. However, It is estimated that to date, British companies are involved in contracts for reconstruction and other work in Iraq to the value of US $2.6 billion.

Low Pay Commission

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people are employed by the Low Pay Commission. [187109]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Low Pay Commission has nine Commissioners, including the Chairman.

The Commission is supported by a Secretariat which currently has 10 members of staff plus one vacancy.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual salaries are of each of the commissioners on the Low Pay Commission. [187114]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Commissioners on the Low Pay Commission do not receive an annual salary. Remuneration is paid on the basis of a daily attendance fee, which is set at £481.06 for the chair and £213.80 for other members of the commission. In addition appropriate expenses are reimbursed.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total annual resource budget for the Low Pay Commission has been since its inception. [187115]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Low Pay Commission (LPC) was established as a result of the National Minimum Wage Act 1998. 1998/99 was the first financial year that the LPC were fully operational. The table below sets out the financial information for the LPC since that date:

Financial Year	Expenditure (£000)
1998-99	627,000
1999-2000	578,737
2000-01	605,751
2001-02	531,710
2002-03	771,032
2003-04	658,631

The above figures are total costs and include salaries, Commissioners fees, research and Travel and Subsistence.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total wage budget is for the Low Pay Commission. [187144]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The total wage bill for the Low Pay Commission secretariat in 2003/04 was £401,725.

Mandatory Retirement Ages

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to abolish mandatory retirement ages. [186792]

Jacqui Smith: The Government are committed to prohibiting age discrimination at work and encouraging more flexibility around retirement. In some circumstances, different treatment on grounds of age can be justifiable, and last year's Age Matters consultation set out some of the issues. We are in the process of considering the best way of tackling retirement ages in the light of the responses to the consultation. Legislation will come into force on 1 October 2006.

Manufacturing Advisory Service

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which firms have been helped by the Manufacturing Advisory Service in the *(a)* Northern Region, *(b)* Tees Valley area and *(c)* Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland constituency; and which of those firms were given advice on added value. [184701]

Jacqui Smith: The regional centre of the Manufacturing Advisory Service in the North East (MAS-NE) dealt with 1,323 inquiries from manufacturing companies in the period June 2002 to June 2004. Of these, 1,257 inquiries came from companies based in the North East region, 304 were from companies based in the Tees Valley, and seven were from companies in the Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland constituency. 146 companies who contacted MAS-NE in this period have gone on to receive in-depth help. The direct impact of this help on company productivity is measured by the "added value". The total added value generated as a result of MAS-NE interventions stood at just over £705, 000 at March 2004.

The names of all companies that have received in-depth assistance from MAS are given in the MAS 2004 Annual Report, which can be found at: www.dti.gov.uk

National Institute for Medical Research

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions have taken place with *(a)* University College London and *(b)* King's College London concerning the future site of the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR); what consideration was given by the Medical Research Council's Task Force on the NIMR to locating it at other institutions (i) in London and (ii) outside London; and if she will make a statement. [185136]

Ms Hewitt: The Task Force set up by the Medical Research Council (MRC) to consider the future of the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) has, following national and international consultation, published its vision for the institute: a multidisciplinary biomedical research facility focused on basic and translational research. The Task Force strongly believes that partnership and co-location with a leading university and hospital would strengthen NIMR to deliver its renewed vision and will enhance:

the multidisciplinary nature of NIMR's work, providing access to other biologists, physical scientists, engineers and mathematicians; and

opportunities to collaborate more closely with clinicians and strengthen the focus on translational research.

The Task Force wishes to keep the critical mass of NIMR's existing excellent science as a foundation for the institute's future scientific portfolio and invited four institutions—Imperial College, King's College London, Queen Mary and University College London to submit partnership proposals. It also asked NIMR management to submit a proposal. All attended a meeting of the Task Force on 21 June for discussion.

The Task Force has recommended that the renewed institute should be co-located with either King's College London or University College London and was expected to produce a full report to the MRC Council meeting on 29 July 2004.

National Minimum Wage

Tony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Great Yarmouth have benefited from the national minimum wage. [186700]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Great Yarmouth. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 90,000 people in the eastern region stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999. Between 80,000 and 90,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

NCP (Communications)

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list *(a)* letters, *(b)* e-mails, *(c)* telephone calls and *(d)* meetings between her Department's officials, including the National Contact Point (NCP), and representatives of companies whose dossiers were forwarded to the NCP for investigation or monitoring in the last 12 months. [186181]

Mr. Timms: The information requested forms part of the dialogue process between the companies and the NCP. This process is confidential under Exemption 13—Third Party Commercial Confidences, and Exemption 14—Information Given in Confidence of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. The NCP will make a public statement at the end of the dialogue.

A statement has already been issued on the allegations against DeBeers (www.dti.gov.uk/ewt/debeers.doc). A statement regarding the allegations against Avient will follow shortly.

Newspaper Market

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will refer the wholesale newspaper market to the Office of Fair Trading for investigation. [186258]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Any such investigation into the wholesale newspaper market would be a matter for the Office of Fair Trading (OFT).

Nuclear Power

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the proportions of expenditure by the planned nuclear decommissioning authority that will be spent on *(a)* discharging nuclear liabilities, *(b)* funding nuclear spent fuel reprocessing and *(c)* power generation. [184397]

Mr. Timms: The 2004 Spending Review announced on 12 July provided funding, subject to the successful adoption of the then Energy Bill (now the Energy Act), for the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) of approximately £2 billion per year including income from trading.

The NDA will set out its spending priorities for 2005–06 in its first annual plan. The draft plan will be subject to public consultation during this autumn. The Secretary of State will approve the plan early next year.

In autumn 2005, the NDA will publish its strategy for the first five years of its operation. This too will provide further information on spending priorities.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* total costs to date and *(b)* projected future costs to public funds are of decommissioning nuclear power stations; and if she will make a statement. [184578]

Mr. Timms: The Government's July 2002 White Paper, "Managing the Nuclear Legacy: A strategy for action", estimated the undiscounted cost of the Magnox decommissioning liabilities at £12 billion and the total cost of treating civil public sector nuclear liabilities at £48 billion. From April 2005, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) will take responsibility for the Magnox power stations, all of which are scheduled to close by 2010.

The cost of decommissioning British Energy's nuclear power stations, which are all operational, is covered in its annual report and accounts. Under British Energy's proposed restructuring plan, the company will continue to contribute to a Nuclear Liabilities Fund (NLF) that will meet British Energy's decommissioning liabilities. To ensure safety and environmental protection, the Government will underwrite the NLF to the extent that the company's contributions are insufficient. The treatment of liabilities by British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. (BNFL), including Magnox, is also discussed in BNFL's accounts.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made by her office of civil nuclear security in respect of providing guidance to *(a)* nuclear operators, *(b)* regulators, *(c)* other non-departmental public bodies and *(d)* relevant Government Departments on the release of sensitive nuclear information. [187306]

Mr. Timms: Such guidance has been issued by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS) and is available on the DTI website.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what additional protection measures have been taken at *(a)* Sellafield, *(b)* other nuclear sites operated by BNFL and *(c)* nuclear installations operated by the UK Atomic Energy Authority since 11 September 2001. [187307]

Mr. Timms: The UK's civil nuclear sites apply stringent security measures regulated by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS), the security regulator. The security regulator works closely with the Health and Safety Executive, the safety regulator, which provides advice on the safety implications of events, including external hazards such as plane crashes, at nuclear installations. Security at nuclear sites is kept under regular review in the light of the prevailing threat and has been significantly enhanced since the terrorist attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001. Under Exemption 1—information whose disclosure would harm national security—of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, it is not Government policy to disclose details of these measures which could potentially be of use to terrorists.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the report published by the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology on 22 July on assessing the risk of terrorist attacks on nuclear facilities. [187304]

Mr. Timms: The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology report is an excellent overview of the publicly-available information in this field. My Department and the civil nuclear industry were among the many who contributed in providing the public domain information required for the report.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the additional requirements for personnel vetting that will arise from the contractorisation of *(a)* nuclear waste management and *(b)* nuclear installation decommissioning under the guidance of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. [187284]

Mr. Timms: Security vetting for the civil nuclear industry is conducted by the Office for Civil Security (OCNS). We believe that the initial impact of the formation of the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency (NDA) on vetting requirements will be within existing resources. However, as the NDA moves toward open bidding for contracts, OCNS will monitor the situation closely in order to ensure that the high standards of vetting within the civil nuclear industry are maintained.

PFI/PPP

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many contracts her Department had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186688]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There have been no contracts for advisory work on PPP or PFI contracts let by the Department with any of the companies mentioned since 2001–02.

Pharmaceutical Services

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry by what date she has been advised she will receive the Office of Fair Trading report on pharmaceutical services; and if she will make a statement. [186321]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Industry received the Office of Fair Trading report on pharmaceutical services on 17 January 2003.

I made a statement to the House of Commons setting out the Government's response to the OFT report on 17 July 2003.

My colleague, the Minister of State at the Department of Health responsible for Pharmacies, announced on 18 August the implementation of the Government's response to the OFT report.

Post Offices (Disabled Access)

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices in Northampton, South have disabled access. [186584]

Mr. Timms: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Postal Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what change there has been in the number of delays in the postal service in *(a)* urban and *(b)* rural areas since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [187113]

Mr. Timms: The issue of the postal service is an operational matter for Royal Mail Group plc and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Regional Development Agencies

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which regional development agencies have *(a)* an office and *(b)* representatives outside the UK. [183537]

Jacqui Smith: The answer to the question updates answers previously given to the hon. Member for Essex north on 26 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 73–76W and 5 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 999–1000W.

I have been advised of the following answers by England's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs).

Advantage West Midlands

Advantage West Midlands has offices in France, Germany, Sweden and Belgium.

In north America, Advantage West Midlands shares representation with their partner agency, EMDA, under the British Midlands' brand. Together they have a total of five offices and seven full-time staff based in Washington, Boston, Chicago, San Jose and Toronto; they also employ the services of a telemarketing agency in north America. The British Midlands is also represented on a full-time basis in Japan with two staff. In south east Asia, India and Australia, the British Midlands has part-time representation with offices in Singapore, Mumbai and Sydney and a total of six part-time agents.

The cost incurred by AWM in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

	£
Australia	63,259
Belgium	107,625
Canada	29,863
France	71,082
Germany	102,784
India	49,817
Japan	101,780
Singapore	44,386
Sweden	85,198
USA	468,574
Total	1,124,367

East of England Development Agency

The East of England Developments Agency (BED A) has an inward investment office in San Jose (Silicon Valley) a joint project between EEDA and Invest East of England. There are no representatives as the office is co-ordinated by the vice-president for business development at Invest East of England.

EEDA also subscribes to the East of England partnership office in Brussels and the Essex and East of England International Trade office in Jiangsu Province China (but does not have offices or representatives).

The cost incurred by EEDA in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

	£
Belgium	56,500
China	63,000
USA	250,000
Total	369,500

East Midlands Development Agency

The East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) is represented in Europe by part-time agents in Germany (Munich-two staff) and Scandinavia (Malmo-one person);

EMDA also employs a telemarketing agency in France.

In north America, EMDA shares representation with their partner agency, Advantage West Midlands, under the British Midlands' brand. Together they have a total of five offices and seven full-time staff based in Washington, Boston, Chicago, San Jose and Toronto; they also employ the services of a telemarketing agency in north America. The British Midlands is also represented on a full-time basis in Japan with two staff. In south east Asia, India and Australia, the British Midlands has part-time representation with offices in Singapore, Mumbai and Sydney and a total of six agents.

EMDA is also a partner in the East Midlands European Office (EMEO), based in Brussels. The partnership also includes the region's strategic local authorities, the Regional Assembly and the East Midlands Regional Local Government Association. In addition, EMDA line manages EMEO on behalf of the regional partnership.

The cost incurred by EMDA in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

	£
Australia	60,000
Belgium	50,000
France	20,000
Germany	70,000
India	50,000
Japan	90,000
North America	402,000
Scandinavia	60,000
Singapore	75,000
Total	877,000

London Development Agency

The London Development Agency is a partner in the London European Office, a staffed Greater London Authority partnership office in Brussels. The cost incurred in maintaining this office in 2003–04 was £50,000.

North West Development Agency

The North West Development Agency (NWDA) has an office with two members of staff (one full-time and one part-time) in Japan (in conjunction with Yorkshire Forward).

As part of a north of England collaboration (a joint venture with One NorthEast and Yorkshire Forward) there are offices in Australia (Sydney) and north America: Chicago (five people), Boston (two people), Atlanta (one person) and Los Angeles: (one person full-time and one person part-time).

The NWDA with the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA) jointly fund an office and one member of staff in Brussels.

The cost incurred by NWDA in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

	£
Australia	55,000
Belgium	103,000
Japan	135,000
USA	392,000
Total	685,000

One NorthEast

One NorthEast has offices in China (Shanghai), Japan (Tokyo) and Korea (Seoul). Until the end of 2003–04 it also operated an office in Taiwan.

As part of a north of England collaboration (a joint venture with North West Development Agency and Yorkshire Forward) there are offices and representatives in Australia (Sydney) and north America (Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Los Angeles).

The cost incurred by ONE in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

	£
Australia	50,000
China	66,525
Japan	185,086
Korea	73,208
North America	396,000
Taiwan	51,855
Total	822,673

South East England Development Agency

The South East of England Development Agency (SEED A) shares an officer post with the Regional Assembly operating from South East England House in Brussels, co-located and working with other partners from around the Region. SEEDA is also represented in Washington DC by Odell Simms and Associates and has a representative in each of the following cities: Berlin, San Diego, Boston, Shanghai, Seoul, Tokyo,Osaka and Sydney, the latter post being part-time.

The cost incurred by SEEDA in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

	£
Australia	56,006
Belgium	131,658
China	26,331
Germany	101,683
Japan	127,655
Korea	33,699
USA	558,735
Total	1,035,766

South West of England Regional Development Agency

The South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) has an office in Japan. There are two representatives in north America—one in Boston and one in Sonoma, California.

It also has just opened an office in Guangdong province in southern China and taken on a new representative in Melbourne, Australia. No costs were incurred for these in 2003–04.

The cost incurred by SWRDA in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

	£
Japan	394,364
USA	468,514
Total	862,878

Yorkshire Forward

Yorkshire Forward has an office and representatives in China and in Japan (the latter joint with the North West Development Agency).

As part of a north of England collaboration (a joint venture with North West Development Agency and OneNorth East) there are offices and representatives in Australia (Sydney) and north America (Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Los Angeles). Yorkshire Forward also provide a contribution of £60,000 towards the running costs of the Yorkshire and Humber European Office, managed by the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly.

The cost incurred by Yorkshire Forward in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

	£
Australia	58,000
Belgium	60,000
China	28,000
Japan	201,000
USA	412,000
Total	759,000

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what offices outside the United Kingdom are maintained by regional development agencies; and what the cost of maintaining each one was in the last financial year for which figures are available. [184984]

Jacqui Smith: The answer to the question updates answers previously given to the hon Member for Essex North on 26 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 73–76W and 5 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 999–1000W.

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The cost incurred by AWM in maintaining these offices in 2003–04 was:

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Belgium	107,625
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	£000
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	£000
Australia	58,000
Belgium	60,000
China	28,000
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USA	412,000
Total	759,000

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether regional development agencies are required to meet performance indicators for central Government. [185772]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the Member to my answer given on 22 July, *Official Report*, columns 514–515W.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding from her Department in 2004–05 is devoted by regional development agencies specifically towards promoting the development of minority ethnic businesses. [186350]

Jacqui Smith: Through the framework provided by their Regional Economic Strategies (RES), RDAs work with a range of local partners, to contribute to the development of ethnic minority businesses. Examples of this are in the document "RDA Activities supporting Ethnic Minority Businesses" which provides a list of RDA supported activities that stimulate ethnic business growth. I have placed this document in the House of Commons Library. Unfortunately, information about costs cannot be easily disaggregated and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The East Midlands Development Agency (emda) have a lead role to co-ordinate policy on ethnic minority businesses on behalf of all the RDAs. They have jointly established with De Montfort University the Centre for Research into Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (www.crème-dmu.org.uk). As part of their work emda are also organising the eighth Ethnic Business Conference in Leicester in September 2004.

Regional Supply Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* role of the regional supply offices; and what their budget was in the most recent year for which figures are available. [184985]

Jacqui Smith: Regional Supply Offices (RSOs) were designed to provide a means by which small businesses could gain access to the supply chain business of large firms. The market failure was that large firms were often unaware of smaller, potential suppliers in their regions, and for their part small businesses were unable to talk to chief buyers etc because they lacked the status to do so. The role of the RSO Advisers was to go out and learn of the large suppliers' supply chain requirements, and then offer to locate (small business) suppliers for them. In parallel, the RSO Advisers would help the small

suppliers to develop their services to meet the customer requirements. Practical examples of these activities included seminars and workshop to highlight the benefits companies could gain from understanding supply chain development programmes, briefing on special topics such as manufacturing issues, subsidised stand space for companies at major trade shows and exhibitions as well as the organisation of business to business events. In April 2001, responsibility for the RSOs was transferred to the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in the English regions.

The RDAs integrated their RSOs but services of a similar nature continue to be provided in all regions as part of the RDAs' and Partners' range of business support. However, as supply chain support has been mainstreamed in this way, information about costs cannot be easily disaggregated and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Rural Postal Services

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has carried out into the possible effects on small businesses in rural areas of further plans for restrictions to the postal services; and if she will make a statement. [186532]

Mr. Timms: The provision of postal services to small businesses in rural areas is an operational matter for the Royal Mail. I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member .

Sellafield Site Remediation Strategy

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made by BNFL towards completing a full structural analysis of the B30 facility at Sellafield. [186118]

Mr. Timms: Following discussion with HSE's Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, BNFL has carried out a structural analysis of the B30 facility. HSE expects to receive the main findings of the report in September, after which further plans will be developed.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress BNFL has made in removing sludges from B30 Sellafield in order to comply with the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate's specification 325 issued in 2000; and what assessment has been made of whether the deadline of removing and treating 90 per cent. of the sludges will be met by August 2010. [186119]

Mr. Timms: BNFL are developing plans to meet the specification requirement of 90 per cent. of sludge removal by August 2010. Sludge removal requires modification to the plant at B30 and the building of a new structure to house and treat the sludge. Some preliminary refurbishment work has started. This and other projects form the basis for carrying out sludge removal and are being incorporated into both the short and long term plans for the site. HSE's Nuclear Installations Inspectorate will continue to monitor these plans so that the August 2010 date will be met.

Turner and Newall

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the implications of Chapter 11 bankruptcy of Turner and Newall for compensation for victims of asbestos-related injuries in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [R] [186491]

Jacqui Smith: The treatment of claims of US asbestos related creditors in the Federal Mogul Chapter 11 proceedings is a matter for the parties in interest in those proceedings to determine, under the supervision of the bankruptcy court. In the UK asbestos related claims against the Turner and Newall companies which are in administration are matters for the administrators of those companies. Where required the administrators can seek the direction of the court as to the conduct of the administration.

UN Sales Convention

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects to be in the position to introduce legislation implementing the UN Sales Convention; and if she will make a statement. [186750]

Ms Hewitt: Any legislation needed to implement the 1980 UN Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods will be introduced when Parliamentary time permits. We are at a comparatively early stage on the road towards possible legislation but we are proposing to issue a consultation document, in the course of the next few months, to examine the available options.

West Midlands Minority Ethnic Business Forum

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the current levels of funding from her Department to the West Midlands Minority Ethnic Business Forum. [186348]

Jacqui Smith: The West Midlands Minority Ethnic Business Forum is not directly funded by the DTI but received support from Advantage West Midlands. This year AWM expects to spend £300,000 on the West Midlands Minority Ethnic Business Forum of which approximately £180,000 has been spent to-date.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with her European counterparts regarding proposals to abolish the individual opt-out from the 48-hour limit set by the Working Time Directive; and if she will make a statement. [186337]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I am not aware of any European proposals to abolish the individual opt out. Both my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I have had a number of key meetings with the Commission and member states to ensure that the UK's position is well represented with regards to the opt out.

We are committed to retaining the opt out and securing a solution to both the opt out and SiMAP/ Jaeger which will work for all member states.

We are currently awaiting publication of the Commission's proposals on the review of the Working Time Directive.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Access Orders

24. **Mr. Andrew Turner:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on enforcement of access orders. [187662]

Mr. Lammy: The Government published a consultation paper on 21 July 2004. It proposes a variety of new powers for courts, to help more effective enforcement of contact orders.

House of Lords Reform

25. **Jim Knight:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what measures the Government are considering to reform the second Chamber. [187663]

Mr. Leslie: The Government are determined to proceed with further reform of the House of Lords. Proposals will be developed in the context of the Labour Party manifesto.

30. **Mr. Gordon Prentice:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Lord Chancellor plans to bring forward proposals to change the powers of the House of Lords to delay legislation. [187669]

Mr. Leslie: Any proposals for substantial reform of the House of Lords will have to consider the role, powers and procedures of the second chamber and its relationship with the House of Commons. The Labour Party will return to House of Lords reform in its manifesto.

Administration of Justice

26. **Mr. Clappison:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress is being made with his plans for the Lord Chancellor and a supreme court in the administration of justice. [187664]

Mr. Leslie: The Constitutional Reform Bill will reform the office of the Lord Chancellor, establish a new Supreme Court and set up a new Judicial Appointments Commission. The Bill was introduced into the House of Lords on 24 February and has received detailed scrutiny from a Lords Select Committee. The Bill is now receiving the attention of the other place.

Essex Magistrates Court

27. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on progress with the allocation of resources to the private finance initiative for Essex magistrates courts. [187665]

Mr. Leslie: Revised Investment Plans following the summer Spending Review will be concluded in November, but under present plans the new courthouse scheme for Colchester and Essex remains on course for construction over the next few years.

Postal Ballots

28. **David Taylor:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment has been made of the all-postal vote electoral pilots in the east midlands up to and on 10 June. [187666]

Mr. Leslie: The Electoral Commission's report on the June all-postal voting pilots was published on 27 August, which included a specific review of the experience in the East Midlands. The Government are currently considering these reports.

Court Efficiency

29. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on progress with improving the efficiency of the courts. [187667]

Mr. Leslie: Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS) will be established in April 2005 and will bring together the current Court Service and the 42 Magistrates Courts Committees in a single organisation. This will enable us to make the delivery of justice across the criminal, civil and family jurisdictions more efficient on a national scale and geared more closely to the needs of the local community and court users.

Asbestos (Compensation)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will propose changes to the law on compensation for asbestos injury victims bringing claims against uninsured defendants to enable them to receive interim payments; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186484]

Mr. Leslie: Rule 25.7(2) of the Civil Procedure Rules currently prevents a court from making an interim payment order against an uninsured defendant. At the request of the Civil Procedure Rule Committee, the Government are seeking views on the operation of this Rule from interested parties, with a view to the issue receiving further consideration by the Rule Committee.

Bereavement Damages

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to review the level of bereavement damages; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186494]

Mr. Leslie: The level of bereavement damages was increased from £7,500 to £10,000 with effect from 1 April 2002, to account for inflation since the previous revision in 1991. The Government are currently considering how best to provide for further increases in future.

CAFCASS

Mrs. May: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many

Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service officers are in post; and how many posts are vacant. [186992]

Margaret Hodge: I have been asked to reply.

As at 30 June 2004, there were 1,304 officers (practitioners) in post (not including the self-employed). The current number of vacancies for officers (practitioners) stands at 39.

Mrs. May: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many reports were drafted by *(a)* the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service and *(b)* predecessor bodies in each of the last five years. [186993]

Margaret Hodge: I have been asked to reply.

Statistics are not available for the period before CAFCASS was established in 2001 as the work was carried out by a range of organisations and authorities, some of which, for example the Probation Service, no longer exist in their previous form. Figures from CAFCASS show numbers of requests for private law reports resulting in written reports:

Requests for private law reports	
2001–02 (October 2001 to March 2002)	17,352
2002–03	35,074
2003–04	33,803
2004–05 (April to May only)	5,175
Total number of requests April 2001 to date	91,404

Mrs. May: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average length of time taken to draft a Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service report has been. [186999]

Margaret Hodge: I have been asked to reply.

There is no 'average length of time' taken by CAFCASS officers to draft reports. However, the number of weeks required to draft a private law report ranges from 10–18 weeks. The length of time may vary from region to region, and also on the scale of officers' workloads and the complexity of individual cases. CAFCASS officers will often seek to agree these times with the courts, on a case-by-case basis.

In Public Law, the Protocol for Judicial Case Management in Public Law Children Act Cases standard is that cases are to be completed by the courts within 40 weeks, though some of these cases can take a year or more. The drafting of reports in these Public Law cases will be undertaken during part of this period.

Child Contact

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to take steps to give grandparents a legal presumption of contact with grandchildren that can be enforced by the courts, save where a child's safety would be at risk. [187009]

Margaret Hodge: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have no plans to give grandparents a legal presumption of contact. The Children Act 1989 makes clear that the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration in any proceedings relating to the upbringing of a child.. The Government believe that this principle should be sustained, without qualification, in order that there continues to be the clearest possible focus on the needs of children.

The Government recognise and value the important role which grandparents can play in children's lives. Many grandparents are already involved with the care of their grandchildren and most children see their grandparents as important figures in their lives. However, the primary responsibility for bringing up children in most families lies with their parents and there may be cases where parents prefer to limit contact with grandparents.

Under the Children Act 1989, grandparents may, provided that the permission of the court is obtained, apply to the court for an order granting contact with a grandchild. The requirement for the court's permission is not designed to be an obstacle to grandparents but to act as an initial filter to sift out prejudiced applications that are unlikely to succeed. Experience suggests that grandparents would not usually experience difficulty in obtaining permission where their application is motivated by a genuine concern for the child.

The Government are aware there is considerable concern about how court ordered contact arrangements can be supported more effectively. Our consultation document, "Parental separation: Children's Needs and Parents' Responsibilities", published in July, outlines how the Government propose better to support families who are going through separation. It details a range of measures, including better information for parents, parenting plans to help parents make good arrangements, in-court conciliation and mediation for those parents who do go to court, active judicial management and stronger powers for judges to enforce court orders.

Civil Legal Aid

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact of high property values in the South East on the eligibility of people of low income who are home owners for civil legal aid. [187010]

Mr. Leslie: The Legal Service Commission is currently consulting on proposed changes to financial eligibility for civil legal aid, including replacing the current £100,000 equity disregard with exemptions targeted on those with the lowest incomes, particularly pensioners and the disabled. During the consultation period (which closes on 15 October 2004), the Commission's research centre is undertaking a means survey of legal aid applicants which will provide further data on housing equity. The results of this research and the wider public consultation will be analysed before we announce the way forward.

Claim Management Companies

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he

has to implement the Better Regulations Task Force's recommendation to strengthen consumer protection against claim management companies. [187668]

Mr. Lammy: I refer the hon. Member to my answer to my hon. Friend, the Member for Hendon (Mr. Dismore).

Court Dress

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on progress with the proposed reforms of court dress. [186587]

Mr. Leslie: The consultation paper "Court Working Dress in England and Wales" set out a range of possible options for changing court working dress. It attracted 3,406 responses. My right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor is considering in the light of these responses whether changes would be beneficial and expects to make an announcement in due course.

Government Information

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what action his Department is taking to deal with delays experienced by applicants under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. [186608]

Mr. Leslie: The Government take any delays experienced by applicants under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information seriously.

The Government regret that delays do unavoidably occur in a minority of complex cases. However, the Ombudsman's review of the first nine months of the Memorandum of Understanding (September 2003 to May 2004) shows that in most cases the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding were met.

In all cases, Departments endeavour to ensure that the time limit of 20 working days for Departments to respond to requests for information is met.

Compliance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information is monitored annually and published in the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information Monitoring Report.

Government Premises

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the arrangements for access to government premises for *(a)* physically disabled persons and *(b)* allergy sufferers, with particular reference to latex allergy. [186959]

Mr. Leslie: As of the 31 July 2004 319 of the 377 properties that currently make up the Court Service estate are fully accessible to physically disabled persons.

There has been no recorded incident in respect of latex allergies within the Department for Constitutional Affairs. In the event that a member of staff or a visitor to one of our buildings were to suffer from an allergy to latex, we would seek the advice of the Department of Health as to an appropriate course of action to ensure that they suffer no discomfort.

Law Commission

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list the outstanding reports for the Law Commission recommending legislation and in relation to which no Bill has been put before Parliament; and if he will make a statement. [186489]

Mr. Leslie: The outstanding reports are set out in the following tables. Following recommendations made in the recent quinquennial review of the Law Commission my Department, with the support of the Law Commission, is exploring ways in which Departments could implement more accepted Law Commission recommendations. A Ministerial Committee is to consider the Law Commission's draft programme every two years. In addition, Departments are being encouraged to consider, where appropriate, the use of regulatory reform orders and other ways of implementing recommendations. My Department already seeks from other Government Departments six monthly reports on their progress in deciding on published Law Commission recommendations, and when they propose to implement them. However, it is for individual Departments to decide which recommendations to accept and when to implement them.

Law Commission Reports awaiting Government response

Year	*Number*	*Title*
1995	229	Intoxication and Criminal Liability
1996	238	Landlord and Tenant: Responsibility for State and Condition of Property
1998	249	Liability for Psychiatric Illness
1999	257	Damages for Personal Injury: Non-Pecuniary Loss
1999	262	Damages for Personal Injury: Medical, Nursing and other Expenses
1999	263	Claims for Wrongful Death
2003	283	Partnership Law
2003	284	Renting Homes
2003	286	Towards a Compulsory Purchase Code: (1) Compensation
2004	287	Pre-Judgment Interest on Debts and Damages
2004	289	In the Public Interest: Publication of Local Authority Reports

Law Commission Reports awaiting legislation

Year	*Number*	*Title*
1991	194	Distress for Rent
1993	218	Offences Against the Person and General Principles
1994	222	Binding Over
1994	226	Judicial Review and Statutory Appeals
1996	237	Involuntary Manslaughter
1997	246	Shareholder Remedies
1997	247	Aggravated, Exemplary and Restitutionary Damages
1998	248	Corruption Offences
1998	251	The Rules Against Perpetuities and Excessive Accumulations
1998	255	Consents to Prosecution
1999	261	Company Directors Duties and Conflicts of Interest
2001	270	Limitation of Actions
2001	272	Third Parties' Rights Against Insurers
2002	276	Fraud
2002	277	The Effective Prosecution of Multiple Offending
2003	282	Children: Their Non-Accidental Death or Serious Injury (Criminal Trials)

Law Commission Reports currently under consideration by Parliament

Year	*Number*	*Title*
1995	231	Mental Incapacity

Legal Rights

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to propose changes to the legal principle of volenti non fit injuria in cases involving sport or outdoor pursuits; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186485]

Mr. Leslie: The Government have no plans to change the law in this area.

Magistrate Training

Andy Burnham: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what training is available to magistrates on access rights for grandparents in cases of family breakdown. [187661]

Mr. Leslie: Statutory responsibility for the training of magistrates currently rests with the 42 independent magistrates courts committees (MCCs). In court lay magistrates sit with their justices' clerk or a legal adviser. The justices' clerk has a statutory duty to provide advice to the magistrates on questions of law, practice and procedure. This will include advice on applying any case law and relevant Court of Appeal judgments when making decisions. Cases concerning contact (access) arrangements are therefore considered by magistrates on individual merit and with appropriate advice on law and procedure. In each case the child's welfare shall be the court's paramount consideration.

The Children Act 1989 introduced the legal framework for contact (access) arrangements for children in cases of family breakdown. A grandparent is entitled to apply to the court under s.10 of the Act for permission to make an application for contact.

Only magistrates who sit on the Family Panel can hear cases that involve contact arrangements. The recently updated Magistrates' National Training Initiative (MNTI 2) sets out (and confirms the current practice) that magistrates should only be invited to sit on the Family Panel after successfully demonstrating the competencies required to sit in the adult court. Magistrates have been using a competence framework since 1998 for appraisal and training. Under MNTI 2 there are new competence frameworks for both the adult and family courts. These competence frameworks set out the knowledge, understanding, and skills magistrates need to demonstrate to perform their role.

Applications for contact arrangements can also be heard in family proceedings in the county court.

National Debt Helpline/Consumer Direct

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the Government grant to *(a)* the National Debt Helpline and *(b)* Consumer Direct is for the next financial year. [185927]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

The DTI grant for the National Debtline for financial year 2005–06 has yet to be decided and will be considered as part of the Department's forthcoming business planning exercise.

The DTI's settlement under the Spending Review 2004 included a ring-fenced provision of £16 million in respect of Consumer Direct for financial year 2005–06.

Personal Injury Cases

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to review the indemnity principle in relation to costs in personal injury cases; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186492]

Mr. Leslie: We considered further the indemnity principle as part of our recent review of the conditional fee agreement (CFA) regime Our conclusions on this, the reform of conditional fee agreements and other important costs matters are set out in "Making simple CFAs a reality" which was published on 29 June 2004, copies of which were placed in the Libraries of both Houses. .

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to review the quantum of general damages for pain, suffering and loss of amenity in personal injury claims in line with the Law Commission's recommendations; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186493]

Mr. Leslie: In response to a question from the hon. Member in November 1999, the Government indicated that this issue was a matter for the discretion of the court, and that the Government had no plans to legislate. That remains the position.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to review the discount rate for damages in personal injury cases; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186495]

Mr. Leslie: The discount rate was set at 2.5 per cent. in July 2001. Since then it has been kept under review.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many contracts the Department has had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public-private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186610]

Mr. Leslie: My Department has had no contracts for advice with Barclays, Royal Bank of Scotland, UBS Warburg or Bank of Scotland on private finance initiative and public-private partnership contracts since 2001–02.

Postal Voting

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people were registered for a permanent postal vote in the Bury St. Edmunds constituency in each year since 1997. [187209]

Mr. Leslie: Individual Electoral Registration Officers keep records of the number of postal voters in their registration area, but they are not required to keep separate records of long term postal voters and those for

one election only. It is possible to apply for a postal vote at any time, and figures are not maintained on a yearly basis. However, the following information is available for the 1997 and 2001 general elections.

Bury St. Edmunds	*Total number of postal voters*
1997	1,966
2001	3,104

In addition, the Electoral Registration Officer for St. Edmundsbury borough council has advised that there are currently 6,544 registered postal voters in the Bury St. Edmunds constituency.

Sentencing Guidelines

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what provisions are in place to increase awareness amongst the judiciary of the behaviour patterns of people who have communication-related disabilities, including autism and Aspergers' Syndrome, in relation to sentencing for communication-related offences, with particular reference to *(a)* section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 and *(b)* the offence of being drunk and disorderly. [186920]

Mr. Leslie: The particular offences in question can only be heard within the magistrates court and usually before lay justices, although District Judges (magistrates court) and Deputy District Judges (magistrates court) also have jurisdiction to deal with them. The Government are committed to the equal and fair treatment of all those who find themselves having to answer criminal charges in court. In particular, part of the judicial oath states that magistrates will "do right to all manner of people".

The JSB Equal Treatment Advisory Committee (ETAC) has provided a Bench Book to all professional judiciary and magistrates courts, and this can also be viewed at www.jsboard.co.uk. The Bench Book includes general advice on dealing with mental disability including autism. The JSB will shortly distribute a booklet entitled "Fairness In Courts and Tribunals" to all magistrates. This booklet is a summary of the newly revised (JSB) ETAC Bench Book. If communication difficulties arise during the charging procedure, and autism or Aspergers' Syndrome is suspected or known, the police will notify the courts in advance of the case being heard. The use of interpreters and/or adult support at Court would then be encouraged.

All magistrates have been issued with an Adult Court Bench Book, published by the Judicial Studies Board. This Bench Book includes a structured decision-making guide for use when making sentencing decisions on both these particular offences and also includes a copy of the newly revised magistrates court sentencing guidelines. The guidelines indicate that the health (physical or mental) of offenders should be considered in mitigation.

The "Magistrate" magazine, which is produced by the Magistrates Association, published an article in the January 2004 edition entitled "Coping with sufferers of autism". This publication is widely read among the magistracy.

Speeding

Mr. Love: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many motorists fined for speeding as a result of evidence provided by cameras *(a)* had not paid the fine after six months and *(b)* had the fine written off as uncollectable in each of the last five years. [187002]

Mr. Leslie: Information on the number of motorists fined as a result of safety camera evidence is collected by the Home Office. The most recent data available are contained in the attached table. Details of the number of motorists that do not pay their fine after six months and/or had the fine written off is not collected centrally. On 5 January I introduced a new policy, from which date fines can no longer be written off. Improving fine enforcement, including for speeding offences, is a priority and good progress continues to be made in improving performance in England and Wales. For the first full quarter of 2004–05 (April to June) the national payment rate was 81 per cent.

Fixed penalties and prosecutions for speeding offences detected by cameras[1] in England and Wales, 1998 to 2002

	Fixed penalty[2]	*Prosecutions*	*Total*
1998	338,800	65,100	403,800
1999	423,000	75,800	498,600
2000	[3]599,200	109,200	699,400
2001	877,500	137,100	1,014,600
2002	1,135,400	275,900	1,411,300

[1] Automatic cameras until 1998, all camera types from 1999.

[2] Paid i.e. no further action.

[3] Following publication of 2000 data, Northamptonshire police force revised their 2000 figures for the number of fixed penalty notices issued for speeding offences from 70,300 to 34,800 (a decrease of 35,500). In consequence, national data have been revised.

Source:

Home Office Statistical Bulletin 05/04—Motoring Offences and Breath Test Statistics, England and Wales 2002.

Supreme Court

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans his Department has to bring forward plans to circumscribe the powers of the House of Lords. [186550]

Mr. Leslie: The powers of the House of Lords can only be determined when its proper role and functions are decided in relation to that of the House of Commons. The Government will revert to the question in its party manifesto.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress his Department is making in locating a site for the proposed new Supreme Court. [186551]

Mr. Leslie: Following a detailed evaluation exercise, two options remain under active consideration. They are Middlesex Guildhall and the New Wing of Somerset. We are continuing to investigate the relative qualitative and financial merits of those two buildings in consultation with the Lords of Appeal before announcing a final decision in the autumn.

Voter Participation

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to encourage *(a)* young and *(b)* first-time voters to vote at the next General Election. [186873]

Mr. Leslie: The Government are keen to ensure that all young people are encouraged to play as full a part as possible in all our democratic processes.

A range of initiatives, such as citizenship education in schools and the UK Youth Parliament, assist this aim. At the last General Election we sought to bring this learning to life for young people by working with partners to provide mock elections in schools and colleges. We are considering how to take forward such initiatives in future elections.

In addition, the Independent Electoral Commission established under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendum Act 2000, whose remit includes educating and informing people on electoral matters, makes special efforts to target young people especially those who are on the point of attaining the right to vote.

However, the main responsibility for encouraging young and first-time voters to participate at the next General Election must lie with the political parties.

Written Constitution

Kevin Brennan: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent representations he has received in support of a written constitution for the UK. [187670]

Mr. Leslie: One of the only recent representations that I have received was from one of my hon. Friend's constituents. My right hon. Friend, the Lord Chancellor explained in his reply that the Government have been engaged since 1997 in a major programme of constitutional reform aimed at addressing the key issues and enhancing the credibility and effectiveness of the UK's constitutional arrangements. We have no plans to formulate an overarching codified constitution.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Indian Ocean Territories

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent *(a)* discussions have taken place with and *(b)* representations have been received from the US military on the resettlement of the Chagos Islands and Diego Garcia. [183929]

Mr. Rammell: The US authorities have from time-to-time made clear their concerns about the possible restoration of a settled civilian population in the British Indian Ocean Territory. However, the only formal representation from US authorities on this subject was in June 2000.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether detainees are currently held on Diego Garcia; and if he will make a statement. [183528]

Mr. Rammell: The US authorities have repeatedly assured us that no suspected terrorists or Iraqi prisoners are, or ever have been, held on Diego Garcia or on vessels within its waters. The British Representative on the island has confirmed this to be the case.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the International Criminal Court will have jurisdiction over *(a)* British Indian Ocean Territories and *(b)* Diego Garcia while the latter are under lease to the US military; and if he will make a statement. [182543]

Mr. Rammell: The Order in Council to extend the United Kingdom's International Criminal Court Act 2001 to the Overseas Territories, which is a necessary preliminary to the United Kingdom's ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in respect of those territories, will not apply to the British Indian Ocean Territory since that territory has no settled population.

Butler Inquiry

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 12 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 84W, on Iraq, if he will place in the Library a copy of *(a)* Mr. Nadhmi Auchi's letter to him of 15 May 2003 introducing the Anglo Arab Organisation and *(b)* his subsequent acknowledgement. [151126]

Mr. Mullin: I apologise for the delay in replying to the hon. Member. As my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Rammell) stated in his answer to the hon. Member on 5 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 84W, Mr. Auchi wrote to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Hewitt) to introduce the Anglo Arab Organisation, on 15 May 2003, and she replied on 29 May 2003.

In his pursuant answer on 3 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 980W, Mr. Rammell stated that Mr. Auchi also wrote to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 15 May 2003 about the Anglo Arab Organisation, and that my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, replied on his behalf on 7 July 2003.

Copies of the letters, parts of which have been obscured under Exemption 12 of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, have been placed in the Library of the House.

Commonwealth Countries

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of which countries the Queen is the head of state. [186895]

Mr. Mullin: The Queen is the Sovereign and Head of State of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, Her Majesty's Realms and Her Majesty's Overseas Territories.

HM Realms are:

Antigua and Barbuda

Australia

The Bahamas

Barbados
Belize
Canada
Grenada
Jamaica
New Zealand
Papua New Guinea
St Kitts and Nevis
St. Lucia
St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Solomon Islands
Tuvalu

HM Overseas Territories are:

Anguilla
Bermuda
British Antarctic Territory
British Indian Ocean Territory
British Virgin Islands
Cayman Islands
Gibraltar
Montserrat
Pitcairn, Henderson, Dulcie and Oeno Islands
St Helena (and her Dependencies of Ascension Island and Tristan da Cunha)
Falkland Islands (and her dependencies of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands)
Turks and Caicos Island

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the Foreign Office spent on press officers *(a)* in 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available, broken down by grade. [184501]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent the following amounts on different grades of staff in its press office. These amounts are based on an average salary for the grade, employer national insurance and superannuation for each grade, and therefore do not reflect actual payments to press office staff.

	£
SMS	183,734
Band D	341,873
Band C	333,122
Band B	130,705
Band A	80,372

The salary costs for overseas press officers and all costs requested for 1996–97 are not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the Department spent on *(a)* mobile phones, *(b)* hospitality and *(c)* taxis in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest accounting period. [184504]

Mr. Straw: The information is as follows:

Mobile phones

1996–97: £169,356.77

2003–04: £680,527.56.

This does not include the costs of mobile phones for staff overseas. Responsibility for such contracts is devolved to our overseas missions and the relevant figures could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Entertainment 1996–97

DS Entertainment Fund, used for official hospitality by Ministers and Officers in London: £383,507.89

Accountable Entertainment Allowance spent on official hospitality abroad by officers with representational duties against a personal authorised ceiling: £3,865,746.74

Frais expenditure by Heads of Mission on official hospitality abroad: £5,532,641.13

Total for 1996–97: £9,781,895.76

2003–04

Direct Entertainment Expenditure in London and at Post, that includes the DS Entertainment Fund and expenditure from a system of local entertainment budgets abroad that replaced the former Accountable Entertainment Allowance for individual officers: £4,178,832.75

Frais expenditure by Heads of Mission on official entertainment abroad: £4,103,380.55

Total for 2003–04: £8,282,213.30

Between these two financial years, entertainment budgets have been largely devolved to individual FCO Directorates and some payments previously made directly to individual officers now have to be drawn against tighter objectives from pooled entertainment funds. The annual totals are not therefore altogether directly comparable.

Expenditure on hospitality for official guests invited to London from overseas for either year could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Official taxi contract spend for the two periods concerned are:

FY 1996–97: £113,058.09

FY 2003–04: £412,168.68

The 1996–07 figures may not provide a full picture of expenditure as they will not include the large ad-hoc use of black cab taxis in London by FCO staff. Staff would claim these costs via individual travel claims. This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

The figures relate to both the FCO's offices in London and Hanslope Park. Hanslope Park, since 1996–07, has developed into an important operational site to the Department and leads on major Projects such as Firecrest, the FCO Telecommunications Network and PRISM; hence the number of visitors has increased. The site is not supported by public transport links and use of taxi's to/from Central Milton Keynes (London main line) station has been the only method of reaching the site for train users. We have recognised the increased use of taxis at Hanslope Park and introduced an 'in-house' minibus service at peak times of the morning/afternoon to cut costs. In addition, we are actively managing the taxi contracts to ensure value for money. We have also encouraged taxi-sharing where possible.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost was of printing Foreign Office headed notepaper in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [184505]

Mr. Straw: For normal departmental use the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not use pre-printed headed notepaper. FCO staff use electronic templates to print out the FCO letterhead. There are, however, some departments/posts which require the use of pre-printed headed paper.

Data from the financial year 1996–97 are not available, although headed paper produced by FCO Services Crystal Print cost £7.70 for 500 sheets in 1996–97. This does not include embossed letterheads which would have been sourced through an external supplier; financial data for this is not available.

The cost of obtaining 500 sheets of pre-printed letterheads from FCO Services Crystal Print is £49.00, £6.50 for each extra 500 thereafter. In 1996–97 the letterheads were charged at cost (ink and paper) as the artwork was supplied by a separate department, and pricing for the internal market had not been introduced fully. Now that the artwork is produced in house a charge for the set up fee of the artwork is included in the initial cost, hence the reduction in price for multiples of 500. This current price also includes full economic cost. For the latest period June 2003—June 2004, FCO Services Crystal Print took orders for about 133,000 sheets of letterheads, including continuation sheets, for both home and overseas departments. The total cost was approximately £5,200. This type of letterhead is produced in house, from layout to print. For the period June 2003 to July 2004 FCO Services Crystal Print ordered embossed letterheads to the value of £6,586 from external suppliers.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185919]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office operates a fleet of 1,361 official vehicles; this is split between the home vehicle fleet (46 vehicles) and the overseas fleet (1,315 vehicles).

The number of personal injury claims in each of the last five years that have involved official departmental vehicles are as follows:

1999–2000: 1 claim (9 September 1999)

2000–01: 0

2001–02: 1 claim (18 March 2002)

2002–03: 0

2003–04: 2 claims (29 September 2003 and 4 March 2004)

Road Safety forms a vital element of the training and development for our UK Fleet Managers. All UK Fleet Managers hold the Certificate of Professional Competence in National Road Haulage Operations. This professional qualification trains Fleet Management teams in the many road safety factors that their driving/maintenance teams must adhere to in the law. All vehicles are fully and properly maintained and driving hours/rest period regulations are monitored as required by the regulations. Other driving/maintenance safety training has been provided to increase the knowledge and proficiency of UK based driving/support teams. To provide details of our overseas fleets and their road safety policies in the form requested could be provided only at disproportionate costs. Different Regions have a range of special conditions that will need to be complied with by local fleets.

I also refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Alexander) on 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 490W).

EU Export Subsidies

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with European partners about the impact on the developing world of EU export subsidies. [186307]

Mr. MacShane: During the last few months the issue of export subsidies and their impact on developing countries has been raised on a regular basis with our European partners by ministerial colleagues including my right hon. Friends, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Secretary of State for International Development and my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs.

The Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs and I attended meetings of the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council in the weeks leading up to the WTO Doha Framework Agreement, reached on 1 August 2004, where we strongly supported the European Commission's approach. I am pleased to say that the Framework Agreement provides explicitly for the elimination of all forms of export subsidy, which will greatly benefit developing countries.

Iraq

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date an official in his Department first informed an official in No. 10 Downing street of the withdrawal of the intelligence on Iraqi production of chemical and biological agent referred to in paragraph 405 of the Butler Report. [186807]

Mr. Straw: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the debate in the House of 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 195.

Royal Family (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Roslndell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Her Majesty the Queen plans to visit Fiji within the next five years. [186881]

Mr. Mullin: There are currently no plans for HM the Queen to visit Fiji.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which countries *(a)* HRH Prince Charles, *(b)* HRH Prince Andrew and *(c)* HRH Prince Edward plan to visit over the next five years. [186884]

Mr. Mullin: The forward programmes of visits for HRH The Prince of Wales, HRH The Earl of Wessex and HRH The Duke of York are not finalised this far in advance. In line with all royal visits, advance announcements are not usually made for security reasons.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many official visits overseas HRH Prince Charles has paid over the past five years. [186885]

Mr. Mullin: HRH The Prince of Wales has made 43 official visits and one royal visit to a realm in the last five years.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many visits the Royal Family has paid abroad over the past five years. [186891]

Mr. Mullin: The Royal Family has made 175 visits overseas at the request of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Her Majesty the Queen has visited New Zealand within the past five years. [186892]

Mr. Mullin: Her Majesty the Queen visited New Zealand in February 2002.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the last royal visit to Singapore took place. [186894]

Mr. Mullin: HRH The Duke and HRH The Duchess of Gloucester visited Singapore in 2002 to promote bilateral relations and commercial interests. HRH The Duke of York visited in 2001 to support commercial and public diplomacy interests.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Royal Family plans to visit Australia within the next five years. [186896]

Mr. Mullin: The forward programme of visits to Australia has not been finalised. In line with all royal visits, advance announcements are not made for security reasons.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when *(a)* Her Majesty the Queen and *(b)* the royal family last visited Australia. [186897]

Mr. Mullin: HM The Queen accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh last visited Australia in February 2002. Other members of the royal family visited Australia on the following dates:

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh—April 1998
HRH The Prince of Wales—January 1994
HRH The Earl of Wessex—November 2002
HRH The Princess Royal—June and September 2000 and October 2003
HRH The Duke of Gloucester—May 1993
HRH The Duchess of Gloucester—January 2004.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether a member of the Royal Family has visited the Falkland Islands over the past five years. [186898]

Mr. Mullin: HRH The Duke of York visited in 2002 to mark the 20th anniversary of the liberation of the Falkland Islands. HRH Princess Alexandra visited the Falkland Islands in 2000 in her capacity as Patron on the UK Falkland Islands Trust.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many times in 2004 Her Majesty the Queen has visited countries of which she is Head of State. [186899]

Mr. Mullin: HM The Queen has not visited any countries in 2004 of which she is the Head of State.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many countries Her Majesty the Queen has visited in an official capacity in 2004. [186900]

Mr. Mullin: HM The Queen made a State Visit to France from 5–7 April to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Entente Cordiale of 1904. HM The Queen, with other Members of The Royal Family also attended the 60th Anniversary of the D-Day Normandy landings on 6 June.

It was announced by Buckingham Palace on 19 July that, at the invitation of President Horst Kohler, The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh will pay a State Visit to Germany from 2 to 4 November.

Beyond that the forward programme of State or Official visits by The Queen has not been finalised.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether a member of the Royal Family plans to make a state visit to Canada within the next five years. [186903]

Mr. Mullin: Security reasons preclude announcements of visits to Canada by Members of The Royal Family this far ahead.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether a member of the Royal Family has paid a state visit to Canada since 1999. [186904]

Mr. Mullin: Visits by Members of The Royal Family to Realms are classified as Royal Visits, not State or official visits. Our records show that visits to Canada by members of The Royal Family since 1999 have included the following:

2002 The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh
2001 The Duke of Edinburgh
2004 The Duke of Edinburgh
2001 The Prince of Wales
1999 The Duke of York
2000 The Duke of York
2003 The Duke of York
2000 The Earl of Wessex

2001 The Earl of Wessex
2002 The Earl of Wessex
2003 The Earl of Wessex
1999 The Princess Royal
2003 The Princess Royal
2004 The Princess Royal
1999 The Duke of Kent
2001 The Duke of Kent
2001 The Duke of Kent
2002 Prince Michael of Kent

Venezuela

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he had with *(a)* the Venezuelan Government, *(b)* international aid organisations and *(c)* others in the months which followed the 1999 Caracas floods; what support the British Government offered to (i) the Venezuelan Government and (ii) international aid organisations who were working there; and if he will make a statement. [186413]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I have been asked to reply.

Following close liaison with the British embassy in Caracas and key operational partners in the field, DFID initially provided 500,000 to Venezuela following the floods in December 1999. This was used to support the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Red Cross. The funds went towards providing emergency assistance for those affected and initiating long-term rehabilitation for up to 10,000 families.

The right hon. Member for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley, Mr George Foulkes, the then DFID Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, later held detailed discussions with the Venezuelan ambassador about DFID's role in providing assistance to the people of Venezuela. DFID also deployed experts to liaise with Venezuelan authorities and humanitarian organisations to identify priority needs. We then provided a further £300,000 in January 2000 to WHO (to expand their programme), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (to fund two disaster management specialists) and the Red Cross (to ensure continuity of relief assistance towards the full-scale recovery process).

Visiting Heads of State

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which heads of state have made visits to the UK over the past five years. [186882]

Mr. Mullin: I have placed a copy of a list from our records of Heads of State who have visited the UK in an official capacity since 1999 in the Library of the House. In addition the Queen has received some other Heads of State during the course of private visits to this country.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which heads of state plan to make visits to the UK over the next five years. [186883]

Mr. Mullin: President Chirac of France is expected to visit the United Kingdom in the autumn and the President of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Roh Moo-hyun, accompanied by Mrs. Roh Moo-hyun, will pay a state visit to the United Kingdom in December.

President Klaus of the Czech Republic arrived in London on 6 September for a two-day visit, and President Iliescu of Romania will arrive on 7 September for a three-day visit. Both are visiting as guests of Her Majesty's Government.

In most cases, guest of Government visits by Heads of State are planned only six to eight weeks in advance, sometimes less. For this reason I cannot predict which other Heads of State will visit during the next five years.

There are normally two inward state visits per year, one in the spring and one in the autumn. The forward programme of state visits for 2005, and subsequent years has not been finalised.

HEALTH

Family Courts

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what remit has been agreed for the review of the use of expert evidence in the family courts; who will be invited to submit evidence to the review; whether it is his intention to publish all submissions to the review; and when he will publish the findings of the review. [185416]

Dr. Ladyman: The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) will take forward a programme of work to examine and make recommendations on how best to ensure the availability and quality of medical expert resources to the family courts. The terms of reference are:

a) To consider the role of expert medical witnesses in relation to family law cases:

i. To examine the experts' participation through the process, and the competencies needed.

ii. To examine evidence of best practice for expert witnesses.

b) To identify a template and portfolio of medical skills by which a practitioner may be regarded as 'competent' to offer evidence.

c) To advise on a sustainable supply of competent, quality-assured expert medical witnesses.

d) To report and make recommendations to Government ministers in early 2005.

The work will involve a wide range of interests, including judicial, legal, clinical specialities, scientific, statistical and consumer groups, as well as health regulatory bodies.

Consideration will be given to the appropriateness of publishing individual submissions.

Advocacy (Older People)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce an independent advocacy service for vulnerable older people. [186458]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no plans to introduce an independent advocacy service for older people. The government encourages local authorities to use and support local advocacy schemes, or set up their own to meet specific identified need.

Annual Health Check (Pensioners)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to introduce an annual health check for pensioners. [186961]

Dr. Ladyman: General medical practitioners must provide an annual health check to any patient aged 75 and over who requests it and who has not had a consultation within the last 12 months.

We have no plans to introduce an annual health check for all pensioners.

Bed Occupancy Rates

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the bed occupancy rates were for *(a)* each NHS hospital trust in England and *(b)* England in each year since 1991. [186513]

Mr. Hutton: Information on beds is collected on a provider basis from national health service organisations and the latest data available is for the year 2002–03. Beds data for 2003–04 is due to be published later this year.

The table shows the average occupancy rate for England between 1996–97 and 2002–03. Prior to 1996–97, bed occupancy data was not collected on the bed availability return.

Bed occupancy data from 1996–97 to 1999–2000 are available in the Library and from the Department's website from 2000–01 to 2002–03 at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/index.htm.

Average occupancy rate, calculated using the average daily number of available and occupied beds in wards open overnight. England, 1996–97 to 2002–03

Percentage occupancy

	All specialties	*General and acute*
1996–97	81.3	80.8
1997–98	80.9	80.5
1998–99	82.5	82.5
1999–2000	82.7	83.1
2000–01	84.0	84.7
2001–02	85.1	86.0
2002–03	85.4	86.5

Source:
Department of Health from KH03.

Cancer (NICE Guidelines)

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what impact he expects the revised National Institute for Clinical Excellence Referral Guidelines for Suspected Cancer will have on postgraduate general practitioner training. [185851]

Mr. Hutton: Government does not specify the content of the general practitioner training curriculum. This is the job of the joint committee on postgraduate training for general practice (JCPTGP), which is the competent authority for general practice training in the United Kingdom. The JCPTGP is an independent body and it is required by section 9(3) of the Vocational Training Regulations 1997 to determine and publish the curriculum to be followed by a GP registrar (a trainee GP).

The Regulations do specify seven competencies which must be tested, and which the curriculum must therefore teach:

factual medical knowledge sufficient to enable the doctor to perform the duties of a GP;

the ability to apply factual medical knowledge to the management of problems presented by patients in general practice;

effective communication, both orally and in writing; the ability to consult satisfactorily with general practice patients;

the ability to review and critically analyse the practitioner's own working practices and to manage any necessary changes appropriately;

clinical skills;

the ability to synthesise all of the above competencies and apply them appropriately in a general practice setting.

It is, therefore, the responsibility of the JCPTGP to assess the impact of the revised National Institute for Clinical Excellence referral guidelines for suspected cancer and adapt postgraduate general practitioner training accordingly.

Care Homes

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds are available for the elderly in care homes in Northampton; and how many were available on average in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 1997. [186515]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of places available for people aged 65 and over in residential and nursing homes in Northamptonshire, at 31 March for the years 1997 and 2001.

Number of care home places for people aged 65 and over in Northamptonshire[1], 1997 and 2001

As at 31 March *Rounded numbers*

	Residential	*Nursing[2,3]*
1997	2,870	—
2001	2,920	1,640

Notes:
[1] Figures for residential care are for Northamptonshire local authority and for nursing care they are for Northamptonshire health authority
[2] Nursing home figures include places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.
[3] Information is not available by age band at health authority level for 1997.

Data for Northampton are not centrally available.

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Chiropody

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average length of time patients have to wait between regular chiropody appointments is, broken down by primary care trust. [186454]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis *(a)* in Burnley, *(b)* within the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Primary Care Trust and *(c)* within the East Lancashire NHS Trust; and if he will make a statement. [186740]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has no plans to institute special data collection exercises for specific diseases, conditions, syndromes or injuries.

Central monitoring and reporting is limited to that information needed to demonstrate progress against the targets set out in "National Standards, Local Action: Health and Social care Standards and Planning Framework 2005/06–2007/08", published by the Department on 21 July 2004; and for contractual purposes. Additional monitoring is kept to a minimum in favour of local performance management systems, exception reporting and independent inspections.

The report of the independent chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalopathy working group, published in January 2002, estimated a population prevalence of around 0.2 to 0.4 per cent. in adults and around 0.07 per cent. in children. It made no analysis of regional variations.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health where chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis-diagnosed patients *(a)* in Burnley, *(b)* within the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Primary Care Trust and *(c)* within the East Lancashire NHS Trust receive treatment; what the furthest distance an individual in these areas has to travel to access specialist services; and if he will make a statement. [186741]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not hold information centrally on the treatments and rehabilitation services available locally to patients with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalopathy.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received from *(a)* chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME) sufferers in Burnley, *(b)* CFS/ME sufferers within the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Primary Care Trust and *(c)* CFS/ME sufferers within the East Lancashire NHS Trust, *(d)* Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Primary Care Trust and *(e)* the East Lancashire NHS Trust regarding (i) the levels of service provision and (ii) access to services for CFS/ME; and if he will make a statement. [186742]

Dr. Ladyman: We are not aware of formal representations from people in the towns and trusts mentioned. There is regular correspondence to the Secretary of State, Ministers and the Chief Medical Officer around service provision for patients with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalopathy.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what provision *(a)* East Lancashire NHS Trust and *(b)* Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Primary Care Trust have for chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis services; what specific funding they receive to deliver these services; and if he will make a statement; [186744]

(2) what referral mechanisms are in place for *(a)* East Lancashire NHS Trust and *(b)* Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Primary Care Trust to access chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis centres and support teams in the region; and if he will make a statement. [186745]

Dr. Ladyman: From April 2005, funding has been granted to create a specialist multidisciplinary team for the geographical area of Lancashire and South Cumbria, which includes East Lancashire and Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale primary care trusts. Children and young people with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalopathy will be managed by local community paediatric services, supported by the two clinical network co-ordinating centres in Manchester and Liverpool. Lancashire and Cumbria have been allocated £115,000 to develop the service.

Continuing Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people received fully funded NHS continuing care in each year since 1997, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [185996]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of people receiving National Health Service continuing care in 2002–03 and 2003–04, broken down by strategic health authority (SHA), is shown in the table. The move to SHA took place in 2002. Therefore, it is not possible to provide data broken down by SHA preceding this date.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the 7.2 per cent. increase in health spending announced by the Chancellor on 12 July his Department expects to deploy to meet the cost of NHS continuing care. [186767]

Dr. Ladyman: The spending review statement by my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, confirmed the Government's commitment to high and sustained levels of growth in investment for the national health service. The public service agreement published as part of the spending review and the departmental publication, "Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Guidance 2005–06 to 2007–08", set the priorities for investment during the next planning period. In support of these objectives, we plan to allocate the majority of NHS funding directly to primary care trusts and so maximise local flexibility in meeting these priorities.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assumptions his Department made about the change in the numbers of people needing intensive home care and home care during the Spending Review period announced by the Chancellor on 12 July; and how much of the planned increase in social care spending he expects will be deployed to allow for an expansion in domiciliary services as a result. [186795]

Dr. Ladyman: One of the Department's public service agreement targets states that, by March 2008, the number of people supported intensively to live independently at home, as a proportion of all those supported intensively at home or in residential care,

should increase to 34 per cent.; increasing the proportion of older people being supported to live in their own home by one per cent. annually in 2007 and 2008.

The Spending Review settlement announced by my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on 12 July, was based on forecast increases in pay and prices, and increases in demand from demographic changes. It is for local authorities to decide how best to deploy the services available.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to his answer of 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 901W, on NHS Continuing Care (Recompense), when the review of those wrongly denied NHS continuing care was commissioned; when it was submitted to Ministers; when it is expected to report back; and what the remit of the review was. [187067]

Dr. Ladyman: As I stated in my answer of 15 June, strategic health authorities (SHAs) are completing their reviews of cases where individuals may have been wrongly denied national health service continuing care and I will make a statement on the number of retrospective reviews completed and the number of individuals eligible for recompense as soon as that information is available. The independent review of the provision and understanding of NHS-funded continuing care within nine SHAs is a separate matter. The report has been completed and the Department is currently considering its conclusions.

Departmental Publications (Storage)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183870]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has approximately 40.4 million items stored at its main distributor, Prolog in Nottingham; 2.5 million items stored with EC Logistics in Hayes, Middlesex; 290,000 items at MM Group in Ashby de la Zouch, and 7,000 items at Brian Manktelow Ltd. in London.

Diabetes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital accident and emergency departments *(a)* stock both animal and human insulin and *(b)* inquire whether the diabetes patient has a preference for one or the other. [187051]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines are in place at primary care level to offer diabetes patients a choice between animal and human insulin *(a)* at first diagnosis of diabetes and *(b)* on occurrence of the patient suffering from side effects of animal or human insulin. [187055]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence issued advice in 2002 on the management of blood glucose in type 2 diabetes and the management of type 1 diabetes in children, young people and adults, issued in 2004. This advice states that patient preference should form part of the choice of insulin type and regimen.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost is to the general practitioner of a patient being prescribed *(a)* animal and *(b)* human insulin. [187056]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost of prescribing insulin is not direct to general practitioners, as all prescribing is funded from the unified budgets of primary care trusts.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings he has had with his EU counterparts to discuss co-operation on research on diabetes. [186626]

Ms Rosie Winterton: None. However, the Department, with the Medical Research Council and the Wellcome Trust is funding a pan-European study on diabetes. The ADDITION study is a population-based screening study for undiagnosed Type 2 diabetes and is taking place in Denmark, the Netherlands, Cambridge and surrounding counties and Leicester.

Diagnostic and Treatment Centres

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* anticipated construction cost, *(b)* date for start of construction and *(c)* date for completion is of each diagnostic and treatment centre already completed or in development in March. [182455]

Mr. Hutton: Capital investment of circa. £140 million has been made in the 27 treatment centres that are open and run and managed by the national health service. In addition, the NHS is contracting with the independent sector for the provision of surgical procedures rather than new physical capacity. In total, we expect there to be around 80 treatment centres open by the end of 2005.

Domiciliary Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many domiciliary care providers have met the registration standards. [187066]

Dr. Ladyman: I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that, as of 31 August 2004, there were 3,018 domiciliary care agencies registered with the CSCI.

Environmental Management

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average score for the controls assurance standard on environmental management has been in each year since 1997. [186013]

Mr. Hutton: The average scores for controls assurance standard on environmental management were:

2000–01	33.6
2001–02	35.5
2002–03	39.2
2003–04	49.0

Scores were not collected prior to 2000–01. From 1 August 2004, key controls assurance standards were incorporated into Standards for Better Healthcare and the risk management process will be managed locally using the existing assurance framework.

Free Eye Tests

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many old age pensioners in the Great Yarmouth constituency have benefited from the introduction of free eye tests. [186707]

Dr. Ladyman: Figures for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of old age pensioners are not collected centrally.

The total number of national health service sight tests paid for patients aged 60 and over in Great Yarmouth Primary Care Trust (PCT) for the year 2003–04 was 13,720. However, some patients aged 60 and over will be eligible for sight tests for other reasons as well; for example, on income grounds. The classification for such patients will depend on the patient and the practitioner.

Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients. Although most people do not come back for a sight test within the year, some patients suffering from medical conditions are advised to have re-examinations sooner.

Free Health Tests (Pensioners)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost of providing an annual *(a)* chiropody assessment and *(b)* diabetes check to pensioners. [186456]

Dr. Ladyman: It is for local service providers to estimate the cost of any changes to local services which they might be considering.

GP Access Target

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients were seen by a general practitioner within the 48-hour general practitioner access target in *(a)* Suffolk and *(b)* the Bury St. Edmunds constituency in the last year. [187197]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not collected centrally. However, the percentage of patients able to be offered an appointment with a general practitioner within the 48-hour general practitioner access target for Suffolk and the Bury St. Edmunds constituency is shown as follows.

1. Central Suffolk Primary Care Trust (PCT)—100 per cent, (as at July 2004).

2. Suffolk West PCT (which serves Bury St. Edmunds)—100 per cent., (as at July 2004).

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average wait for an appointment to see *(a)* the general practitioner with whom an individual is registered and *(b)* another general practitioner in the practice with which an individual is registered, was in the last period for which figures are available. [R][181673]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not hold data on actual waiting times for appointments with general practitioners. It collects data on the availability of appointments to monitor progress towards the primary care access target. These show that, in July 2004, some 98 per cent. of the population could be seen by a GP within two working days.

Head Injury Rehabilitation

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in implementing the recommendations of the Health Select Committee's Third Report of Session 2000–01, on Head Injury Rehabilitation; and if he will make a statement. [186978]

Dr. Ladyman: We have taken various actions to improve services for patients with head injury. We commissioned the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to prepare guidelines for the triage, assessment, investigation and early management of head injuries in infants, children and adults in June 2003. The guidelines contain recommendations about when it is appropriate to admit patients to hospital following a head injury, what level of care they should receive and correct protocols for transferring patients to specialist head/brain injury units.

The British Society for Rehabilitation Medicine also published guidelines, Rehabilitation following acquired brain injury; national clinical guidelines, last December. These outline the general principles of service provision and specific advice on the clinical management of patients with acquired brain injury. The guidelines were produced to inform the national service framework (NSF) for long term conditions.

The NSF for long term conditions will focus on improving services for people with neurological conditions. It will recommend improvements in standards, care and support that will benefit everyone with a neurological condition.

We are committed to publishing the framework as soon as possible.

Headed Notepaper

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of printing Department of Health headed notepaper was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [184550]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The costs of printing departmental headed notepaper in 1996–97 can be provided only at disproportionate cost. Costs for the period 2003 to June 2004 were £2,099.

Health Promotion (Older People)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to invest in health promotion among older people; and what initiatives for older people have taken place in this area over the last two years. [186797]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework for older people focused on the promotion of health and active life in old age. The Health Development Agency has produced an "advocacy tool" to enable local health and social care services appreciate the importance and make the case for improving health and well-being in midlife and older age.

The needs of older people have been part of the development and services offered through healthy living centres, local exercise pilot sites and the development of learning through the healthy communities collaborative programme. This work has been supported further

through actions that incorporate a preventative approach into the development of stroke and mental health services and integrated falls services. Recognising the broad nature of factors that contribute to older people's sense of independence and well-being, we have also worked across Government to encourage active ageing based on council-wide strategies involving transport, leisure, education and other services.

Our consultation, "Choosing Health? A consultation on action to improve people's health", ended on 28 June 2004. Over 2,200 responses have been received and are now being analysed. These cover a wide range of topics. We shall build on the consultation responses as we prepare our White Paper on improving people's health, which we plan to publish in the autumn.

Hearing Aids

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost per patient is of *(a)* an externally-worn hearing aid and *(b)* a hearing aid fitted to be internally worn. [186314]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are a number of hearing aid types available under the national health service national framework for the supply of hearing aid products. For behind-the-ear hearing aids, prices are in the range of £67 to £195 for digital aids and £31 to £125 for analogue aids. In-the-ear hearing aid prices are in the range of £54 to £66 for analogue aids. These prices are for supply of a single hearing aid only and do not include the costs associated with the provision of the hearing aid service.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health by what date internally-worn hearing aids will be fitted to all NHS patients for whom they are suitable and who request them. [186361]

Dr. Ladyman: All audiology departments in England will routinely be fitting digital hearing aids by March 2005 to patients who require them.

There are no plans for the national health service to supply in-the-ear hearing aids routinely to patients.

Hospital Hygiene/Infection Control

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what independent inspections are undertaken of hospital hygiene management programmes; and if he will make a statement. [184417]

Mr. Hutton: Responsibility for reviewing the performance of national health service trusts rests with the Healthcare Commission. A new inspection process for monitoring against the new healthcare standards will commence from next year.

In addition, infection control protocols will be inspected as part of the clinical negligence scheme for trusts.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assistance has been given since 19 March 1997 to the *(a)* development and *(b)* use in hospitals of new (i) paints and (ii) cleaning products able to kill known microbes; and if he will make a statement. [184418]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The choice of paints and cleaning products for use in hospitals is decided locally by individual national health service trusts. We have set up a rapid review process to assess products that make claims about their efficacy to prevent or control healthcare associated infections. However, products to destroy these micro-organisms are already available and it is the consistent use of good infection control practice that needs to be improved.

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS hospital trust *(a)* Chairmen, *(b)* Chief Executives and *(c)* other board members have received training in administering hygiene and infection control regimes. [185335]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* representations he has received and *(b)* evidence he has collected regarding the effect of advance publication of hospital cleaning target specifications on the cleanliness of hospitals. [185620]

Mr. Hutton: Since 2000, the patient environment action team (PEAT) programme and the national standards of cleanliness for the National Health Service have been introduced.

As a result of the PEAT inspections; the introduction of the national standards of cleanliness; the investment of £68 million and the efforts of the NHS, standards have risen from a position where, in autumn 2000, only a little over 20 per cent. of hospitals were assessed as having good standards of cleanliness to one where nearly 80 per cent. were assessed as good and the remainder assessed by PEAT as acceptable. We consider that these changes have been important factors in raising standards across the NHS over the past four years, but recognise further improvements are needed.

No representations have been received specifically on this issue.

Mental Health

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1275W, on mental health, what percentage of NHS trusts provide single-sex accommodation for unplanned admissions. [186753]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not collected centrally.

National health service trusts should make every effort to ensure that all patients are cared for in single-sex accommodation. There may be occasions when the use of mixed sex accommodation is unavoidable. Hospitals will not turn patients away because a bed in a single-sex area is not available, and nor would we expect them to.

Emergency admissions may sometimes be placed in an area that houses both male and female patients. This is not ideal; but it is sometimes necessary, given that the NHS deals with almost four million emergency admissions each year.

Guidance on maintaining patient privacy and dignity issued to the service in 1997 advises that patients admitted under emergency procedures should be transferred into appropriate single-sex accommodation at the earliest possible opportunity; but at least within 48 hours. Where the use of mixed-sex accommodation is unavoidable, hospitals should have in place clear operational policies that minimise the impact of this situation until the patient can be moved to accommodation that is more appropriate.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures have been taken to assist carers of patients with advanced Alzheimer's disease in Romsey. [186757]

Dr. Ladyman: All carers, including those caring for people with dementia, are entitled to an assessment to determine their needs as carers and eligibility for support. The new Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 introduces new provisions that will ensure that carers are made aware of this right.

The carers grant, worth £125 million this year, provides money for local councils to provide short breaks and services to cares to enable them to continue in their caring role. Carers are also entitled to cash payments for carers' services to enable them to purchase the type of support they require and promote a better quality of life.

The Department has also revised and updated, "Who cares? Information and support for the carers of confused people."

At a local level, the Eastleigh and Test Valley South Primary Care Trust, working with the Hampshire Partnership Trusts and the local social services, has developed a wide range of initiatives in both the acute and community setting which offer advice and support to patients with dementia, and their carers. This includes a carer's centre, jointly commissioned specialist services for carers provided by Southampton MIND, and regular carer's education and support sessions which are run by the local memory assessment and research centre.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the availability of drugs for treating advanced Alzheimer's disease in Romsey; [186758]

(2) how much was spent by the NHS on drug treatments for advanced Alzheimer's disease patients in Romsey in the latest year for which figures are available; [186759]

(3) how many advanced Alzheimer's disease patients are being treated in the Romsey constituency. [186760]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of advanced Alzheimer's disease patients being treated by individual primary care trusts (PCTs) is not collected centrally.

Data on the number of prescription items dispensed in the community and the net ingredient cost are collected by the Prescription Pricing Authority. The total number of prescription items dispensed for dementia drugs and the net ingredient costs of these drugs, in the area covered by Eastleigh and Test Valley South PCT in 2003–04 is shown in the table. It is not possible to provide a breakdown for expenditure on drug treatments for advanced Alzheimer's patients for Eastleigh and Test Valley South PCT.

Total number of prescription items and net ingredient cost for "Drugs for Dementia" (BNF 4.11, Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease) dispensed in the community for Eastleigh and Test Valley South PCT in 2003–04

	Number of prescription items (thousand)	*Net ingredient cost (£000)*
Eastleigh and Test Valley South PCT	2.9	298.0
England total	392.7	34,217.0

Notes:

1. PCA data covers all prescription items that are dispensed in the community in England. PCA data does not include items dispensed in hospitals or private prescriptions.
2. Drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease are classified in the British National Formulary section 4.11 (Drugs for Dementia) and include the drugs Donepezil, Rivastigmine, Galantamine and Memantine.
3. Information on the number of patients receiving prescriptions for these drugs is not available, but numbers of prescription items of all prescriptions dispensed in the community in Eastleigh and Test Valley South PCT (this is not necessarily the same as where the drugs were prescribed) and the net ingredient cost is provided.
4. Prescriptions are written on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.
5. The net ingredient cost is the basic cost of a drug. This cost does not take account of discounts, dispensing costs, fees or prescription charge income.

Source:

Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) data from the Prescription Pricing Authority.

The Department has not made an assessment of the availability of drugs for treating advanced Alzheimer's disease in Romsey. It is for PCTs, in conjunction with strategic health authorities, to ensure that services meet local needs.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to increase the resources available to Alzheimer's patients. [186457]

Dr. Ladyman: Funding for the development of treatment and care for people with Alzheimer's disease is not identified separately, but is part of general allocations to local health and social care organisations. It is for local primary care trusts, in partnership with other local national health service and social care organisations, to assess the needs of the local population and meet them from general funding allocations.

The Government is committed to improving standards of health and social care and people with Alzheimer's disease will benefit from the new investment that is being made available to support this commitment. For the NHS, there is an annual average funding increase of 7.5 per cent. above inflation over the five years 2003–04 to 2007–08. This is now the largest ever sustained increase in NHS funding. There have also been substantial increases in the level of funding provided for social services in recent years. Social services resources will increase by an annual average of 6 per cent. in real terms from 2003–04 to 2005–06. These significant funding increases will help provide new and better health and social care services for people with Alzheimer's disease.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Alzheimer's disease patients are being treated in Norwich; what the total spending on drugs available on the NHS for Alzheimer's disease was in Norwich in the last year for which figures are available; what assessment he has made of the availability of drugs for moderately-severe to severe Alzheimer's disease in Norwich; how much was spent by the NHS on drug treatments for advanced Alzheimer's disease patients in Norwich in the last year for which figures are available; and what measures have been taken to assist carers of patients with advanced Alzheimer's disease in Norwich. [187013]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of advanced Alzheimer's disease patients being treated by individual primary care trusts (PCTs) is not collected centrally.

Data on the number of prescription items dispensed in the community and the net ingredient costs is collected by the Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA). The total number of prescription items dispensed for dementia drugs and the net ingredient costs of these drugs, in the area covered by Norwich PCT in 2003–04 is shown in the table. It is not possible to provide a breakdown for expenditure on drug treatments for advanced Alzheimer's patients in Norfolk.

Total number of prescription items and net ingredient cost for "Drugs for Dementia" (BNF 4.11, treatment of Alzheimer's disease) dispensed in the community for selected PCTs—2003–04

	Number of prescription items	*Net ingredient cost*
Norwich PCT	1,408	111,272
England total	392,652	34,217,012

Notes:

1. PCA data covers all prescription items that are dispensed in the community in England. PCA data does not include items dispensed in hospitals or private prescriptions.
2. Drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease are classified in the British National Formulary section 4.11 (Drugs for Dementia) and include the drugs Donepezil, Rivastigmine, Galantamine and Memantine.
3. Information on the number of patients receiving prescriptions for these drugs is not available, but numbers of prescription items of all prescriptions dispensed in the community in Norwich PCT (this is not necessarily the same as where the drugs were prescribed) and the net ingredient cost is provided.
4. Prescriptions are written on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.
5. The net ingredient cost is the basic cost of a drug. This cost does not take account of discounts, dispensing costs, fees or prescription charge income.

Source:

Prescription cost analysis (PCA) data from the PPA.

The Department has not made an assessment of the availability of drugs for treating advanced Alzheimer's disease in Norwich. It is for PCTs, in conjunction with strategic health authorities (SHAs), to ensure that services meet local needs.

Norfolk Suffolk and Cambridge SHA has advised that all patients who are prescribed medication for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease are assessed by a consultant for four months. If the medication is beneficial then the patient's general practitioner takes over responsibility for prescribing, with the option to discontinue the medication if it is not producing benefits for the patient, or his/her carer, at any time.

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures have been taken to assist carers of patients with advanced Alzheimer's disease in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Dartford. [187028]

Dr. Ladyman: All carers, including those caring for people with dementia, are entitled to an assessment to determine their needs as carers and eligibility for support. The new Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 introduces new provisions that will ensure that carers are made aware of this right.

The carers grant, worth £125 million this year, provides money for local councils to provide short breaks and services to carers to enable them to continue in their caring role. Carers are also entitled to cash payments for carers' services to enable them to purchase the type of support they require and promote a better quality of life.

The Department has also revised and updated Who cares? Information and support for the carers of confused people.

Matters relating to Scotland and Wales are matters for the devolved administration. Whilst the institutions in Northern Ireland are dissolved, responsibility rests with Ministers in the Northern Ireland Office.

There are two new local initiatives in Dartford. Firstly, the provision of 10 residential care beds specifically for the assessment and treatment of dementia. Secondly, there is an intensive domiciliary care scheme that offers patients and their carers an opportunity to choose the kind of support they receive.

Midwives

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwives are registered in the West Midlands. [187300]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held centrally, but is available directly from the Nursing and Midwifery Council, which is an independent statutory regulatory body.

Ministerial Conference (Care Issues)

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the purposes were of the ministerial conference on 26 to 27 May on care issues; and if he will list those invited to attend. [186153]

Dr. Ladyman: Central Government Departments are required to produce pay and workforce strategies in respect of the public services workforces that they cover. The social care workforce is covered predominantly by three Departments; the Department of Health, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The social care workforce conference was organised by the Department of Health to bring together stakeholders in the development of the social care workforce to share knowledge and to reflect on and

inform the revision of the Department's national social care workforce strategy in relation to recruitment, development and rewards.

Over the past year, most parts of the national infrastructure that are accountable for the social care workforce have experienced significant change. In the Department of Health, a major reorganisation has created a new workforce directorate that has joined health and social care workforce development functions into new teams. Children's social care policy has moved to a new children and families directorate in the DfES and new people are engaged in taking forward the proposals in the Green Paper, Every child matters. Key regulatory institutions, the National Care Standards Commission and the Social Services Inspectorate, have merged into the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). The proposed introduction of a sector skills council is also having an impact on the social care employers infrastructure.

The conference had the dual purpose of providing an early opportunity for the many new people to meet and share perspectives, and then to consider with the Government Ministers with central responsibilities how future strategy should be shaped and partnership managed.

Invitations were sent to the following people:

	Title	*First name*	*Surname*	*Organisation*
1.	Mr	James	Churchill	ARC
2.	Professor	Gillian	Slater	Bournemouth University
3.	Mr	Ian	Johnston	British Association of Social Workers (BASW
4.	Ms	Julia	Hurst	Bupa Care Services
5.	Mr	Peter	Ludford	Bupa Care Services
6.	Mr	Oliver	Thomas	Bupa Care Services
7.	Professor	Peter	Beresford	Centre for Citizen Participation
8.	Mrs	Sheelagh	Richards	College of Occupational Therapists
9.	Mr	David	Behan	Commission for Social Care Inspection
10.	Ms	Denise	Platt	CSCI
11.	Mr	Paul	Harper	Department for Education and Skills
12.	Mr	Dominic	Hudson	Department for Education and Skills
13.	Mr	Tom	Jeffery	Department for Education and Skills
14.	Ms	Judy	Leavesley	Department of
15.	Dr	Jeanette	Pugh	Department for Education and Skills
16.	Mr	Steve	Catling	Department of Health
17.	Mr	Andrew	Foster	Department of Health
18.	Dr	Carol	Lupton	Department of Health
19.	Ms	Anne	Mercer	Department of Health
20.	Mr	Craig	Muir	Department of Health
21.	Mr	Andrew	Nash	Department of Health
22.	Ms	Melanie	Newman	Department of Health
23.	Professor	Anthony	Sheehan	Department of Health
24.	Mr	Martin	Staniforth	Department of Health
25.	Mrs	Janis	Stout	Department of Health
26.	Mr	Lionel	Took	Department of Health
27.	Ms	Pat	Nicholls	Department of Health
28.	Mrs	Sue	Brennan	Department of Health
29.	Mr	Rob	Webster	Department of Health
30.	Ms	Joan	Munro	Employers Organisation for Local Government
31.	Councillor	John	Stocks	Employers Organisation for Local Government
32.	Mr	Mike	Walker	Employers Organisation for Local Government
33.	Miss	Ann	Mackay	English Community Care Association
34.	Ms	Lynne	Berry	General Social Care Council
35.	Mr	Rodney	Brooke	General Social Care Council
36.	Mr	John	Sargent	Greater Manchester WDC
37.	Mr	Andrew	Crook	H M Treasury
38.	Miss	Lucy	French	H M Treasury
39.	Mr	Nigel	Druce	Improvement and Development Agency
40.	Professor	Michael	Preston-Shoot	JUC-SWEC University of London
41.	Mr	Peter	Huxley	Kings College London
42.	Professor	Jill	Manthorpe	Kings College London
43.	Mr	Neil	Dhruev	Leicestershire Partnership Trust
44.	Mr	Vie	Citarella	LGA
45.	Mr	Tony	Hunter	Liverpool City Council
46.	Ms	Vivienne	Walters	Local Government Association
47.	Ms	Catherine	Mangal	Local Government Association
48.	Ms	Jenny	Goodall	London Borough of Brent
49.	Ms	Christine	Hawes	London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
50.	Mr	Des	Kelly	National Care Forum
51.	Mrs	Sheila	Scott	National Care Homes Association
52.	Mrs	Nadra	Ahmed	National Care Homes Association
53.	Ms	Erica	De'Ath	NCVCCO
54.	Mr	Brendan	Johnston	National Ireland Social Care Council
55.	Ms	Husna	Mortuza	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
56.	Mr	Geoffrey	Tierney	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
57.	Mr	Michael	Leadbetter	Practice Learning Taskforce

	Title	First name	Surname	Organisation
58.	Mr	Frank	Ursell	Registered Nursing Home Association
59.	Mr	Alistair	Gaw	Scottish Executive
60.	Ms	Ann	Christina	Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority
61.	Mr	John	Rogers	Skills for Health
62.	Mr	Richard	Clough	Association
63.	Ms	Sheila	Barrett	Social Care Institute of Excellence
64.	Mr	Don	Brand	Social Care Institute of Excellence
65.	Ms	Jane	Campbell	Social Care Institute of Excellence
66.	Mr	Bill	Kilgallon	Social Care Institute of Excellence
67.	Ms	Sue	Lightup	St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council
68.	Mr	Richard	Banks	Topss England
69.	Mr	Arthur	Keefe	Topss England
70.	Mrs	Andrea	Rowe	Topss England
71.	Mr	Francis	Ward	Topss England
72.	Mr	Bill	McClimont	UK Home Care Association
73.	Mrs	Lesley	Rimmer	UK Home Care Association
74.	Mr	Owen	Davies	Unison
75.	Ms	Jo	Goodship	University of Portsmouth
76.	Professor	Judith	Lathlean	University of Southampton
77.	Ms	Maggie	Blyth	Youth Justice Board
78.	Mr	David	Jones	DfES
79.	Mr	David	Leay	NATOPSS
80.	Ms	Fiona	Woodward	Unison

MRSA

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he gives to ambulance authorities on *(a)* combating MRSA and *(b)* infection control generally; and what additional resources he plans to make available for this purpose. [184409]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Management action and resources for infection control are matters for individual national health service trusts. Each trust will have an infection control policy which should comply with current best practice and have access to local advice. Healthcare organisations including ambulance trusts should have systems in place to minimise the risk to patients from healthcare associated infections. Health Service Circular 2000/002 required all NHS trusts, including ambulance trusts to take action to strengthen prevention and control of infection, to secure appropriate health care services for patients with infection and improve surveillance of infection. This was reinforced by "Winning Ways—Working together to reduce Hospital Acquired Infection in England".

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the isolation procedures set down by the Department to combat MRSA and which were operative as at 19 March 1997 are still operative; when the procedures were last brought to the attention of hospitals; and if he will make a statement; [184411]

(2) in what circumstances hospitals are required to provide strict isolation for MRSA sufferers; and if he will make a statement. [184413]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Decisions on isolation are made locally. The guidance issued in 1995 is still in place and we require national health service organisations to regularly assess their needs for isolation facilities. Health Service Circular 2000/002 on the management and control of hospital infection, required trusts to undertake a risk assessment to determine appropriate provision of isolation facilities within each trust.

"Winning Ways—Working together to reduce healthcare associated infection in England", published in December 2003 requires chief executives to ensure that there is appropriate provision of isolation facilities within their healthcare facilities.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether hospitals are required to destroy bed linen of MRSA sufferers after use; and if he will make a statement. [184412]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The destruction of bed linen is not necessary as methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* is removed by normal laundering.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the results were of the national surveillance by 40 hospitals in respect of MRSA announced by the Minister on 19 March 1997; and if he will make a statement. [184414]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The results were used to develop the nosocomial infection national surveillance service, which was a voluntary and confidential reporting system. This surveillance system aimed to help hospitals benchmark their own performance and investigate their own infection rates. It had two module hospital acquired blood stream infections, which has been replaced by the mandatory surveillance system, and surgical site infections. Orthopaedic surgical site infection (SSI) surveillance is now part of the mandatory system and the rest of SSI module was developed into the surgical site infections surveillance system.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures he proposes to introduce to tackle MRSA in nursing homes; and if he will make a statement. [184421]

Dr. Ladyman: Implementation of our action plan, "Winning Ways—Working together to reduce Healthcare Associated Infection in England", will reduce infections in both hospital and community settings. This report will raise standards by reinforcing the need to follow existing good practice, such as the

public health medicine environmental group guidelines on the control of infection in residential and nursing homes, published in 1996 and the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidance, "Infection control; prevention of healthcare associated infection in primary and community care", published in 2003. In addition, we have asked the public health medicine and environmental group to update the existing guidance on infection control in nursing homes.

Nappies

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Department has received a written request from the Nappy Alliance seeking a meeting to discuss policy and practice in the use of nappies within NHS facilities. [178246]

Dr. Ladyman *[pursuant to his reply, 21 June 2004, Official Report, column 1279W]:* I regret that my previous reply was incorrect. It should read as follows:

The Department of Health received a written request from the Nappy Alliance for a meeting in a letter dated 6 May 2004.

NHS Agency Staff

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money was spent by the NHS on agency staff in Northampton south in each year since 1997. [186519]

Dr. Ladyman: The information for the national health service organisations serving the Northampton south area is shown in the following table.

Expenditure on total non NHS staff: 1997–98 to 2002–03 (£)

Trust name	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	279,396	560,994	668,454	949,289	2,173,143	3,254,519
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	147,376	106,148	208,977	458,423	903,261	1,346,960
Northampton Community Healthcare NHS Trust	803,837	1,221,668	1,057,035	1,266,031	n/a	n/a
Rockingham Forest NHS Trust	265,930	902,672	806,521	1,384,405	n/a	n/a
Northampton Healthcare NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4,121,279	4,649,625
Daventry and South Northamptonshire Primary Care Trust (PCT)	n/a	n/a	n/a	63,534	67,404	100,000
Northampton PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	202,315

Sources:

1. Annual financial returns of NHS trusts, 1997–98 to 2002–03.
2. Annual financial returns of PCTs, 2000–01 to 2002–03

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): Medical and dental staff, and Non-Medical within Northampton General Hospital National Health Service Trust

Number (headcount)

	As at 30 September each year				
	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
Medical and Dental Staff (Doctors)	226	241	248	264	283
Non-Medical Staff (Nurses)	n/a	2,628	2,601	2,581	2,799
Of which					
Professionally qualified clinical staff	n/a	1,411	1,414	1,427	1,548
Qualified nurses	n/a	1,141	1,149	1,156	1,233
Qualified Scientific and Technical staff	n/a	270	265	271	315
Support to clinical staff	n/a	893	876	766	879
Support to doctors and nurses	n/a	738	724	616	719
Support to Scientific and Technical staff	n/a	155	152	150	160
NHS infrastructure support	n/a	324	311	388	372
Central functions	n/a	120	130	125	120
Hotel property and estate staff	n/a	145	127	204	193
Managers and senior managers	n/a	59	54	59	59

Number (headcount)

	As at 30 September each year				
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Medical and Dental Staff (Doctors)	283	279	293	298	312
Non-Medical Staff (Nurses)	2,805	2,869	3,023	3,101	3,366
Of which					
Professionally qualified clinical staff	1,505	1,529	1,553	1,540	1,611
Qualified nurses	1,192	1,192	1,202	1,180	1,237
Qualified Scientific and Technical staff	313	337	351	360	374
Support to clinical staff	861	901	979	1,068	1,280
Support to doctors and nurses	699	728	779	867	1,051
Support to Scientific and Technical staff	162	173	200	201	229

Number (headcount)

	As at 30 September each year				
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
NHS infrastructure support	439	439	491	493	475
Central functions	99	107	100	110	140
Hotel property and estate staff	273	265	315	286	261
Managers and senior managers	67	67	76	97	74

n/a—not applicable
Sources:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

NHS Commercial Activity

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will *(a)* take steps to prevent the distribution within NHS hospitals of Bounty packs to mothers of newly-born children and *(b)* undertake an assessment of the environmental sustainability of the products contained in Bounty packs. [186180]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no plans to take steps to prevent the distribution of Bounty packs within National Health Service hospitals and no plans to undertake an assessment of the environmental sustainability of the products contained in the packs.

NHS Dentistry

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on the progress of the NHS dentistry support team's work with primary care trusts in Gloucestershire; [186311]

(2) if he will make a statement on the progress of the action plan to establish new dental practices in Gloucestershire. [186312]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national health service dentistry support team is working with West Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT). The PCT's dental action plan has been endorsed by the support team and will be published following the PCT's board meeting on 16 September.

Additional recurrent funding of £400,000 has been allocated by the support team to the PCT to support the developments contained in its action plan.

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices are offering NHS dental services in the London borough of Enfield; and what efforts are being made to increase their availability. [187004]

Mr. Hutton: Data for numbers of dentists accepting new patients are not collected by London borough.

The available information on practises accepting new patients is on the nhs.uk website at www.nhs.uk. The table shows the number of dentists in Enfield Primary Care Trust (PCT) accepting new patients.

Number of dental practices in Enfield PCT accepting new national health service patients by type of patient as at 27 July 2004

Service	*Accepting new patients*	*Total number of practices*
		51
Providing occasional NHS treatment to non registered patients	4	—
Registering charge exempt adults for NHS treatment	21	—
Registering charge paying adults for NHS treatment	22	—
Registering children aged 0–18 years for NHS treatment	30	—

Note:
Enfield PCT (as part of North Central London) has the highest general dental practitioner per 1,000 population ratio in the United Kingdom (=0.5).

Enfield PCT recognises that practices are not always located in the areas of greatest need. As part of developing its commissioning strategy for dentistry, the PCT will look to increase the number of personal dental services in Enfield in 2004–05 and has already put aside space for a dental practice at the local investment finance trust Forest Road Primary Care Centre, Edmonton, in February 2006.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in the Colchester constituency provide NHS treatment; how many provided NHS treatment in 1997; and if he will make a statement. [186979]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not collected by parliamentary constituency. However, there were 82 dentists providing National Health Service treatment in the Colchester Primary Care Trust area, which includes the Colchester constituency, in September 2003, the latest data available. In September 1997, there were 72 dentists. These numbers cover dentists working in the general dental service or personal dental service.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of NHS dentists in the Bury St. Edmunds constituency are registering new NHS patients. [187202]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected by Parliamentary constituency. However, there are 34 national health service dental practices in the Suffolk West Primary Care Trust area, which covers the Bury St. Edmunds constituency. Of these, 12, or 35.3 per cent., of the total, are registering children, eight, or 23.5 per cent., are registering charge exempt adults and six, or 17.6 per cent., are registering charge paying adults. In addition, one practice is providing occasional NHS treatment for non registered patients.

Source:
NHS.UK website.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have applied to become NHS dentists in each year since 2000 in Suffolk. [187206]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of entrants into national health service dentistry in each year since 2000 in Suffolk primary care trusts (PCTs) are shown in the table.

	2000	2001	2002	2003
Central Suffolk PCT area[1]	5	3	3	3
Suffolk Coastal PCT area[2]	3	1	1	2
Suffolk West PCT area[3]	8	14	16	10

[1] Figures for Central Suffolk are based on general dental service (GDS) contracts only. There are no personal dental service (PDS) dentists in this PCT area.
[2] Figures for Suffolk Coastal are based on GDS contracts only. There are no PDS dentists in this PCT area.
[3] Figures are based on GDS and PDS contracts.

NHS Denturists

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans the Department has to review the role of denturists within the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [187228]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The practice of denturism is currently illegal in the United Kingdom, but the Department is working with the General Dental Council (GDC) to provide for the registration of appropriately trained clinical dental technicians (CDTs). On 30 July we issued for consultation a draft of an Order which, with other amendments to the Dentists Act 1984 to modernise the regulation of dentistry, would give the GDC the necessary powers. Comments on the draft are requested by 30 October and it will subsequently be laid before Parliament for debate under the affirmative procedure. Subject to approval, we expect the Order to come into force during 2005.

NHS Staff Vacancies

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff vacancies there were on average in the NHS in Northampton in each year since 1997. [186520]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Department of Health Vacancies Survey, 1999–2004

Northamptonshire HA (1999–2001) and Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA (2002–04)	1999		2000		2001	
	Three month vacancy rates and numbers					
	Percentage	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*
GP	—	—	—	44	—	89
Consultant and other doctors (excluding doctors in training)	3.30	9	[1]—	[1]—	1.20	3
All nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff (excluding HA staff)	2.3	76	1.6	57	2.1	73
All scientific, therapeutic and technical staff (excluding HA staff)	1.0	9	2.8	26	3.4	34
All other staff (excluding HA staff)	1.8	43	0.4	9	0.4	9

Northamptonshire HA (1999–2001) and Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA (2002–04)	2002		2003		2004	
	Three month vacancy rates and numbers					
	Percentage	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*
GP	—	[2]123	—	[3]48	—	—
Consultant and other doctors (excluding doctors in training)	1.80	5	5.40	47	7.70	31
All nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff (excluding HA staff)	3.4	116	2.8	281	1.7	192
All scientific, therapeutic and technical staff (excluding HA staff)	3.5	36	3.4	112	2.4	87
All other staff (excluding HA staff)	0.2	4	0.6	47	1.2	97

GP information:
[1] 2000 data not available.
[2] In 2002, one HA in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland did not respond to the survey.
[3] Vacancy numbers for Northamptonshire PCTs.
Note:
No figures for PCTs are available before 2003 as previous years vacancy numbers were collected from health authorities. Vacancy numbers for each year refer to the number of vacancies occurring in the 12 month period between 1 April and 31 March.

Northampton General Hospital

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses and *(c)* support staff were employed by Northampton General Hospital, in each of the last 10 years. [186590]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS): medical and dental staff, and non-medical within Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust

Number (headcount)

	As at 30 September each year									
	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Medical and dental staff (doctors)	226	241	248	264	283	283	279	293	298	312
Non-medical staff (nurses)	n/a	2,628	2,601	2,581	2,799	2,805	2,869	3,023	3,101	3,366
of which:										
Professionally qualified clinical staff	n/a	1,411	1,414	1,427	1,548	1,505	1,529	1,553	1,540	1,611
Qualified nurses	n/a	1,141	1,149	1,156	1,233	1,192	1,192	1,202	1,180	1,237
Qualified scientific and technical staff	n/a	270	265	271	315	313	337	351	360	374

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS): medical and dental staff, and non-medical within Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust

Number (headcount)

	As at 30 September each year									
	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Support to clinical staff	n/a	893	876	766	879	861	901	979	1,068	1,280
Support to doctors and nurses	n/a	738	724	616	719	699	728	779	867	1,051
Support to scientific and technical staff	n/a	155	152	150	160	162	173	200	201	229
NHS infrastructure support	n/a	324	311	388	372	439	439	491	493	475
Central functions	n/a	120	130	125	120	99	107	100	110	140
Hotel property and estate staff	n/a	145	127	204	193	273	265	315	286	261
Managers and senior managers	n/a	59	54	59	59	67	67	76	97	74

Note:
n/a denotes not applicable.
Sources:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.
Department of Health non-medical workforce census.

Nurses

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many overseas nurses are employed in the University Hospital of Leicester. [186625]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many modern matrons have been appointed in the NHS since the NHS Plan was introduced; and if he will make a statement. [186665]

Mr. Hutton: The latest figures, taken from local development plan returns from trusts, indicate that, as at December 2003, there were 3,200 modern matrons employed in the national health service.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether community matrons will take precedence over senior district nurses in the general recruitment process. [187166]

Mr. Hutton: It is for local national health service trusts to determine their local work force priorities and to recruit staff according to local need and national priorities. The Government has increased the number of nurses working in the NHS by 77,500 since 1997, which includes an increase of 25 per cent. in community service nurses.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact on current staffing levels of his aim to recruit 3,000 community matrons. [187167]

Mr. Hutton: It is expected that nurses with the skills and knowledge to take on the role of community matron will be recruited from a range of community, hospital and intermediate care settings, in particular district nursing. The introduction of community matrons will mean staffing working differently and more effectively and may not always require additional nursing staff.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact of community matrons on staffing levels of social care professionals. [187339]

Mr. Hutton: In order to deliver benefits for patients, community matrons will need to be able to assess patients medical, psychological and social care needs. This combination of skills is largely found in experienced nurses, rather than social care professionals. It is expected that social care professionals will form part of the multi-professional team that community matrons will work within.

Out-patient Access Targets

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the performance of health authorities in Great Yarmouth in meeting out-patient access targets since 1997. [186714]

Dr. Ladyman: Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority's (which covers the health economies of Great Yarmouth) performance on meeting out-patient access targets are shown in the table. The figures for 1997 are not available.

Number of people waiting for out-patient treatment; over 13 and over 17 weeks

March:	*Over 13 weeks*	*Over 17 weeks*
1998	17,859	n/a
1999	21,517	n/a
2000	19,183	n/a
2001	15,429	n/a
2002	10,797	n/a
2003	5,366	1,685
2004	2,556	0

Notes:
1. Data prior to September 2001 have been converted to match current strategic health authority boundaries.
2. Target: achieve a maximum wait of four months (17 weeks) for an out-patient appointment and reduce the number of over 13-week out-patient waiters by March 2004, as progress towards achieving a maximum wait of three months for an out-patient appointment by March 2005.
Source:
Care and health information portfolio factsheet.

Patient Environment and Assessment Team

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospitals were *(a)* put on special measures and *(b)* offered additional support following inspection by a Patient Environment and Assessment Team (PEAT) in each year since inspections began; and what the overall (i) PEAT score and (ii) star rating were in each case. [185333]

Mr. Hutton: Since 2000, assessments of hospital cleanliness have been undertaken by patient environment action teams (PEATs). Following these assessments hospitals are allocated a rating on a 'traffic-light' scale—Red equals poor, Amber equals acceptable and Green equals good. Since August 2001, PEATs have confirmed that there are no hospitals where overall standards are less than acceptable.

However, following the PEAT assessments in 2002, some hospitals were identified where, although overall acceptable levels had been achieved, it was felt that there were grounds for additional support to be provided to ensure that standards were maintained and any shortfalls identified remedied. This was also the case in 2003.

In 2002, 51 hospitals were identified where such support was been deemed appropriate and in 2003 this number was 111. The PEAT rating for all of these hospitals was 'Amber'.

The star rating process is applied to the aggregate performance of a trust, whereas the PEAT rating is applied to each hospital within a trust and it is therefore possible that a trust with an overall good star rating may have an individual site where cleanliness standards are a cause for concern.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many contracts have been let by his Department in each financial year since 2001–02 to *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte and Touche, *(c)* KPMG and *(d)* Ernst and Young for advising his Department on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts; and what fees were paid in each case. [182266]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows details of the number of contracts and fees paid to PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte and Touche, KPMG and Ernst and Young since 2001–02 by the Department for advising on the private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts.

	PwC	Deloitte and Touche	KPMG	Ernst and Young
2001–02				
Number of contracts	1	0	2	[1]
Fees (£)	23,818	—	25,000 25,000	[1]
2002–03				
Number of contracts	0	3	0	[1]
Fees (£)	—	50,529 20,623 [2]21,803	0	[1]
2003–04				
Number of contracts	0	2	1	[1]
Fees (£)	—	189,772 71,557	58,321	[1]
2004–05				
Number of contracts	0	0	1	[1]
Fees (£)	—	—	17,500	[1]

[1] No contracts awarded.
[2] Sub-contracted to Davis Langdon Everest.

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many contracts and what fees *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland received for advising his Department on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02. [186674]

Mr. Hutton: No contracts have been awarded to any of the companies listed in the question.

Press Officers

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many press officers are employed in his Department. [187159]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are 21 press officers presently employed in the Department.

Radioactivity (Public Health)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will commission a study of cancer incidence in North Essex. [183975]

Dr. Ladyman: We have no current plans to commission a study of cancer incidence in North Essex. Indeed, in line with the "NHS Plan" and the "Shifting the Balance of Power" initiative to devolve funding decisions to the front line, it is now for primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services, based on the specialised knowledge they have of the local community.

Recruitment Consultants

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available on (i) head-hunters and recruitment consultants, (ii) management consultants, (iii) advertising consultants and (iv) public relations consultants. [184534]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 16 July 2004]*: The detailed information requested is not held centrally. Expenditure by the Department on external consultancy services in each year from 1996–97 to 2003–04 is shown in the table.

Financial Year	Expenditure (£ million)
1996–97	14.699
1997–98	12.694
1998–99	7.332
1999–2000	8.132
2000–01	6.531
2002–02	6.800
2002–03	7.266
2003–04	[1]10.951

[1] This is the latest figure included in the accounts, but the accounts have yet to be authorised.

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Medical Research Council has identified

rheumatoid arthritis as a priority area; and how much of its resources are going into *(a)* research programmes and *(b)* projects related to this disease. [186279]

Ms Hewitt: I have been asked to reply.

Arthritis and rheumatism is one of 12 disease specific research divisions of the Medical Research Council (MRC).

The MRC spent £6.8 million in the FY 2002–03, on research into arthritis and rheumatism and much of this will be relevant to rheumatoid arthritis.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Government supports the inclusion of rheumatoid arthritis as a priority of research area in the next EU framework programme. [186284]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government has recently consulted on the European Union seventh research and development framework programme. Details are available on the Office of Science and Technology (OST) website at http://www.ost.gov.uk/ostinternational/fp7/index.html. Initial feedback will be published on the OST website shortly.

The Government plans to produce a position paper on the seventh framework programme in early Autumn 2004. That paper will also be published on the OST website.

Scoliosis

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the incidence of scoliosis among teenagers; and what steps are being taken to develop appropriate treatment of the condition. [185280]

Dr. Ladyman: Scoliosis is a descriptive term rather than a specific diagnosis, which can be wide-ranging from simple to very complex conditions. Information is not collected centrally by the Department on the incidence of all types of scoliosis. However, it has been estimated that idiopathic adolescent scoliosis, which is one of the accepted classifications in which scoliosis can be the only finding, has an incidence of two per thousand children.

A range of services for the treatment of scoliosis is available across the country, including spinal corrective surgery for children. A review of services for children with spinal deformity, including scoliosis, is being undertaken by a project group with wide stakeholder representation. The group, led by the North Central London Strategic Health Authority, produced its first report in May 2004 and is looking to take recommendations forward.

Suffolk West Primary Care Trust

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the current deficit is of Suffolk West Primary Care Trust; and what it has been in each of the last three years. [187198]

Dr. Ladyman: Suffolk West Primary Care Trust (PCT) overspend against the revenue resource limit (deficit) is shown as follows. It is not possible to provide a separate figure for 2001–02 as the PCT was then part of Suffolk health authority.

	£000
Financial position at year end 2002–03	1,581
Financial position for year end 2003–04	4,423

Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of the Suffolk West PCT.

Suffolk West PCT is forecasting to break even at year end 2005.

The audited information in respect of the 2004–05 financial position of all PCTs will be published in their individual annual accounts and will be available centrally in autumn 2005.

Vancomycin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what preventative measures his Department has taken against the threat of vancomycin resistant *staphylococcus aureus* to the NHS; [184324]

(2) what research his Government have conducted into the treatment against vancomycin resistant *staphylococcus aureus;* [184325]

(3) what contingency plans he has in place to control the spread of vancomycin resistant *staphylococcus aureus* in NHS hospitals. [184327]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 15 July 2004]:* Minimising the development and spread of new strains such as vancomycin resistant *staphylococcus aureus* (VRSA) requires prudent prescribing of antibiotics as well as strict adherence to infection control measures. These measures are part of our action plan, "Winning Ways—Working Together to Reduce Healthcare Associated Infection in England".

We are aware of three incidents of VRSA infection worldwide to date and all were susceptible to some alternative antibiotics. Hospital microbiology laboratories carry out sensitivity tests on their isolates and the health protection agency monitors isolates of *staphylococcus aureus* for vancomycin resistance to detect any new cases of VRSA and to ensure that these very rare microorganisms are not becoming more commonplace.

Vulnerable Adults

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to extend the protection of vulnerable adults list to *(a)* the NHS and *(b)* day care services; and if he will make a statement. [187071]

Dr. Ladyman: The protection of vulnerable adults (PoVA) list will be extended to the national health service as soon as the necessary changes can be made to the Care Standards Act 2000.

Day care services do not fall within the scope of the PoVA scheme. This is because they are not regulated under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whom he has consulted on the extension of the protection of vulnerable adults list to the NHS. [187079]

Dr. Ladyman: The consultation process on extending the protection of vulnerable adults scheme to the national health service has not yet begun. We intend to go out to consultation in the near future, but we also

need to ensure that the proposals are consistent with the proposals for barring unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults emerging from the Bichard Inquiry.

Waiting Lists

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients in the Northampton, South constituency, or the nearest relevant unit of population were waiting for NHS operations for longer than *(a)* 18 months, *(b)* 15 months, *(c)* 12 months, *(d)* nine months and *(e)* six months in each of the last 10 years. [186578]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Patients waiting for elective admission: Provider based

Month end/Organisation	*Total number of patients waiting for admission*	*Patients waiting for admission by months waiting*				
		6–8 months	*9–11 months*	*12–14 months*	*15–17 months*	*Over 18 months*
March 1996						
Kettering General Hospital National Health Service Trust	5,991	889	424	15	1	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	4,707	380	180	78	4	0
March 1997						
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	6,432	1,106	640	0	0	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	5,796	783	424	191	28	0
March 1998						
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	7,492	1,141	715	201	100	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	7,225	1,056	702	421	149	0
March 1999						
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	5,910	863	543	245	8	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	7,088	1,051	827	399	119	0
March 2000						
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	5,818	750	362	235	77	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	6,713	909	718	467	238	0
March 2001						
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	5,944	727	360	151	28	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	6,484	809	537	288	114	0
March 2002						
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	5,522	771	402	176	0	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	6,759	1,016	600	403	0	0
March 2003						
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	5,515	939	222	0	0	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	7,323	1,135	694	0	0	0
March 2004						
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	4,435	536	0	0	0	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	5,982	702	0	0	0	0

Organisation	*Total number of patients waiting for admission*	*Patients waiting for admission by months waiting*		
		6–8 months	*9–11 months*	*Over 12 months*
Daventry and South Northamptonshire PCT	19	0	0	0
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	4,420	467	0	0
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	5,625	804	0	0

Mr Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average number of patients on *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* day case waiting lists was in Great Yarmouth in each year since 1997; and what the percentage change was in each year. [186699]

Dr. Ladyman: The average number of patients for Great Yarmouth Primary Care Trust (PCT) for in-patient and day case waiting lists, the latest data available, is shown in the table.

Count of elective in-year admissions (waiting list and booked cases) and percentage changes for ordinary and day cases, 1996–97 to 2002–03, PCT code (PCT of residence) = 5GT (Great Yarmouth) National Health Service Hospitals, England

Year	In-year admissions ordinary	Change (ordinary) percentage	In-year admissions (day case)	Change (day case) percentage	In year admissions (ordinary plus day case)	Change (ordinary plus day case) percentage
1996–97	4,737		5,434		10,171	
1997–98	4,339	−8.4	5,594	2.9	9,933	−2.3
1998–99	3,912	−9.8	6,368	13.8	10,280	3.5
1999–2000	3,505	−10.4	6,287	−1.3	9,792	−4.7
2000–01	3,389	−3.3	6,174	−1.8	9,563	−2.3
2001–02	3,049	−10.0	4,452	−27.9	7,501	−21.6
2002–03	3,328	9.2	4,883	9.7	8,211	9.5

Notes:
1. An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Periods of care ongoing at the end of the datayear (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital episode statistics (HES), Department of Health.

West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cancelled operations there were in each of the last seven years in the West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust. [187200]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of cancelled operations at the West Suffolk Hospital is shown in the table. However, it should be noted that the figures quoted at trust level only go back three years. Prior to that, the data was collected at health authority (HA) level only and they would not be comparable.

West Suffolk Hospitals National Health Service Trust—Number of cancelled operations for non clinical reasons

Quarter	Number of last minute cancellations for non clinical—reasons in the quarter
2003–04 4	183
2003–04 3	124
2003–04 2	78
2003–04 1	40
2002–03 4	43
2002–03 3	11
2002–03 2	74
2002–03 1	66
2001–02 4	145
2001–02 3	122
2001–02 2	14
2001–02 1	81

Note:
Data prior to 2001–02 collect at HA level only.

Source:
Department of Health dataset QMCO.

Winter Deaths

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to introduce targets to reduce the number of winter deaths. [186798]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are no plans to introduce additional targets specifically to reduce the number of winter deaths. The Government are committed to decreasing the number of national targets imposed on the national health service and allowing more locally agreed targets. The document, "National Standards, Local action: Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework 2005–06 to 2007–08", published on 21 July 2004, has already set out the national targets for the next five years.

However, there is an existing target to tackle influenza, one of the biggest seasonal killers. A target for influenza vaccination in those aged 65 and over has been set since 2000–01. In 2003–04, the target was that nationally over 70 per cent. of that age group would be vaccinated, and thanks to last year's successful 'flu immunisation campaign, this was exceeded, with 71 per cent. of those aged 65 or over being vaccinated. The 70 per cent. take-up target remains this year.

In addition to the 'flu target, the Government have several other initiatives to reduce avoidable winter deaths. These include the "Keep Warm, Keep Well" campaign, which offers people advice on staying warm and keeping well in winter and winter fuel payments for older people, which help to keep warm those most susceptible to the cold weather.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* house officers, *(b)* senior house officers, *(c)* specialist registrars, *(d)* general practitioners, *(e)* consultants, *(f)* associate specialists, *(g)* staff grades and *(h)* clinical assistants have signed a formal opt-out from the Working Time Directive; [186362]

(2) how many *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* acute hospital trusts and *(c)* social care trusts have medical staff who have signed a formal opt-out from the Working Time Directive. [186365]

Mr. Hutton: The Working Time Directive is a legal requirement on which implementation is being taken forward locally.

Under Regulation 5 of the Working Time Regulations 1998, individuals are allowed to voluntarily agree in writing with their employer to exceed the maximum average weekly working time of 48 hours. As this is an agreement made locally, information on take-up is not held centrally.

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what evidence he has collated following the results from the Working Time Directive Pilots Programme on whether the NHS will be compliant with the European Working Time Directive on 1 August; [186363]

(2) what recent representations he has received on the ability of *(a)* anaesthetic, *(b)* maternity, *(c)* paediatric, *(d)* general surgical and *(e)* general medical services to comply with the European Working Time Directive. [186364]

Mr. Hutton: Strategic health authorities are responsible for performance managing trust implementation of Working Time Directive (WTD) compliance for doctors in training from 1 August 2004. The Working Time Regulations have applied to all other national health service staff since 1998 and trusts are expected to comply with them in the same way as any other national legislation. The Department does not routinely collect information on compliance either by trust or by specialty.

The vast majority of trusts are now fully compliant. A handful of trusts are having problems in securing compliance in a limited number of specialties.

We are working in partnership with the British Medical Association, the Royal Colleges and the Modernisation Agency to support those trusts finding compliance particularly difficult. The Modernisation Agency WTD team offers expert advice and the sharing of good practice solutions throughout the NHS.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Savings Incentives

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the number of people eligible for means-tested benefits on incentives to save. [186546]

Malcolm Wicks: In its response last year to the Work and Pensions Select Committee's Third Report on The Future of UK Pensions, the Government recognised that it is important to improve our understanding of savings decisions and how savings incentives work.

Eligibility for income related benefits is one of many factors likely to influence incentives to save. However these are complex questions and we want to engage with academic and other experts on how best to assess the influences on savings behaviour. The Government has established the independent Pensions Commission to monitor and keep under review the voluntary system of private pensions and long term savings.

Benefit Recipients

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people who receive *(a)* income support and *(b)* pension credit also pay income tax; and what proportion this is of recipients of each benefit. [187346]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

Christmas Bonus

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of increasing the pensioners' annual Christmas bonus to the equivalent of one week's state pension. [186567]

Malcolm Wicks: The cost of increasing the annual Christmas bonus to the equivalent of one week's state pension in 2005–06 is estimated at £1.0 billion.

Notes:
1. Figures are in 2004–05 price terms rounded to the nearest £100 million.
2. The bonus is assumed to be paid at the full category A weekly rate of basic state pension, currently £79.60.
3. The Christmas bonus is currently paid to people in receipt of a number of qualifying benefits, some of whom are of working age. These people are assumed to receive the Christmas bonus at the new rate.

Council Tax Benefit

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the Bridgwater constituency *(a)* are entitled to council tax benefit and *(b)* do not claim the council tax benefit to which they are entitled. [186500]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. Statistics for Great Britain are presented in the DWP series "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up". The latest estimates relate to financial year 2001–02 and are in the Library.

DLA

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to change the levels of disability living allowance payable to pensioners. [186459]

Maria Eagle: The rates at which disability living allowance is paid are increased in April each year by the rate of inflation as measured by the movement in the Retail Price Index. The Government have no plans to change this arrangement.

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applications for disability living allowance were initially *(a)* granted and *(b)* refused in the last year within the constituency of Northampton South. [186583]

Maria Eagle: The number of applications for Disability Living Allowance that were initially granted in the last year in the Parliamentary Constituency of Northampton South is 400[1] The number of refusals is not available, as these are held as a national figure only.

Notes:
1. Figures less than 500 are subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
2. Figures taken from a 5 per cent., sample at 29 February 2004
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
4. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.

Source:
IAD Information Centre.

Employers' Liability Insurance

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make it his policy to require companies to be registered for employers' liability compulsory insurance. [187185]

Jane Kennedy: The Department will assess the costs and benefits of registering employers on an ELCI database by autumn 2004. This is part of our work to consider how best to tackle the small number of employers who do not have Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance (ELCI) cover, and how best to help claimants trace employers' ELCI insurance policies.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of *(a)* the extent of evasion of employers' liability compulsory insurance within the construction and roofing industries and *(b)* the impact of such evasion on (i) the health and safety of workers and (ii) the profitability of insured employers. [187186]

Jane Kennedy: There are no figures available to show compliance with the Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance (ELCI) Act 1969 solely within the construction and roofing industries.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) carried out a survey of compliance with ELCI in the autumn of 2003. That survey included small, medium and large firms across all sectors in England, Scotland and Wales and concluded that ELCI compliance was high—nearly 99.5 per cent. of those employers surveyed were ELCI compliant.

The provision of ELCI does not, of itself, impact on the health and safety of workers. ELCI merely ensures that there is some money available to compensate a person who successfully claims against their employer in the event of an injury or ill health arising out of their employment.

The survey found that the most commonly sited response to the increased cost of ELCI has been to "try and improve health and safety performance" (50 per cent. of respondents). In the context of our work to promote a risk-based approach to the setting of ELCI premiums, better Health and Safety performance will enable insurers to better reflect good Health and Safety practices in the terms they can offer.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he intends to implement the recommendations of his Department's second report on employers' liability compulsory insurance. [187187]

Jane Kennedy: The Department for Work and Pensions, working with stakeholders, has made good progress towards delivering all the recommendations in the Second Stage Report.

Recommendations still to be fully implemented are the Framework for Vocational Rehabilitation, the Health and Safety Executive Management Performance Index for small businesses, and the Claims Pilots to make claims processes more cost effective, quicker and transparent. All of these will be launched by the autumn 2004.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost has been of creating Jobcentre Plus offices in each year since 2001–02; and what the estimated costs are for each year to 2007–08. [187347]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. David Willetts, dated 7 September 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the costs of creating Jobcentre Plus offices in each year since 2001/02 and what the estimated costs are for each year to 2007/08. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The creation of Jobcentre Plus offices was organised in two separate phases. The rollout did not start until 2002/03. The 56 offices introduced in 2001/02 were known as Pathfinders and were not accounted for as part of the main roll out project. The capital cost of these Pathfinders in 2001/02 was £36.7m.

From 2002/03 the Jobcentre Plus Implementation Project was set up to roll out the remaining offices nationwide. This is a 4-year programme from 2002/03 to 2005/06. The breakdown of the total costs is as follows:

	Total	
	£ million	*Percentage*
Total Staffing	674	30
Total Running Costs	652	29
Total Capital	903	41
Total Rollout Programme	2229	100

The total project spend to date, including accruals, is £817m. The annual costs of rolling out the offices are shown below.

£ million

	Actual		*Forecast outturn*		*Rollout Programme Total*
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	
Capital Costs	111	251	195	346	903
Staffing/Running Costs	149	200	381	596	1326
Cumulative Total	260	711	1287	2229	—

The Jobcentre Plus Implementation project is due to be completed in March 2006. The project has now rolled out over 500 offices and remains within budget.

I hope this is helpful.

New Deal

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have entered self-employment as a result of participating in each New Deal scheme in each year since 1997–98. [186779]

Jane Kennedy: The information is not available.

Information on numbers of people entering the New Deal self employment option through New Deal for Young People and New Deal 25 plus, and those receiving the New Deal 50 plus Employment Credit whilst being self employed is in the table. Information on Self Employment starts from the other New Deals is not available.

New Deal

	New Deal[1] for Young People	*New Deal[2] 25 plus*	*New Deal[3]–50 plus*
1998–99	780	—	—
1999–2000	1,540	—	—
2000–01	1,350	—	4,040
2001–02	980	3,470	4,120
2002–03	1,080	3,870	4,040
2003–04	1,140	2,290	—
Total	6,870	9,630	12,190

Notes:

1. Information is only available from 1998 onwards.
2. Information is only available from 2001 onwards.
3. Information is only available from 2000 onwards
4. Information is for April to March each year.
5. All data is to March 2004 except New Deal 50 plus which is to March 2003.
6. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10 and totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source:

New Deal Evaluation Database, DWP Information and Analysis Directorate

New Deal and Employment Zones

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are employed *(a)* in his Department and *(b)* in Jobcentre Plus in administering each of the (i) New Deal programmes and (ii) Employment Zones. [186427]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not available.

The Department for Work and Pensions, including Jobcentre Plus, keeps staffing records by grade and location, but not by job role.

Pensioners

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners are *(a)* eligible for and *(b)* claiming the pension credit in Northampton South. [186464]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of people likely to be eligible for Pension Credit is not available at constituency level. However, we estimate that approximately 250,000 households in the East Midlands region, corresponding to approximately 350,000 individuals (rounded to the nearest 50,000), are likely to be eligible for Pension Credit in 2004–05. At the end of July, 3,885 pensioner households in Northampton South, comprising 4,655 individuals (rounded to the nearest five), were in receipt of Pension Credit. The corresponding figures for the East Midlands region at the same date were 185,305 households and 227,800 individuals in receipt of Pension Credit.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Bridgwater *(a)* are entitled to pension credit, *(b)* are in receipt of pension credit and *(c)* were receiving the minimum income guarantee prior to the introduction of pension credit. [186507]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of people likely to be eligible for pension credit is not available at constituency level. However, we estimate that approximately 300,000 households in the South West region, corresponding to approximately 400,000 individuals (rounded to the nearest 50,000), are likely to be eligible for pension credit in 2004–05. At the end of July, 214,425 pensioner households in the South West region, comprising approximately 261,835 individuals, were in receipt of pension credit. Information on the number of pension credit and minimum income guarantee (MIG) recipients in Bridgewater is given in the table.

Pension credit and MIG recipients in Bridgewater

	Recipients of MIG, 3 October 2003	*Recipients of pension credit, 31 July 2004*
Households	3,025	4,550
Individuals	3,655	5,655

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.
2. Individual recipients include a small number of partners under age 60.
3. Pension credit was introduced on 6 October 2003.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 833–34W, on pension credit, if he will provide the same breakdown of calls to the pension credit application line for subsequent months. [186852]

Malcolm Wicks: The available information is shown in the table.

Calls to pension credit application line, January–July 2004

	Calls received by application line	*Calls receiving engaged tone or recorded message*	*Calls answered within 30 seconds*	*Average call duration (minutes: seconds)*
January	495,560	120	429,670	08:12
February	433,790	190	372,930	08:34
March	430,070	230	378,440	08:38
April	346,890	13,560	250,970	09:18
May	234,580	20	212,570	08:48
June	315,200	20	266,040	07:20
July	239,990	30	212,390	07:22

Notes:

1. Numbers of calls are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. The number of calls receiving the engaged tone or a recorded message was unusually high in April due to reduced numbers of staff as a result of industrial action. The number of lines feeding into the application line from the network was reduced to avoid people having to wait for a long time for an answer (instead they received a recorded message).
3. The number of calls received is a measure of the total number of calls from customers made to the application line number 0800 99 1234. The number of calls answered within 30 seconds is a measure of all calls answered in application line sites and excludes any calls abandoned by the customer.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest projections are for expenditure on all benefits to pensioners, broken down by benefit, up to 2053–54 *(a)* as a percentage of GDP and *(b)* in £ billion at 2004–05 prices. [187358]

Malcolm Wicks: The information has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average pensioner income was in *(a)* cash terms and *(b)* real terms in (i) 2001–02, (ii) 2002–03 and (iii) 2003–04, broken down by (A) state benefits and (B) private savings. [187356]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the tables. Information for 2003–04 is currently unavailable.

Average pensioner income in cash terms

Income source	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
State benefits	136	142
Private saving	105	106
Earnings	24	25
Average pensioner income	268	277

Average pensioner income in real terms

Income source	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
State benefits	139	142
Private saving	107	106
Earnings	25	25
Average pensioner income	273	277

Source:
Family Resources Surveys 2001–02 and 2002–03, average incomes rounded to the nearest pound.

Income from state benefits includes: state pensions; income-related benefits; and disability benefits. Income from private saving includes: occupational pensions; personal pensions; and investments.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to change the state pensions of expatriates living in countries not covered by reciprocal social security agreements with the UK. [186564]

Malcolm Wicks: We up-rate state pensions for British citizens living overseas where there is a legal requirement or a reciprocal social security agreement to do so.

However, the up-dating of State Pensions outside this arrangement is the subject of an appeal to the House of Lords from a decision of the Court of Appeal which found in favour of the Government. We will respond accordingly at the hearing which is set for 28 February and 1 March next year.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to change the rules allowing for the state pension to be reduced after 52 weeks in hospital. [186565]

Malcolm Wicks: We have no plans at present to change these rules.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to change the level of a surviving partner's entitlement to the state earnings-related pension scheme. [186572]

Malcolm Wicks: We have no plans to alter the current arrangements.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of increasing the 25p a week age addition to £25. [186573]

Malcolm Wicks: The net cost of raising the age addition to £25 per week in 2005–06 is estimated at £2.1 billion.

Notes:

1. Figures are in 2004–05 price terms, rounded to the nearest £100 million.

2. Costs net of income-related benefits (savings credit, guarantee credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit) and income tax are calculated using the Department's policy simulation model for 2005–06.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost over a period of five years of increasing the basic state pension to a level of one-third average male earnings. [186575]

Malcolm Wicks: The Information is in the table.

£ billion

	Gross cost	*Net cost*
2005–06	50.5	32.3
2006–07	52.9	36.2
2007–08	55.6	38.0
2008–09	58.5	39.9
2009–10	61.5	41.9

Notes:

1. Figures are for GB and overseas in 2004–05 price terms, using the Gross Domestic Product deflator index, rounded to the nearest £100 million.

2. Gross basic state pension costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002 based population projections. Basic state pension costs refer to the additional costs after allowing for consequential changes to National Insurance Fund benefits and non-income-related vote benefits.

3. Costs net of income-related benefits (savings credit, guarantee credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit) and income tax are calculated using the Department's policy simulation model for 2005–06 and 2006–07. For illustrative purposes it is assumed that the proportion of savings calculated for the 2006–07 year is constant for subsequent years.

4. Average male earnings are taken from table 3.2 of the Department for Work and Pensions annual abstract of statistics. The April 2003 figure was £525 per week, and this was used to set a category A basic state pension of £175 for the following year. This was then projected forward using Budget 2004 economic assumptions for earnings growth.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of extending the full basic state pension to all people of pensionable age regardless of national insurance contributions. [186576]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table:

£ billion

	Gross cost	Net cost
2005–06	7.3	5.0
2006–07	8.9	6.0
2007–08	9.9	6.7
2008–09	10.9	7.4
2009–10	11.9	8.1

Notes:

1. Figures are for Great Britain only, in 2004–05 price terms, using the Gross Domestic Products deflator index, rounded to the nearest £100 million.

2. It is assumed that the rules are changed from 2005–06 and that basic state pension is increased in line with prices. It is assumed that all individuals above state pension age (65 for men; 60 for women receive the full category A rate of basic state pension (currently £79.60 per week) regardless of contribution record or marital status.

3. Gross basic state pension costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002-based population projections. Basic state pension costs refer to the additional costs after allowing for consequential changes to National Insurance Fund benefits and non-income-related vote benefits.

4. Costs net of income related benefits (savings credit, guarantee credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit) and income tax are calculated using the Department's policy simulation model for 2005–06 and 2006–07. For illustrative purposes it is assumed that the proportion of savings calculated for the year 2006–07 is constant for subsequent years.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of raising the basic state pension to the level of the guarantee credit. [186579]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the following table:

£ billion

	Gross cost	Net cost
2005–06	13.5	7.3
2006–07	15.1	7.7
2007–08	16.4	8.3
2008–09	17.8	9.0
2009–10	19.2	9.8

Notes:

1. Figures are for Great Britain and overseas in 2004–05 price terms, using the Gross Domestic Product deflator index, rounded to the nearest £100 million.

2. It is assumed that the category A rate of basic state pension is increased to the level of the individual guarantee credit in 2005–06 and that both are increased in line with earnings. The category B rate of basic state pension is increased by the same proportion.

3. Gross basic state pension costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002-based population projections. Basic state pension costs refer to the additional costs after allowing for consequential changes to national insurance fund benefits and non-income-related vote benefits.

4. Costs net of income-related benefits (savings credit, guarantee credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit) and income tax are calculated using the Department's policy simulation model for 2005–06 and 2006–07. For illustrative purposes it is assumed that the proportion of savings calculated for the year 2006–07 is constant for subsequent years.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what targets he has set for the uptake of benefits by pensioners for the next four years. [186796]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has two Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets for take up of pension credit by pensioners:

By 2006, be paying pension credit to at least 3 million pensioner households; and

By 2008, be paying pension credit to at least 3.2 million pensioner households, while maintaining a focus on the most disadvantaged by ensuring that at least 2.2 million of the households are in receipt of the guarantee element.

In addition, the 2006 pension credit target is supported by a Service Delivery Agreement (SDA), which says that by 2006, we will be paying the guarantee element of pension credit to at least 2.1 million pensioner households.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimates are of the cost of contracted-out rebates in each of the past 10 years and each of the next 10 years consistent with the latest estimates by the Office of National Statistics of Pension contributions. [187348]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. The National Insurance contribution (NIC) rebates for Contracted-out Salary Related Schemes are delivered through lower rate NICs rather than as a payment to the pension scheme. Because of this, they would not be included in the data source used to compile the ONS estimates of pension contributions. Such information as is available is set out in the table.

£ billions

Past 10 years		Next 10 years	
Tax year	Estimated cost of rebates	Tax year	Estimated cost of rebates
1994–95	[1]	2004–05	11.9
1995–96	6.7	2005–06	12.3
1996–97	6.9	2006–07	12.7
1997–98	7.6	2007–08	12.2
1998–99	7.8	2008–09	12.5
1999–2000	8.3	2009–10	12.8
2000–01	9.1	2010–11	13.1
2001–02	9.5	2011–12	13.5
2002–03	11.1	2012–13	13.5
2003–04	11.5	2013–14	13.8

[1] Data not available.

Notes:

1. Figures are based on the assumptions used to determine the current national insurance rebates and those for the long-term Public Expenditure Survey undertaken in February 2004.

2. They are for Great Britain only and are calculated on an accruals' basis.

3. The model used by GAD to produce these estimates goes back only to the 1995–96 tax year. They have been unable, therefore, to provide estimates for 1994–95.

Source:

Government Actuary's Department (GAD)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will provide a breakdown of expenditure on contracted-out rebates for *(a)* private sector employees and *(b)* public sector employees in each of the past 10 years; and what the projections are for each of the next 10 years. [187353]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the *(a)* mean and *(b)* median cost of the contracted out rebate for

(i) a public sector employee and (ii) a private sector employee in each of the last 10 years; and what the projection is for each of the next 10 years. [187354]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many contracts his Department had with *(a)* Barclays Bank, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186657]

Jane Kennedy: DWP was formed in June 2001. We have had no involvement with any of these companies concerning private finance initiative and public private partnerships contracts.

Social Fund

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what resources the Government have made available to the Social Fund since 1997; whether the Government intends to increase the budget of the Social Fund; and if he will make a statement. [186866]

Mr. Pond: Additional resources have been made available to both the regulated and discretionary Social Fund since 1997.

In the regulated fund, which is not cash limited, Sure Start Maternity Grants have been introduced and are now worth £500; five times as much as the old maternity payment. Winter fuel payments, now worth £200, have been introduced to help older people meet fuel costs, and are available to around eight million households. From the winter of 2003–04 those households that include a person aged 80 or over receiving a winter fuel payment receive an additional £100.

The net budget for the discretionary Social Fund, which includes Community Care Grants, Budgeting Loans and Crisis Loans, has also increased since 1997, and will be increased by a further £90 million over the three years from April 2003.

The information is in the table.

Social Fund expenditure since 1997

£ million

	Discretionary Fund		
	Community Care Grants	*Budgeting Loans*	*Crisis Loans*
1997–98	97	311	54
1998–99	98	344	59
1999–2000	98	396	62
2000–01	100	435	65
2001–02	103	469	75
2002–03	108	462	85
2003–04	117	484	85

Regulated Fund

£ million

	Maternity Payments/ Sure Start Maternity Grants	*Funeral Payments*	*Cold Weather Payments*	*Winter Fuel Payments*
1997–98	20	38	0.5	191
1998–99	18	39	0.2	194
1999–2000	17	38	1.0	759
2000–01	44	36	30	1,749
2001–02	61	38	15	1,692
2002–03	111	42	14	1,700
2003–04	120	47	4	1,931

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest £1 million, except for cold weather payments of £1.0 million or less which are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million.
2. Winter fuel payments expenditure for 2000–01 includes £94 million for retrospective entitlement due to extending winter fuel payments to all those aged 60 or over (with some exceptions) and £108 million for those entitled for the first time in 2000–01.
3. Winter fuel payments expenditure for 2003–04 includes expenditure on the 80+ payment. Winter fuel payment expenditure for 2003–04 is estimated.

Source:

Secretary of State's annual reports on the Social Fund, except expenditure for winter fuel payments, which is taken from Social Fund accounts.

Social Fund Loans

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Social Fund budget loans, and to what value, have been made in each year since 1997; and how many and what value of these were to cover delays in payments of social security benefits and tax credits. [186781]

Mr. Pond: Social Fund Loans, including Budgeting Loans, should not be awarded to compensate for delay in payment of benefits; where there is delay in payment, interim benefit payments can be considered.

Budgeting Loan awards and gross expenditure since 1997

	Initial awards	*Total gross expenditure (£ million)*
1997–98	916,000	311
1998–99	935,000	344
1999–2000	1,017,000	396
2000–01	1,145,000	435
2001–02	1,240,000	469
2002–03	1,251,000	462
2003–04	1,250,000	484

Notes:

1. Initial awards do not include awards made after review.
2. Gross expenditure does include awards made on review.
3. Numbers of initial awards are rounded to the nearest thousand and total gross expenditure to the nearest million.

Source:

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Annual reports on the Social Fund.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of increasing the value of the winter fuel allowance to £300 per household. [186460]

Malcolm Wicks: The estimated additional cost of increasing the winter fuel payment from £200 to £300 is £860 million.

Industrial Injuries (Appeals)

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the Government's target time is from application to hearing for appeals concerning industrial injuries disablement benefit diseases; and what the average waiting time has been for those whose appeals are currently being heard. [175717]

Mr. Pond: *[pursuant to the reply, 27 May 2004, Official Report, c. 1802W]:*

This is a matter for Christina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Appeals Service. She will reply to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Chris Pond to Mr. Tony Lloyd, dated 31 August 2004:

Dr. Christina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Appeals Service, wrote to you on 27 May in reply to your question about waiting times for Industrial Injuries Disablement appeals.

Unfortunately, the figure quoted in the reply was for appeal clearance rather than appeal waiting time. I am sorry that this mistake, which was the result of a programming error when producing the data, has arisen. I attach a copy of the amended reply, which will also be published in Hansard.

Letter from Christina Townsend to Mr. Tony Lloyd, dated 31 August 2004:

Pursuant to my written answer on 27 May, *Official Report*, column 1802W. The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question regarding the target time for hearing appeals concerning Industrial Disablement Benefit (IIDB) diseases and the average waiting time for those whose appeals are currently being heard.

Our target for the 2003–2004 financial year was to hear appeals within an average of 13 weeks from receipt in our Service. Information on waiting times is not available in the format requested but I can advise you that the average waiting time for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit appeals was 9.26[1] weeks for the 2003–2004 financial year.

I hope that this is helpful.

Notes:

[1] All figures are subject to change as more up to date data becomes available.

Figures for the latest months may rise significantly as information feeds through to the Appeals Service.

Figures are rounded to two decimal places

Source:

100 per cent. download of the Generic Appeals Processing System

Disability Discrimination Act

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will set out the timescale for compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 for *(a)* voluntary and community groups and *(b)* small businesses; and if he will make a statement; [187572]

(2) what financial assistance is available to help *(a)* voluntary and community groups and *(b)* small businesses to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995; and if he will make a statement. [187573]

Maria Eagle: Many voluntary and community groups and small businesses, where they are employers or provide services to the public, are already under a duty to meet certain requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. For example, they are already required not to discriminate unjustifiably against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled people in recruitment, employment or in the way that they deliver services to disabled people.

On 1 October 2004, the employment provisions of the DDA are being extended to employers with fewer than 15 employees. At the same time, service providers will be under additional duties to tackle physical features of their premises which otherwise make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to access the service, or to provide the service by another reasonable means.

The Government, and the Disability Rights Commission, have undertaken wide-ranging publicity campaigns over the last two years to raise awareness of the new duties in order to give employers and service providers the opportunity to understand, and plan for, their implementation.

There is no specific funding available to help *(a)* voluntary and community groups and *(b)* small businesses, or indeed any business or organisation with duties under the DDA, to meet the requirements of the Act. This is because employers and service providers are only required to do what is reasonable, and factors such as the cost and practicability of making reasonable adjustments, and the financial and other resources available to the business or organisation, will be taken into account in determining what is reasonable.

In certain instances, an employer who employs a disabled person may be able to obtain assistance to make adjustments for the disabled employee from the Access to Work programme. Employers can obtain further information about the programme by contacting their nearest Access to Work Business Centre.

Pension Credit

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to alter the rule whereby people who stay abroad for longer than four weeks have their pension credit payments stopped; and if he will make a statement. [187546]

Malcolm Wicks: Pension Credit is for people who live in Great Britain. If someone expects to be absent abroad for less than 52 weeks it can continue to be paid normally for no more than four weeks; or for up to eight weeks for someone accompanying a young person who lives with them and who is receiving medical treatment abroad. It can continue to be paid for people who have gone abroad for medical treatment under the NHS for themselves for as long as they receive treatment.

Officials are currently researching a range of options for potentially extending the period for which Pension Credit can continue to be paid for customers who go abroad for less than 52 weeks.

Employers' Liability Insurance

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to reduce the burden on employers' liability compulsory

insurance on small businesses with good health and safety track records; and what legislative changes are proposed. [186352]

Jane Kennedy: The Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance (ELCI) Review identified a number of steps that would help to reduce the burden of ELCI on small businesses with good health and safety track records.

Firstly, the Department for Work and Pensions is currently reviewing ELCI in respect of those limited companies in the UK where the owner is the only employee. If a decision is made to remove the requirement for ELCI from such companies, then any legislative change can be expected in the UK early in 2005.

The Department is keen to see a more risk based approach to the underwriting of risks. The 'Making the Market Work' initiative run by the Association of British Insurers, and the developing Health and Safety Executive Management Performance Index for small businesses, will both help to ensure that insurers are able to reflect good health and safety practices in the terms they can offer.

Social Fund

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans the Government have to reform the Social Fund; and if he will make a statement. [186865]

Mr. Pond: The Social Fund plays an important role in the Government's agenda for tackling poverty and social exclusion. It provides support to millions of people on low incomes, including some of the most vulnerable people in our society. We have announced a number of improvements to the Social Fund.

£90 million is being added to the Discretionary Social Fund budget over the three years to 2005–06, as announced in the Pre-Budget report 2002.

The Child Poverty Review, published on 12 July 2004, announced the Government's intention to abolish the Budgeting Loan 'double debt' rule and to reduce the current standard repayment rate of 15 per cent. of a customers benefit to 12 per cent. These changes will make Budgeting Loans more consistent and easier to understand and the Social Fund more effective in assisting those families most likely to experience over-indebtedness.

The Government are also looking at ways in which more affordable loans can be made available to people on low incomes, and are seeking to work in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors to find ways of delivering these, while ensuring that the loans enhance the ability of people to manage their finances responsibly.

We will continue to look at ways in which the Social Fund can be made more effective.

Work Injuries

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will introduce a training system for providers of rehabilitation services to victims of accidents at work; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186482]

Jane Kennedy: The Department's work to produce a Framework for Vocational Rehabilitation has highlighted that organisations representing different rehabilitation providers already provide training schemes. For example, there are existing training curricula for doctors in the specialties of occupational medicine and rehabilitation medicine published by the Specialist Training Authority. There are analogous schemes for nurses and other health care professionals.

The framework will commit the Department to work with stakeholders, including training organisations, to ensure consistency in the training provided on recognised vocational rehabilitation standards. The Department will also work with stakeholders to identify, and take steps to fill, any standards or training gaps.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will introduce an accreditation scheme for providers of rehabilitative services to victims of accidents at work; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186483]

Jane Kennedy: The Departments work to develop a Framework for Vocational Rehabilitation has highlighted that many stakeholders would like steps to be taken to consider the need for accreditation schemes for providers of vocational rehabilitation. The Framework will set up the necessary mechanisms to enable the Department and other stakeholders to fully consider the need for accreditation schemes, and if required, to develop these.

Means-tested Benefits

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is on the assessment of *(a)* grants, *(b)* bursaries, whether from Government or other sources and *(c)* student loans in the household incomes assessments for means-tested benefits; and whether this policy is under review. [186843]

Mr. Pond: Income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, housing benefit and council tax benefit are income-related benefits. It is a general principle in the calculation of these benefits that any income available to the customer including grants, bursaries and student loans will be taken into account. A standard disregard is allowed for books, travel and equipment.

For benefit purposes, a student loan is treated in the same way as a grant or bursary. However, a further disregard of £10 per week is applied.

The new Higher Education Grant and Educational Maintenance Allowance paid to those students with low parental or family income will be wholly disregarded in the calculation of benefit as they are paid for the purpose of defraying costs of books, equipment, travel and child care.

DWP are currently working with the Department for Education and Skills and the Devolved Administrations in reviewing our policies on the treatment of grants,

loans and bursaries within the benefit system in time for new grants and bursaries due to be introduced at the beginning of the 2006/07 academic year.

CSA

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the Bridgwater constituency who have cases with the Child Support Agency are using *(a)* the old maintenance payment system and *(b)* the new maintenance payment system; and if he will make a statement as to when he estimates all people in Bridgwater will be assessed using the new system. [186502]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Ian Liddell-Grainger, dated 7 September 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in the Bridgwater constituency who have cases with the Child Support Agency are using *(a)* the old maintenance payment system and *(b)* the new maintenance payment system; and if he will make a statement as to when he estimates all people in Bridgwater will be assessed using the new system.

We do not have the information in the format you have requested. However, I can tell you that in total around 1,890,000 people are involved in cases using the old maintenance payment system and around 480,000 people are involved in cases using the new maintenance payment system. Ministers will make a decision on the bulk transfer of cases from the old scheme when they are satisfied that the new arrangements are working well for new clients. It is not possible to provide a timescale for this.

Benefit Claimants

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claimed *(a)* incapacity benefit and *(b)* jobseeker's allowance in (i) the Bury St. Edmunds parliamentary constituency and (ii) the county of Suffolk in each year since 1997. [187188]

Maria Eagle: The most recent information is in the tables.

People claiming incapacity benefit in the Bury St. Edmunds parliamentary constituency and Suffolk

As at February	Bury St. Edmunds parliamentary constituency	Suffolk
1997	2,000	18,200
1998	2,100	19,200
1999	2,300	18,800
2000	2,000	19,200
2001	2,600	19,600
2002	2,800	19,500
2003	2,700	19,700
2004	2,700	20,100

Notes:

1. Incapacity benefit figures include those getting severe disablement allowance and national insurance credits only.
2. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
4. Numbers are based on a 5 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
5. Local authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.
6. Suffolk is made up of the following LAs: Babergh, Forest Heath, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk, St. Edmundsbury, Suffolk Coastal, and Waveney.

Source:

DWP-IAD Information Centre 5 per cent. sample.

People claiming job seekers allowance in the Bury St. Edmunds parliamentary constituency and Suffolk.

As at July	Bury St. Edmunds parliamentary constituency	Suffolk
1997	1,350	13,769
1998	1,119	11,342
1999	991	10,390
2000	818	8,472
2001	742	7,437
2002	771	7,538
2003	754	7,877
2004	683	7,153

Source:

Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems (including clerically held cases).

Fraud

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress he has made in achieving his anti-fraud targets. [186522]

Mr. Pond: We have set firm targets to reduce fraud and error and have already had considerable success. Our latest figures show that since 1997 we have reduced fraud and error in income support and jobseekers allowance by 29 per cent. This is against our target of reducing fraud and error in these benefits by 33 per cent. by March next year and by 50 per cent. by March 2006.

For the first time, we have established a continuous measurement of the level of fraud and error in housing benefit with a target to reduce fraud and error in housing benefit by 25 per cent. by 2006.

The latest assessment of the levels of fraud and error in housing benefit were published in "Fraud and Error in Housing Benefit, April 2002 to September 2003" on 12 August 2004. Copies of the report are in the Library.

Savings Incentives

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what incentives the Government are offering to young people to begin saving for pensions. [186686]

Malcolm Wicks: We recognise that pension saving is far more affordable when done over a long period and the key is for young people to start taking action early in life as they become financially independent and enter the workplace for the first time.

Through our Informed Choice[1] programme we are encouraging all people, including young people, to plan ahead. We are doing this by making them aware of their options and ensuring they have the right information at the right time, together with the basic financial awareness and skills, to help them make appropriate choices. The range of initiatives include measures to:

maximise workplace pensions savings, provide personalised information about an individual's forecasted state and occupational/private pension positions, working with employers to provide information and advice in the workplace, and introducing a new web-based retirement planner.

Furthermore, the national Financial Capability Strategy, led by the Financial Services Authority and set out in two recent FSA documents[2], is working to address the financial capability needs, including those related to saving for retirement, for all groups, including young people.

We already provide incentives to encourage long-term savings by giving more generous tax treatment on pensions than on other forms of investment. Pensions are one of the most efficient ways of saving for all age groups. To encourage and reassure individuals who save in occupational pensions that their pension is secure, the Pension Protection Fund, will, for the first time in the UK, serve to protect members of defined benefit schemes if their sponsoring employer becomes insolvent and the scheme is under-funded.

We are also introducing other measures to encourage the savings habit. For example, in June, we announced our proposals for the stakeholder suite of simple, low-cost, risk-controlled savings and investment products to meet the needs of all, including the young, for their short, medium and long-term needs. Measures such as the Savings Gateway, the Universal Banking Services, the Community Finance and Learning Initiative and the introduction of the Child Trust Fund, also serve to encourage young people to engage with the financial sector.

[1] Command paper, Simplicity, Security and Choice: Informed Choices for working and saving.

[2] Towards a National Strategy for Financial Capability, November 2003 and Building Financial Capability in the UK, May 2004.

Family and Child Study

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason all reference to marriage has been omitted from the Family and Child Study data; and if he will reinstate the previous format. [187251]

Mr. Pond: The Families and Children Study (FACS) collects data from a sample of British families with dependent children on an annual basis. The questionnaire covers topics such as demographics, health, child outcomes, work, family income, material well-being and child support, among others.

FACS also continues to collect data on the marital status of the study's members. However, for reasons of limited space, the most recent FACS annual report did not include a separate analysis of marital status. Instead, the focus was on lone parent/couple status, a key determinant of benefit entitlement. It is anticipated that future reports based on FACS data will provide analyses by marital status.

Pensions

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what advice the Government provide for young people on saving for pensions. [187303]

Malcolm Wicks: Through our Informed Choice[1] programme, we are delivering a range of initiatives which help to break down the barriers people, including young people, often experience in planning ahead for their financial future in retirement. We are making people aware of their options and ensuring they have the right information at the right time, together with the basic financial awareness and skills, to help them make appropriate choices. The range of initiatives include measures to: maximise workplace pensions savings, provide personalised information about an individuals forecasted state and occupational/private pension positions, working with employers to provide information and advice in the workplace, and introducing a new web-based retirement planner.

The Government cannot promote or provide advice about financial products for pensions saving but we want all people, including young people, to be confident about making their own informed choices about working and saving for retirement. They can only do so if they have acquired basic financial awareness and skills to help them interpret the information and advice available to them.

The national Financial Capability Strategy, led by the Financial Services Authority and set out in two recent FSA documents[2] is working to address the financial education, information and advice needs, including those related to saving for retirement, for all groups, including young people.

In addition, Government information about pensions is already available to everyone, including young people, from the Pensions Service and the Financial Services Authority, via their websites and/or telephone helplines, leaflets and publications.

[1] Command paper, Simplicity, Security and Choice: Informed Choices for Working and Saving.

[2] Towards a National Strategy for Financial Capability, November 2003 and Building Financial Capability in the UK, May 2004.

New Deal

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Great Yarmouth have benefited from the New Deal for *(a)* Young People, *(b)* Long-term Unemployed and *(c)* Lone Parents. [186719]

Jane Kennedy: The information is in the table.

New Deal information for the Great Yarmouth constituency

Programme	*Number of individuals starting the programme*	*Number of individuals into jobs*
New Deal for Young People	2,040	1,270
New Deal 25 plus	1,610	580
New Deal for Lone Parents	830	400

Notes:
1. All information is to March 2004.

2. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
DWP Information and Analysis Directorate.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have participated in each New Deal programme; and how many people have participated *(a)* twice and *(b)* three times or more. [187357]

Jane Kennedy: The information is in the table.

Participants on the New Deal

Programme	*Individuals who have started the programme*	*Individuals who have started the programme twice*	*Individuals who have started the programme three times*	*Individuals who have started the programme three times or more*
New Deal for Young People	858,780	159,840	40,700	48,430
New Deal 25 plus	512,360	95,390	31,700	40,410
New Deal for Lone Parents	485,320	83,590	18,390	22,990
New Deal for Disabled People	76,620	2,630	120	130
New Deal 50 plus	98,040	—	—	—
New Deal for Partners	7,820	—	—	—

Notes:
1. New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) figures relate to registrations with an NDDP Job Broker.
2. All data is to March 2004 except New Deal 50 plus which is to March 2003.
3. Information on New Deal 50 plus relates to starts to the Employment Credit. Only one start to the New Deal 50 plus Employment Credit can be made.
4. Information on the number of individuals starting New Deal for Partners more than once is not available.
5. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
DWP Information and Analysis Directorate

Winter Fuel Payments

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in the Great Yarmouth constituency were *(a)* entitled to and *(b)* took up the winter fuel payment in the last year for which figures are available. [186704]

Malcolm Wicks: For winter 2003–04 the number of pensioners in the Great Yarmouth constituency who received a winter fuel payment was 22,220. It is not possible to say how many pensioners were entitled to a winter fuel payment.

Note:
Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
Source: IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

Pensioners

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of average pensioner household disposable income in each year since 1997; what factors are taken into account in calculating the average figure; and if he will make a statement. [186928]

Malcolm Wicks: The information in the table gives, in 2002–03 prices, the average weekly net before and after housing cost income for pensioner units between 1996–97 and 2002–03. In this period, net income before housing costs has increased by 19 per cent. in real terms, whereas net income after housing costs has increased by 26 per cent. in real terms.

Average pensioner unit net income (£)

	Income before housing costs	*Income after housing costs*
1996–97	199	170
1997–98	202	174
1998–99	208	182
1999–2000	216	189
2000–01	225	202
2001–02	233	210
2002–03	237	214

Notes:
1. Pensioners' income includes income from state pensions and benefits, private pensions and investment income.
2. The net before housing cost measure of disposable income is equal to gross income minus income tax payments; National insurance contributions; domestic rates/council tax; contributions to occupational pension schemes; maintenance and child support payments; and parental contributions to students living away from home.
3. The net after housing cost measure additionally deducts rent; water rates; community water charges; and council water charges; mortgage interest payments; structural insurance premiums; and ground rent and service charges.
Source:
Pensioners' Income Series 2002–03, in 2002–03 prices.
The estimates are based on the Family Resources Survey.

Pensioners

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of the adult population the Government estimates have claimed the basic state pension in each year since 1990. [186828]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. However, such information as is available is in the following table.

	Recipients of basic state pension living in GB	*As a percentage of GB population aged 18 and over*
September 1990	9,380,900	22
September 1991	9,407,000	22
September 1992	9,450,800	22
September 1993	9,458,200	22
September 1994	9,458,900	22
September 1995	9,541,200	22
September 1996	9,679,400	22
September 1997	9,801,700	23
March 1998	9,841,100	23
September 1999	10,030,400	23
September 2000	10,086,600	23
September 2001	10,163,600	23
September 2002	10,224,200	23
September 2003	10,317,700	23

Notes:
1. Recipient figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Recipient figures are derived from a 5 per cent. sample of cases taken from the Pension Strategy Computer System as at 31 September each year, except for 1998 when the figure is derived from a 5 per cent. sample of cases as at 31 March.

3. Recipient figures exclude persons in receipt of only: non-contributory State Pensions; Graduated Retirement Benefit; and additional State Pension.
4. Population figures are taken mid-year from mid-1990 onwards. Population data sources are: Office for National Statistics (ONS); and General Register Office Scotland (GROS).
5. As no population figures are yet available for 2003, mid-2002 figures have been used.

TRANSPORT

Public Transport (CCTV)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will provide resources to enable full coverage of operational CCTV on all public transport vehicles; and what research his Department has commissioned on the effects upon the number of charges and convictions for criminal activity on public transport if full operational CCTV coverage were to be installed in all public transport vehicles. [186976]

Mr. McNulty: It is up to individual transport operators to fund CCTV systems on their vehicles and a growing number recognise the importance of doing so. For example, although the Strategic Rail Authority has not stipulated CCTV as a requirement for trains, CCTV has been included on all new trains and most refurbished trains.

Government funding is available to Local Authorities to support infrastructure improvements to tackle crime through their Local Transport Plan integrated transport block allocations. Schemes funded in this way include the installation of CCTV cameras in bus shelters.

There has been no Government research into the effects on the number of charges and convictions for criminal activity on public transport if full operational CCTV were to be installed. However, there has been a Government funded national evaluation of CCTV generally which includes an analysis of the perceptions of offenders and any changes in recorded crime in CCTV areas, buffer areas surrounding the CCTV areas (intended to detect displaced crime) and control areas. The report will be published at the end of this year.

A1

Joyce Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his current estimate is of the cost of making the A1 between Newcastle and Berwick fully-dualled. [186429]

Mr. Jamieson: The A1 Multi-Modal Study Report in May 2002 estimated the cost of dualling the A1 from Newcastle to the Scottish border to be £343 million at 2001 prices. However the report concluded that although the completion of dualling was necessary between Newcastle and Alnwick, wholesale dualling could not be justified in the foreseeable future.

The Highways Agency have not carried out a detailed costing. But on a pro rata basis from the 2001 estimate, I would expect the cost at current prices to exceed £375 million.

A40/M40

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many copies of the Highways Agency's consultation leaflet on the M40/A40 Management Strategy have been distributed in Stokenchurch. [187380]

Mr. Jamieson: Fifty copies of the consultation for the M40/A40 Draft Route Management Strategy were sent to Stokenchurch Library.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Highways Agency has taken to consult the residents of Stokenchurch on the draft A40/M40 Route Management Strategy. [187543]

Mr. Jamieson: A press notice was issued to inform national and local media. The document was placed on deposit at local council offices. Leaflets were available at Oxford Motorway services, High Wycombe library and subsequently Stokenchurch library.

Aviation Health Unit

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the work of the Aviation Health Unit. [187190]

Mr. McNulty: The Aviation Health Unit was established in December 2003 primarily to provide advice to the UK Government and others on aviation health issues. It also investigates potential new aviation health concerns; reviews research and other information on aviation health; and liaises with the aviation industry and relevant organisations throughout the world. The Department is funding the unit until legislation can be enacted to allow the CAA to meet the costs of the unit from the charges it levies on airlines.

Cargo Aircraft (Terrorism)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the vulnerability of cargo aircraft using United Kingdom airports to terrorists stowing on board with the aim of taking over the cockpit in flight. [187305]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport continually assesses the vulnerability, from all types of terrorist attack, of all aircraft using UK airports.

Crossrail

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the start of construction of *(a)* Crossrail and *(b)* Crossrail 2. [187132]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State announced to Parliament on 20 July 2004 that he intended that appropriate powers for the construction of Crossrail should be sought by means of a hybrid Bill to be introduced in Parliament at the earliest opportunity. Previous experience, with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Bill, suggests that the bill might take around two years to complete its passage. The Government have no plans currently to seek legal powers for Crossrail 2.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost of refurbishments to the fabric of buildings owned by his Department has been since May 1997. [186396]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 653W to the hon. Member for South West Bedfordshire (Mr. Selous).

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total running cost of his Department's canteen facilities was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* 2003–04. [186398]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 263W, to the hon. Member for South-West Bedfordshire (Andrew Selous).

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent on replacing light bulbs in the last year for which figures are available. [186401]

Mr. McNulty: This information is not collected centrally and the costs are often undifferentiated from other mechanical and electrical service costs or are not accounted for separately in the individual finance systems. To separately identify such costs would involve disproportionate costs.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost of printing departmental headed notepaper was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available. [186397]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the answer on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 264W, to the hon. Member for Leominster (Mr. Wiggin).

Freight Transport

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on progress in implementing the 10 Year Transport Plan as it relates to freight transport. [186672]

Mr. Jamieson: The 10 Year Plan for transport marked the beginning of a more strategic approach to delivering transport improvements. It delivered a long term Government commitment to sustained increases in transport spending.

Much of this investment will benefit freight alongside other transport users. The plan is delivering new capacity on the road network, with 80 schemes at various stages in the Targeted Programme of Improvements totalling around £8.8 billion. 13 of these schemes are currently under construction, including widening of the M25 between Junctions 12 to 15 around Heathrow. We have also invested in the Rail Network, renewing 800 miles of track last year. And we have increased total Government capital support for local authorities from £650 million in 2001 to £1.9 billion in 2004–05.

In relation to specific references to Freight in the 10 Year Plan, there has been a significant increase in freight on rail over recent years. The possibility of dedicated HGV only lanes on our strategic routes has been under consideration, but suitable sites have yet to be identified, though a number of schemes have been introduced which afford goods vehicles priority, along with buses and cyclists, over general traffic in congested urban areas. Finally, we have made significant progress in implementing road haulage efficiency measures as outlined in the 10 Year Plan, particularly through the Road Haulage Modernisation Fund. In particular we have been funding projects to offer training in safer and more fuel efficient driving, and to promote operational practices that save on the use of fuel.

"The future of Transport", published in July this year builds on the 10 Year Plan and looks forward to the factors that might shape travel demand and our transport network over the next 30 years. It sets out how the Government will respond to those pressures while safeguarding our economic and social wellbeing and the environment. Our policies for freight transport are set out in that document.

M6

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is his intention that the proposed M6 toll expressway should be *(a)* constructed and *(b)* operated by a private sector contractor. [186986]

Mr. Jamieson: The M6 expressway is no more than a broad concept at this stage. If we decide to ask the Highways Agency to undertake further development work in light of the responses from the consultation exercise, one issue we will need to consider further is whether the proposal could be undertaken by a private sector concessionaire to fund, construct and operate the expressway for a set period.

Night Flights

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will publish a consultation document on night flights. [186320]

Mr. McNulty: I published a consultation paper on night flying restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 56–58WS.

Nuclear Materials (Transport)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has conducted a review of the suitability, in respect of security and safety, of the different ships used, or planned to be used, to transport plutonium MOX fuel to overseas customers from Sellafield. [187285]

Mr. McNulty: Ships used to transport MOX fuel are reviewed routinely under separate regulations governing the security and safety of the transport of nuclear materials. The Nuclear Industries Security Regulations 2003 provide for the review of all security aspects of each shipment of MOX fuel including the suitability of the vessel. The Merchant Shipping (Carriage of Packaged Irradiated Nuclear Fuel etc.) (INF Code) Regulations 2000, SI 3216 provide for both certification that vessels have been constructed to international standards, and periodic review to ensure that they continue to comply with the requirements.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many contracts his Department had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186659]

Mr. McNulty: The Department was formed in May 2002. The Department has not awarded contracts to any of these banks for advice on private finance initiative and public-private partnership contracts.

Rail Services

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to paragraph 5.3.5 of The Future of Rail, Cm.6233, what estimate he has made of the total amount of money elected regional assemblies would be able to spend on improving rail services in *(a)* the North East, *(b)* the North West and *(c)* Yorkshire and the Humber. [186154]

Mr. McNulty: Elected regional assemblies will be given flexibility to decide how much money to spend on rail passenger improvements within the resources available to them. The level of government funding available to assemblies will be determined in due course.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from the Leonard Cheshire Foundation regarding equal access for disabled people to the rail network. [186971]

Mr. McNulty: The Department regularly meets with major disability organisations including the Leonard Cheshire Foundation and frequently consults and corresponds with them, both directly and through correspondence with Members. We have recently responded to a number of inquiries generated by the Foundation's "All Aboard" campaign.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has commissioned regarding the Government's rail end date of 2055 and the viability of alternatives proposed by the Leonard Cheshire Foundation. [186972]

Mr. McNulty: The Government first consulted on an 'end date', by which time all rail vehicles must comply with the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations, last November, as part of a consultation on our proposals for amending the rail provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act. Various dates were considered, looking both at the needs of disabled people and at the financial implications for the rail industry, and we indicated that we favoured 2025.

The consultation included a draft regulatory impact assessment which was based on an independent economic appraisal of the various options. We are committed to further consultation before a final date is set in regulations. This will take full account of the responses to the November consultation, including that received from the Leonard Cheshire Foundation, and the recommendation of the Joint Scrutiny Committee on the draft Disability Discrimination Bill.

Roads

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list planned road resurfacing projects broken down by the number of houses affected by above 68dB of noise that will benefit from noise reduction; and how many of these projects will be financed from the £5 million ringfenced sum. [186728]

Mr. Jamieson: In general, priorities for resurfacing sections of the strategic road network are assessed according to maintenance need rather than noise criteria. Detailed information on the numbers of houses exposed to more than 68dB that are expected to benefit from this resurfacing programme is not available.

An assessment of the number of houses exposed to more than 68dB is only made for sites meeting the criteria for noise announced on 22 March 1999 in connection with the £5 million ringfenced sum. This ringfenced sum was specifically aimed at funding noise mitigation measures at sites where the noise problems were serious and pressing and where resurfacing with quieter materials could not be justified on normal maintenance grounds.

In the majority of cases, the ringfenced sum has funded the provision of noise barriers at locations identified on the list published on 11 November 1999. There is only one resurfacing scheme in the 2004–05 programme with funding from the ringfenced sum. This will deal with the problem identified on M6 junctions 34–35, Camforth and should provide a significant noise reduction for approximately 300 houses currently exposed to more than 68dB of noise.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent in each year since 1997 installing speed humps on roads. [186761]

Mr. Darling: The installation of speed humps is a matter for individual Highway Authorities. As such this information is not held centrally.

Local authorities are solely responsible for the implementation of all traffic calming schemes, including the installation of road humps.

Funding is allocated via the Single Capital Pot based on the Road Safety Strategy contained within their Local Transport Plans.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 130W, on road safety, how many people died as a result of crashes that occurred on hard shoulders of English trunk motorways in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003. [187058]

Mr. McNulty: The number of people who have died as a result of crashes that occurred on English trunk road motorways where at least one vehicle was on, entering or leaving the hard shoulder in *(a)* 2002 was 22 and in *(b)* 2003 was 11.

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road schemes have been started in Northampton in each year since 1992. [186517]

Mr. McNulty: The number of road improvements, costing over £1 million, and excluding maintenance schemes, started in Northampton for each year since 1992 is as follows:

	Number
1992	1
1993	0
1994	0
1995	0
1996	1
1997	1
1998	1
1999	2
2000	0
2001	0
2002	1
2003	2

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Government are on track to achieve its target of delivering *(a)* 100 new bypasses on trunk and local roads and *(b)* 130 major local road schemes by 2010; and what the (i) construction costs, (ii) scheduled date for start of construction, (iii) expected completion date and (iv) status at 1 April is for each currently identified scheme. [186168]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government are on track to deliver 32 new bypasses on the strategic road network by the end of 2010–11. The following table gives the relevant detail on these bypasses which have either been completed, or are contained within the current Targeted Programme of Improvements (TPI).

Firm decisions have yet to be made on start of works for the remainder of the current programme so no forecast dates of opening are possible but the latest estimated outturn costs and status report for these schemes has been provided.

On local roads it is too soon to say whether the quoted number of local road schemes will be delivered. This depends largely on how quickly local authorities bring their schemes to completion. 79 road schemes have been fully or provisionally approved by the Government since 2000; these schemes are now at various stages of delivery. A local authority's progress in delivering a local road scheme is a matter for the local authority concerned. The Government are considering a number of other road scheme proposals from local authorities.

A. Major Project Bypasses already completed

Scheme	Latest estimated outturn cost (£ million)	Start of works	Date of completion
A5 Nesscliffe Bypass	20	March 2002	March 2003
A6 Great Glen Bypass	21	April 2001	February 2003
A6 Rushden and Higham Ferrers Bypass	16	April 2002	August 2003
A6 Rothwell-Desborough Bypass	19	April 2002	August 2003
A6 Clapham Bypass	44	May 2001	December 2002
A6 Alvaston	22	September 2002	December 2003
A27 Pplegate Bypass	29	October 2000	June 2002
A41 Aston Clinton Bypass	44	August 2001	October 2003
A43 Towcester-M40 Dualling (including A43 Silverstone Bypass)	97	February 2001	September 2002
A63 Selby Bypass	65	October 2001	June 2004
A66 Stainburn and Great Clifton Bypass	12	July 2001	December 2002
A500 Basford, Hough, Shavington Bypass	54	June 2001	May 2003
A650 Bingley Relief Road	91	July 2001	December 2003
M6 Toll (accelerated Roads Review scheme)	[1]Toll Road	March 2001	December 2003

[1] The M6 Toll Road is privately funded. There is some publicly funded expenditure, which is currently estimated to outturn at £41 million.

B. Major Project Bypasses in the current TPI, either on site or expected to be on site by the end of 2004–05, and to be completed by 2010–11

Scheme	Latest Estimated Outturn cost (£ million)	Actual/Estimated Start of Works	Estimated date of completion	Status at 1 April 2004 (2004–05 Business Plan Key/Critical Event)
A10 Wadesmill Colliers End	39	April 2002	2004–05	Road Open
A21 Lamberhurst Bypass	19	June 2003	2004–05	Road Open
A5 Weeford-Fazeley Improvement	38	April 2004	2005–06	Start of Works (achieved)
A421 Great Barford Bypass	43	2004–05	2006–07	Start of Works
A47 Thorney Bypass	28	2004–05	2006–07	Start of Works

C. Major Project Bypasses in the TPI, not yet on site, but to be completed by 2010–11

Scheme	Latest estimated outturn cost (£ million)	Status at 1 April 2004 (2004–05 Business Plan Key/Critical Event)
A21 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst Bypass	68	Awaiting TPI entry (achieved)
A3 Hindhead Improvement	236	Public inquiry
A303 Stonehenge	223	No Event—Public inquiry already started
A38 Dobwalls Bypass	36	Publish draft Orders and Environmental Statement
A419 Blunsdon	40	Publish draft Orders and Environmental Statement
A483 Pant-Llanymynech Bypass	41	ECI tenders invited

C. Major Project Bypasses in the TPI, not yet on site, but to be completed by 2010–11

Scheme	*Latest estimated outturn cost (£ million)*	*Status at 1 April 2004 (2004–05 Business Plan Key/ Critical Event)*
A505 Dunstable Northern Bypass (A5 to M1 Link)	48	ECI contract awarded
A57/A628 Mottram in Longdendale, Hollingworth and Tintwistle Bypass	103	ECI contract awarded
A590 High and Low Newton Bypass	22	ECI tenders invited
A595 Parton-Lillyhall Improvement	25	Public inquiry
A64 Rillington Bypass	12	ECI tenders invited
A66 Temple Sowerby and Improvement at Winderwath	23	ECI contract awarded
A69 Haydon Bridge Bypass	24	ECI contract awarded

Strategic Rail Authority

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what will happen to the work force of the Strategic Rail Authority when it is abolished; [186737]

(2) how much the Department expects to spend in severance payments when the Strategic Rail Authority is abolished. [186778]

Mr. Darling: Work is in progress, following publication of the rail White Paper in July, to determine which of the SRA's functions will continue and which body will exercise them. Until decisions have been taken, it is too soon to know how many SRA staff will transfer elsewhere and how many might become eligible for severance payments.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what will happen to the *(a)* stock and *(b)* assets held by the Strategic Rail Authority when it is abolished. [186739]

Mr. Darling: Appropriate arrangements will be made in the proposed legislation for the transfer of the property, rights and liabilities of the Strategic Rail Authority.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Peace Process

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on progress towards restoration of devolution to Northern Ireland. [187675]

Mr. Spellar: We are engaged in intensive political activity with the aim of restoring stable and inclusive partnership government in Northern Ireland.

It is important to draw upon the high degree of commitment among the Northern Ireland parties to bring about resumed devolution at an early stage. Recent meetings with all parties have made me confident of support from all sides and good prospects for restoring stable devolved government to Northern Ireland.

12 and 13 July Disturbances

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* police officers, *(b)* rioters, *(c)* army personnel and *(d)* ordinary civilians were injured in disturbances in Northern Ireland on 12 and 13 July. [186024]

Mr. Pearson: The number of persons injured as a result of the security situation and serious public disorder on 12 and 13 July 2004 is listed in the following table:

	Number
Police	29
Police Reserve	6
Army	9
Civilian	10
Total	54

Note:
Statistics are provisional and will be subject to minor amendment.

Andersonstown Newspaper Group

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 5 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 530W, on the Andersonstown Newspaper Group, whether the monies were allocated for projects *(a)* outside the UK and *(b)* in the Republic of Ireland. [186466]

Mr. Spellar: None of the monies referred to in the previous answer have been allocated to the Andersonstown Newspaper Group for projects *(a)* outside the UK or *(b)* in the Republic of Ireland.

Anti-TNF Drugs

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to ensure all patients requiring anti-TNF drugs for rheumatoid arthritis will receive this medication within three months. [186017]

Angela Smith: The degree to which the health and social care system can respond to presenting needs is limited by the level of resources available. Although there are no plans to ensure that all patients requiring anti-TNF drugs for rheumatoid arthritis will receive this medication within three months, my Department remains committed to extending the availability of these specialist drugs where they will clearly result in a significant improvement in patient care.

Substantial extra funding has been allocated to the Health and Social Services Boards to allow 100 additional patients to receive anti-TNF drugs during this financial year. The Department of Health, Social Services will continue to seek additional resources to further improve access to these and other specialist medicines.

Apple Growing

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce special programmes to support and encourage apple growing in Northern Ireland. [186288]

Mr. Pearson: I have no plans to introduce special programmes to support and encourage apple growing in Northern Ireland. Producer organisations in the sector can avail of financial assistance through the structural support arrangements under the EC Fruit and Vegetable Regime. Further, the Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Countryside Management Schemes include options whereby scheme participants may receive payment towards the restoration or re-creation of traditional orchards.

Aid is available to the apple processing sector through the EU Agricultural Processing and Marketing Grant Scheme and the EU Marketing of Quality Agricultural Products Grant Scheme. Invest NI also provides assistance to companies in the sector.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development continues to provide assistance to the apple sector through its advisory and technical services

Coastal Protection (Northern Ireland)

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his oral statement of 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–70, what Royal Naval presence he plans around the coast of Northern Ireland to secure the Province against illegal importation of arms and explosives by sea. [186528]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

There are no plans for a dedicated Royal Naval presence in Northern Irish waters once the Northern Ireland Flotilla is paid off.

Delayed Hospital Discharge

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the level of delayed hospital discharges in the Homefirst Health and Social Services Trust area; and if he will make a statement. [186221]

Angela Smith: The most recent figures show that, at the end of April 2004, there were 111 patients in the Homefirst Health and Social Services Trust area whose discharge was delayed, amounting to 29 per cent. of the Northern Ireland total of 387. The total number of delayed days amounted to 6,124 with a patient average of 55 delayed days. Thirty-three Homefirst residents had remained in hospital for more than three weeks and another 47 were still in hospital at the end of eight weeks.

It is unacceptable that some people have to remain in hospital long after they are medically fit for discharge. A target has been set for all Health and Social Services Boards to ensure that, by 31 March 2005, 85 per cent. of all people who are medically fit for discharge should wait no more than eight weeks for community services to be provided and that the number of delayed discharge days is reduced by 10 per cent. compared to 2003–04 levels. Considerable additional resources have been allocated to ensure that these targets are met.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action is being taken to reduce delayed hospital discharges within the Homefirst Health and Social Services Trust area. [186222]

Angela Smith: The Northern Health and Social Services Board has developed a strategy for older people to reflect the needs of its growing and ageing population. Over the past 18 months the board has been working to implement a comprehensive range of services to address the high levels of delayed discharges in its area, and is planning to invest over £4 million in the Elderly Programme of Care during 2004–05.

A number of measures have been put in place aimed at reducing hospital admissions and speeding up the discharge process. Additional nursing home places have been funded, Home from Hospital and community rehabilitation services have been expanded across the whole Homefirst Trust area, and Rapid Response Nursing services have been established to provide acute care in the Homefirst community.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effect of delayed hospital discharges in the Homefirst Health and Social Services Trust on hospital waiting lists at *(a)* Antrim and *(b)* Whiteabbey hospitals. [186223]

Angela Smith: Delayed discharges have some impact on waiting lists at Antrim, Whiteabbey and other hospitals, although the scale of this is difficult to quantify. Delayed discharges increase the pressure on medical beds and when medical beds are full, new medical patients may be admitted to surgical wards and this can sometimes impact on the level of surgical activity.

Work is currently under way to re-design and reform the emergency care service in Northern Ireland. Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts are required to develop plans to streamline processes relating to emergency patient flows at all hospitals so that, by 31 March 2005, the number of delayed discharge days is reduced by 10 per cent. compared to 2003–04 levels. This work, coupled with planned increases in capacity, such as the 24-bed ward at Antrim hospital due to open in 2005, will reduce the need for medical patients to be cared for in surgical wards.

Departmental Annual Report

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many copies of his Department's annual report were printed in each year since 1997; how many were sold in each year; and what the *(a)* publication costs and *(b)* sales revenue were. [183889]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Stationery Office has provided the following information:

	Number of NIO annual reports issued
1997[1]	—
1998[1]	—
1999[1]	—
2000	519
2001	558
2002	494
2003	443
2004[2]	321

[1] The Northern Ireland Office has only produced a published version of its annual report since 2000. Prior to that the NIO was one of a number of contributors to the Northern Ireland Departmental Report, an annually published report produced by the Department of Finance and Personnel (NI), which set out the work and expenditure of all the different Departments in Northern Ireland.

[2] The 2004 report became available for purchase only on 7 May 2004 so final details of costs and sales are not to hand. Figures shown are the latest available.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185916]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The NIO and its agencies and the 11 Departments and agencies of the NI Administration operate a total of 2,492 vehicles. The number of personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the NIO and the NI Departments within each of the last five years is outlined as follows:

	Number of personal injury accidents
1999–2000	9
2000–01	9
2001–02	9
2002–03	7
2003–04	9

Policies for managing work-related road safety are encompassed within health and safety policies as required by Health and Safety legislation. These include centrally issued guidance, and local guidance where appropriate, on issues such as the use of mobile phones while driving, the need for drivers of certain Government vehicles to be medically examined, road worthiness of vehicles, driver competence and the availability of driver training.

Employment Opportunities

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many adults were available for work in Northern Ireland in *(a)* June 2004 and *(b)* June 1999. [186243]

Mr. Gardiner: Latest figures from the Spring (March–May) 2004 Labour Force Survey estimated that there were 754,000 persons aged 16 and over who were either working or available for work in Northern Ireland. This compares to a figure of 748,000 for Spring (March–May) 1999.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were in *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time employment in Northern Ireland in (i) June 2004 and (ii) June 1999. [186244]

Mr. Gardiner: The most up-to-date employee jobs data relates to March 2004. Estimates of the number of full-time and part-time employee jobs in Northern Ireland for June 1999 and March 2004 are as follows.

Employee Jobs[1] in Northern Ireland

	June 1999	*March 2004*[2]
Full-Time Employee Jobs	422,150	441,070
Part-Time Employee Jobs	201,850	235,450
Total Employee Jobs	624,000	676,530

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10
[2] Provisional
Figures are not seasonally adjusted

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were employed in the small and medium enterprise sector in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 1999. [186266]

Mr. Spellar: Estimates from the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) of the number of employee jobs in small and medium-sized enterprises (i.e. enterprises with less than 250 employees) in the private sector in Northern Ireland for March 1999 and March 2004 are as follows.

Employee jobs[1] in private sector small and medium sized enterprises

	Number of employee jobs
March 1999	288,900
March 2004 [1]	318,200

[1] Provisional
Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
Figures are not seasonally adjusted

Fisheries Conservancy Board Vessel

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps have been taken to ensure traceability of the Fisheries Conservancy Board vessel since the disappearance of the previous boat from Lough Neagh. [184834]

Angela Smith: There are no measures available which are foolproof and which would ensure traceability of a stolen boat. However, there are other factors which may enable the Board to trace the vessel. The Board has registered the vessel with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Accordingly, if it was stolen and recovered it could be traced back to the Board. The Board is also looking at whether there are cost effective measures, which might make traceability easier. Furthermore, appropriate equipment on board the vessel carry serial numbers.

The Board has taken measures to try to protect the boat from theft. The vessel is moored in a prominent berth in Ballycastle Marina. The Marina is staffed from 8.00 am to midnight during the summer and from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm in winter. There are also three CCTVs covering the Marina for security purposes.

Football

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the money will be released by the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure to pay for the improved floodlights at Windsor Park. [186409]

Angela Smith: To date the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has made no commitment to release money to pay for the improved floodlights at Windsor Park. However, money may be made available

under the facilities component of the Soccer Strategy. This would be dependent on my being satisfied that the necessary changes in the governance of soccer have been implemented and that remaining issues, including the completion by the Irish Football Association (IFA) of a detailed audit of priority football facilities, are addressed in accordance with accountability requirements for public funds.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made on implementing the football strategy in Northern Ireland. [186410]

Angela Smith: Since the Irish Football Association's (IFA) decision on 6 April 2004 to accept the recommendations of the football strategy, I have set up a Sports Council led Implementation Group to oversee the implementation of the strategy in Northern Ireland. This Group has held a number of meetings and advertisements were recently placed in the press by the IFA for the appointment of two external members to the Association's new Executive Committee. Arrangements are also presently being made for the appointment of a new IFA Chief Executive. In addition to these, I have established a Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure led Monitoring Group to ensure that overall progress remains consistent with the central aims of the football strategy. This Group held its first meeting on 23 July 2004.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the floodlights at Windsor Park will be upgraded in time for Northern Ireland's first home World Cup matches. [186411]

Angela Smith: Responsibility for upgrading the floodlights at Windsor Park in time for Northern Ireland's first home World Cup matches rests with the governing body of Soccer in Northern Ireland, the Irish Football Association (IFA), and the owners of the stadium, Linfield FC. I understand that the IFA and Linfield FC are presently putting arrangements in place for the necessary upgrading work to be carried out within the given time constraints.

Hazardous Waste

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many sites in Northern Ireland are licensed to accept hazardous waste; how many such sites there were in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [186598]

Angela Smith: At present in Northern Ireland, the legislation that defines hazardous waste are the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 (which came into operation on 31 March 2003) and the Landfill Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 (which came into force on 6 January 2004). Hazardous waste was not defined in Northern Ireland waste legislation before this.

There are currently no landfill sites nor 'permitted' disposal facilities authorised to accept hazardous waste. However, there are various treatment facilities and transfer stations authorised to accept special waste as defined by the Special Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases of hospital-acquired infection were recorded *(a)* at each hospital and *(b)* within each health and social services board area in Northern Ireland in each of the last four years. [186601]

Angela Smith: There were 228 reports of patient episodes of Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) bloodstream infections in Northern Ireland in 2001–02 and 218 in 2002–03. The figures for 2003–04 will be available shortly. Records of such reports are maintained on an acute hospital trust basis and are set out in the following tables along with a breakdown by health and social services board. Earlier data and data for other infections are not available.

Table 1: Number of MRSA patient episodes by acute hospital trust

Acute hospital trust	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Altnagelvin Group	22	13
Belfast City Hospital	55	46
Causeway	8	9
Craigavon Area Hospital Group	13	16
Down Lisburn	10	8
Green Park Healthcare	2	4
Mater Infirmorum Hospital	16	19
Newry and Mourne	6	4
Royal Group of Hospitals	40	26
Sperrin Lakeland	5	9
Ulster Community and Hospitals	17	29
United Hospitals Group	34	35

Table 2: Number of MRSA patient episodes by health board

Health and social services board	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Northern	42	44
Southern	19	20
Eastern	140	132
Western	27	22

Individual Learning Accounts

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action has been taken by the Department of Employment and Learning to recover the estimated loss identified by the Auditor General's Report NIA 41/03, HC 673, as having accumulated through irregular expenditure on the Individual Learning Accounts Scheme. [183063]

Mr. Gardiner: The NIAO report on Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) indicated potential irregular payments to providers in Northern Ireland (NI). The Department for Employment and Learning has obtained legal advice on the scale and nature of the potential recoveries as part of a wider validation exercise; has liaised with the Department for Education and Skills and the police, in England, on the progress of their investigations; has undertaken extensive checks with Companies Registry NI and Companies House Great Britain (GB) to establish the present status of ILA providers; and obtained credit rating reports on the providers highlighted by the validation work. The Department is undertaking audits of providers to determine the actual potential for recovery and a

number of providers which operate also in GB is being pursued on DEL's behalf by the relevant police authorities.

Infantry Battalions (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many men and women as at 21 July were serving with each infantry battalion of the British Army who were battle fit or able to serve on operational tours in Northern Ireland or overseas; and what the establishment strength is of each of those battalions. [187255]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

The unit establishment of each infantry battalion is given as follows:

Infantry battalion	*Establishment*
1st Battalion The Grenadier Guards	620
1st Battalion The Coldstream Guards	620
1st Battalion The Scots Guards	670
1st Battalion The Irish Guards	620
1st Battalion The Welsh Guards	620
1st Battalion The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)	620
1st Battalion The Royal Highland Fusiliers (Princess Margaret's Own Glasgow and Ayrshire Regiment)	620
1st Battalion The Kings Own Scottish Borderers	651
1st Battalion The Black Watch (The Highland Regiment)	670
1st Battalion The Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons)	687
1st Battalion The Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)	670
1st Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires)	620
2nd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires)	670
1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	620
2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	667
1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment	620
2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment	620
1st Battalion The Kings Own Royal Border Regiment	670
1st Battalion The Kings Regiment	667
1st Battalion The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire	620
1st Battalion The Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment)	620
1st Battalion The Queens Lancashire Regiment	670
1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)	620
1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment (27th (Inniskilling), 83rd, 87th and The Ulster Defence Regiment)	620
1st Battalion The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment	667
1st Battalion The Cheshire Regiment	620
1st Battalion The Royal Welsh Fusiliers	670
1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Wales (24th/41st Foot)	620
1st Battalion The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment	620
1st Battalion The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment (29th/45th and 70th Foot)	670
1st Battalion The Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's)	670
1st Battalion The Light Infantry	620
2nd Battalion The Light Infantry	620
1st Battalion The Royal Green Jackets	620
2nd Battalion The Royal Green Jackets	712
1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles	712
2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles	687
1st Battalion The Parachute Regiment	687
2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment	687
3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment	25,874
Total	

Information relating to the number of personnel classed as 'fit' in individual infantry battalions is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, as at 3 July 2004, the number of personnel classed as 'fit' in the infantry as a whole was 23,335. Personnel are defined as 'fit' when they are considered to be fit for service on operations anywhere in the world. It should be noted that although an individual soldier may be medically downgraded, they may still be liable for deployment, depending on the reason for the downgrading, the nature and location of the deployment, and medical advice.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average time taken to process an application for assistance by *(a)* Invest Northern Ireland and *(b)* Invest Northern Ireland's legacy organisations was in the most recent relevant period. [186854]

Mr. Spellar: The Invest NI target processing time for larger business development projects is 60 days, with a target of 30 days for less complex development cases. These times relate to 'controllable' time, ie periods when an application is being dealt with by Invest NI, and do not include periods when further information is required to be provided by the client. While target timeframes are currently being met in the majority of cases, there can be exceptions where, for example, the case is particularly complex or the negotiations prolonged.

The average processing target time operated by the legacy organisations IDE and LEDU, was 83 days. Invest NI has set target times which are shorter than those operated by these legacy bodies. It would require a disproportionate administrative effort to attempt to provide precise information on the legacy agencies' performance. However, it is clear that in the majority of cases the target timeframes were met and where this was not the case it again tended to reflect the complexity of the case concerned.

Mortality Statistics

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 20 July 2004, reference 184778, how many of the patients in the table for *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2002–03 subsequently died in hospitals; and if he will make a statement. [187155]

Angela Smith: There is no information available on whether any particular patient recorded in the mandatory surveillance of MRSA patient episodes subsequently died in hospital as a result of that episode. The tables published annually by the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre Northern Ireland regarding such patient episodes of MRSA are derived from data mandatorily supplied by acute hospital trusts. The data is aggregated and does not carry personal identifiers.

Movanagher Fish Farm

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* temperature and *(b)* quality checks have been carried out in the last 12 months by staff of the Movanagher Fish Farm to detect poor water quality. [181819]

Angela Smith: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Staff at Movanagher Fish Farm record the temperature of the inflowing water supply on a daily basis for management purposes.

(b) Staff at Movanagher fish farm do not monitor water quality in the river and canal supplying water to the farm. This is the responsibility of the EHS Water Management Unit. Water quality is monitored at four points on the Lower Bann. The nearest monitoring point to Movanagher Fish Farm is at Kilrea Bridge, 3 to 4 km upstream of the farm. Samples are taken monthly. In addition, farm staff undertake checks of dissolved oxygen of the inflowing water supply if flows and temperature suggest that fish may be stressed.

EHS is committed to chemical and biological monitoring of all significant waterways in Northern Ireland in line with national and international classification schemes and agreements. DCAL continues to engage with EHS and others to bring forward initiatives to address widespread water quality problems in Northern Ireland's waterways.

National Stadium

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland why the specification for a national stadium requires a site of 60 acres. [186018]

Angela Smith: In setting the minimum acreage specification for a possible multi-sports stadium in Northern Ireland at 60 acres, the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) is seeking to satisfy both the design requirements of the three sports concerned (soccer, rugby and Gaelic games) and defray costs to the public purse as much as possible through the acquisition of additional land space for mixed-use business development in and around the stadium itself. However, as this is not yet a formal procurement process, the SIB has been willing to consider notifications of interest from landowners of sites below 60 acres provided they satisfied the key criteria of acceptability to the three sports, deliverability and potential economic benefits.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the reason was for a deadline of 30 June for submissions on a new national stadium. [186019]

Angela Smith: The deadline of 30 June for submissions on a possible multi-sports stadium in Northern Ireland was set because I have asked the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) to complete its evaluation of potential sites for a multi-sports stadium and report back to me with an appropriate location by the autumn. However, as this is not yet a formal procurement process, the SIB has been willing to consider notifications of interest from landowners submitted after 30 June provided they satisfied the key criteria of acceptability to the three sports concerned (soccer, rugby and Gaelic games), deliverability and potential economic benefits.

Nursing Staff

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of the nursing staff at each Northern Ireland hospital are not of UK origin. [186184]

Angela Smith: Nurses not of UK origin are employed within the HPSS but cannot be identified separately either from HRMS or by the Trusts themselves. Information is only held by Trusts on the number of EC and non-EC nurses employed. Figures for the percentage of non-EC nursing staff working within each Health and Social Services Trust are as follows.

Percentage of non-EC nurses working within each Health and Social Services Trust as at 30 June 2004

HSS[1] Trust	Percentage of non-EC nurses working within each HSS Trust
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	3.0
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	0.0
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	4.0
Causeway HSS Trust	1.4
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	4.5
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	0.5
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	5.0
Foyle Community HSS Trust	0.3
Green Park Healthcare HSS Trust	8.0
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	9.3
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	7.5
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	0.4
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	0.2
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	10.3
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	0.0
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	1.5
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	3.6
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	3.8
Total	3.8

[1] Health and Social Services

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the potential impact recruiting nursing staff from overseas to work in Northern Ireland's hospitals will have on health services in less developed countries. [186185]

Angela Smith: The Department is currently drafting guidance on International Nursing Recruitment that will advise HPSS employers not to actively recruit from developing countries that are experiencing nursing shortages of their own.

The majority of overseas nurses currently employed within the HPSS are from the Philippines, where nursing surpluses exist and the national Government actively supports recruitment by health service employers.

Parades

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what participating bands were listed in the notification to the Parades Commission submitted by Ballymacarrett District Loyal Orange Lodge No 6 as organisers of the 1 July parade; and what bands participated in the parade. [182845]

Mr. Pearson: Information in relation to Notified bands is as follows. Police are currently investigating if additional bands attended without prior notification.

Notified

1. Ulster Volunteer Flute Band
2. Albertbridge Accordion Band
3. Parkinson Accordion Band
4. Crimson Star Flute Band
5. Pride of the Hill, Carnmoney
6. Lord Carson Memorial Accordion
7. Hillview Flute Band
8. Gertrude Star Flute Band
9. Pride of the Shore
10. Pride of the Ravan
11. Rising Sons of Donaghadee
12. East Belfast True Blue Flute Band
13. Ballymacarrett Defenders Flute Band
14. Ballysillan Volunteers Flute Band
15. Shankill Road Protestant Boy Flute Band
16. Rising Sons of East Belfast Flute Band
17. Shankill Star
18. Pride of the Shankill Flute Band
19. Ballybeen Young Loyalist Flute Band
20. Pride of Laganvalley Flute Band
21. Fairhill Flute Band
22. Monkstown YCV Flute Band
23. East Belfast Protestant Boys
24. Shankill Road Defenders Flute Band
25. Millar Memorial Flute Band
26. Fusiliers Flute Band
27. Crown Defenders Flute Band
28. Mount Vernon Flute Band
29. Ballynafeigh Apprentice Boys
30. North Down Defenders Flute Band
31. Castlereagh Young Defenders Flute Band
32. Blues and Royals East Belfast

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many contracts his Department had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186691]

Mr. Pearson: None of the 11 Northern Ireland Departments nor the Northern Ireland Office have entered into contracts with any of the institutions identified.

Public Bodies

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many positions on public bodies in Northern Ireland are occupied by persons aged under 25 years. [184938]

Mr. Paul Murphy: At the 16 July 2004, 16 persons aged under 25 held ministerial appointments to the Boards of public and other governing bodies in Northern Ireland.

Other information on appointments to bodies sponsored by Northern Ireland's 11 Government Departments can be found in the Public Appointments Annual Report for 2002–03. Information on appointments made by the Northern Ireland Office during the same period can be found in Appendix F of the NIO Departmental Report for 2004. Copies of both reports are available from the Library of the House and can be found on the internet at: www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/publicappointments and www.nio.gov.uk/pdf/deptreport2004.pdf

Rail Network

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money has been spent on *(a)* maintaining and *(b)* upgrading the rail network between Belfast and the border with the Irish Republic in each of the past five years. [185114]

Mr. Spellar: Public money spent on maintaining and upgrading the rail network between Belfast and the border with the Irish Republic in each of the past five years is as follows:

Infrastructure maintenance—Cross-border line

	£000
1999–2000	668
2000–01	691
2001–02	696
2002–03	720
2003–04	725
Total	3,500

This includes work carried out on the track, level crossings, bridges/embankments and buildings/stations.

Upgrading cross-border line

	£000
1999–2000	5,150
2000–01	1,175
2001–02	2,800

Upgrading cross-border line

	£000
2002–03	2,552
2003–04	5,700
Total	17,377

This includes work carried out on resignalling at Lurgan, the City junction to Central relay, fencing, conversion to full barrier and the installation of CCTV at Moira and Trummery accommodation crossings and the upgrading of Belfast Central station.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money from Northern Ireland Departments has been spent on *(a)* maintaining and *(b)* improving the Enterprise rail service between Belfast and Dublin in each of the past five years. [185115]

Mr. Spellar: Public money spent on maintaining and improving the Enterprise rail service between Belfast and Dublin in each of the last five years is as follows:

	£000
1999–2000	523
2000–01	786
2001–02	932
2002–03	1,006
2003–04	1,200
Total	4,447

Within this, around £1.9 million was spent on routine maintenance of the rolling stock and around £2.5 million on the refurbishment of Enterprise carriages. Translink classify the latter as planned maintenance.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1329W, on the Railway Review Group, if he will list the officials from *(a)* the Department for Regional Development, *(b)* the Department of Finance and Personnel and *(c)* Translink who are members of the Railway Review Group. [186305]

Mr. Spellar: Listed as follows are the officials from the Department for Regional Development, Department of Finance and Personnel, Translink and the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company who are members of Railways Review Group.

Members of Railways Review Group

	Official
(a)	Doreen Brown (Department for Regional Development)—Joint Chairperson
	David Sterling (Department for Regional Development)
	Brian White (Department for Regional Development)
	Michael Pollock (Department for Regional Development)
	Garry McKenna (Department for Regional Development)
(b)	Michael Brennan (Department of Finance and Personnel)
(c)	Keith Moffatt (Translink)—Joint Chairperson
	Jim Aiken (Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company)
	Stephen Armstrong (Translink)
	Clive Bradberry (Translink)
	Mal McGreevy (Translink)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the Department of Transport's New Approach to Transport Appraisal; and whether future investment decisions relating to Northern Ireland's railways network will be considered in the light of this report. [186855]

Mr. Spellar: The New Approach to Transport Appraisal is applied to all transport projects as set out in the "Guidance on Methodology for Multi Modal Studies" and this is fully consistent with the Treasury "Green Book-Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government" which is used to inform investment decisions in Northern Ireland.

Royal Group of Hospitals, Belfast

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are employed in the Royal Group of Hospitals, Belfast in *(a)* clinical and medical, *(b)* secretarial and administrative, *(c)* ancillary and cleaning, *(d)* security and *(e)* catering positions; and what percentage in each category are non-Roman Catholics. [186989]

Angela Smith: The information requested is as follows. Clinical staff are those who provide a direct service to patients. Therefore, clinical staff within this trust include the following terms and conditions groups: nursing, midwifery and health visiting, professional and technical, medical and dental. It was impossible to break down the figures for ancillary and cleaning, security and catering as requested so information has been provided as detailed. Cleaning and security staff are employed by the Royal Group of Hospitals HSS and are included in the figures for operatives.

(a) Table 1: Number of clinical staff positions in the Royal Group of Hospitals HSS[1] Trust as at 23 July 2004 and percentage in each category that are non-Roman Catholics

Group	Headcount	WTE[2]	Percentage of staff non-Roman Catholic
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	2,761	2,291.95	46.12
Professional and technical Staff	864	770.31	55.56
Medical staff	675	635.73	66.81
Dental staff	43	26.52	83.72

[1] Health and Social Services

[2] Whole time equivalent

(b) Table 2: Number of administration and clerical positions in the Royal Group of Hospitals HSS[1] Trust as at 23 July 2004 and percentage that are non-Roman Catholics

Group	Headcount	WTE[2]	Percentage of staff non-Roman Catholic
Administration and clerical staff	1,090	970.5	27.80

[1] Health and Social Services

[2] Whole time equivalent

(c), (d) and (e) Table 3: Number of ancillary and general positions in the Royal Group of Hospitals HSS[1] Trust as at 23 July 2004 and percentage that are non-Roman Catholics

Grades	Headcount	WTE[2]	Percentage of staff non-Roman Catholic
Operative	715	485.07	4.2
Catering assistant	155	109.00	7.1
Cook	27	24.59	18.52
Other grades	26	24.78	26.90

[1] Health and Social Services
[2] Whole time equivalent

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures are in place to ensure equality of opportunity for employment at the Royal Group of Hospitals, Belfast. [186990]

Angela Smith: The Royal Group of Hospitals carry out a three yearly review of their employment composition and practices in accordance with Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. The last review, carried out in 2002, was submitted to the Equality Commission, which is the body with responsibility to ensure compliance with the legislation. All job vacancies are advertised widely and the advert includes a statement welcoming applicants from groups which are currently under represented in the work force. The Royal Group of Hospitals also promotes equality of opportunity for all groups covered under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Schools (New Build)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many schools in Northern Ireland he estimates will be replaced as a result of the new build programme which is under way. [186235]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department of Education's current capital building programme will result in 130 schools being replaced.

Second Homes

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of dwellings that were used as second homes in the towns of *(a)* Portballintrae, *(b)* Portstewart, *(c)* Portrush and *(d)* Castlerock last year. [186328]

Mr. Spellar: Although the use of dwellings as second homes has a significant impact on the housing market and on the housing stock available for permanent occupation by residents in certain areas, it is not possible to establish accurately the extent of second home use in specific areas without detailed field work. No estimates have therefore been produced for these towns.

Secondary Education

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the result was of the public consultation on *(a)* the future of grammar schools in Northern Ireland and *(b)* on the 11-plus examination in Northern Ireland. [187121]

Mr. Gardiner: There has been no consultation on the future of grammar schools, which will remain as an integral part of the schools system under new arrangements for post-primary education. Responses to the earlier consultation following the Burns report showed a clear majority favoured the abolition of the present 11-plus transfer test.

Sexual Abuse Victims

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research he has collated on the number of individuals in Northern Ireland who have suffered sexual abuse. [183019]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available, as cases of sexual abuse are largely unreported, and information on the number of people who have reported experiencing sexual abuse is not collected centrally.

Information is, however, available on the number of children who have been placed on the Child Protection Register because they are at risk of sexual abuse. At 31 March 2003, there were 238 such children.

In addition, during the financial year 2003–04, there were 1,780 notifiable sexual offences against adults and children recorded by the Police Service of Northern Ireland. During 2002–03, when in total 1,469 notifiable sexual offences were recorded, the victim was under 18 years of age in 851 cases (out of 1,418 cases where the age of the victim was known or applicable).

Sion Mills

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what future development is anticipated in the Sion Mills area up to 2030 that the wastewater treatment works due for completion in March 2006 will be designed to cater for. [186302]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Services (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Member in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Mr. Roy Beggs, dated September 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about anticipated future development in Sion Mills catered for in the design of the planned wastewater treatment works for the area. I have been asked to reply as Chief Executive of Water Service as the issue falls within my operational responsibility.

Water Service estimates that the existing wastewater treatment works at Sion Mills serves a population equivalent of some 3,100 taking account of both domestic and non-domestic properties. Water Service is proposing to undertake a major upgrade of the Works as it does not have capacity for dealing with significant additional flows.

The new Works will be designed to cater for a population equivalent of 3,700 by the year 2030. This has been assessed using established methodologies taking into account population growth and anticipated housing and commercial development. This projection does not take into account the recent proposal to develop the Herdman's Mills site in Sion Mills. This could have an impact on the required capacity of the new Works but the implications cannot be assessed at this stage. However, as the design of the Works is still at an early stage, it should be possible to allow for the impact of the proposals for the Herdman's Mills site at a later stage in the design.

Textiles Industry

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were employed in the textiles industry in Northern Ireland in *(a)* June 2004 and *(b)* June 1999. [186245]

Mr. Spellar: The most up-to-date employee jobs data relates to March 2004. Estimates of the number of employee jobs in the textiles industry in Northern Ireland for June 1999, and March 2004 are as follows.

Employee jobs[1] in the textiles industry in Northern Ireland

	Number of employee jobs
June 1999	19,300
March 2004[1]	7,360

[1] Provisional

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Figures are not seasonally adjusted

Titanic Quarter

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what value he places on Northern Ireland's connection with the Titanic as a means of attracting visitors to Northern Ireland. [182609]

Mr. Gardiner: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board's 'Tourism in Northern Ireland—A Strategic Framework for Action 2004—2007' has identified Belfast, and in particular its historical connections with Titanic (Maritime) Belfast, as one of five signature projects for Northern Ireland tourism.

Belfast City Council and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board are currently in the process of commissioning research into realising the potential value of the 'Titanic' theme for Belfast and Northern Ireland. It is anticipated that this research will begin in September 2004 with the first draft results available by January 2005.

The Titanic brand could have substantial tourist potential, especially on the centenary in 2012 and the years immediately after. Conservatively, MAGNI (National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland) estimate that visitor numbers to a new museum attraction and to Belfast could be in the region of 300,000 per annum. Such is the interest in the Titanic and the city in which she was built, that it is considered that visitors will be attracted from all over the world.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how prominent a role the Titanic story will play in the proposed Museum for Sea and Sky at Titanic Quarter. [182611]

Angela Smith: So far as the possible development of a museum at Titanic Quarter is concerned, I would refer the hon. Member to the questions tabled on 28 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 56W (179804). It is anticipated that exhibitions on the Titanic will be included in this museum and would obviously feature prominently in the year 2012, the centenary of the Titanic disaster. The museum would also include exhibitions both temporary and permanent on themes related to, for example, the industrial history of Belfast and the story of the people of Northern Ireland.

University Admissions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the lowest A level grades were with which students from *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* outside the UK were admitted to each faculty at (i) Queen's University, Belfast and (ii) the University of Ulster in each of the last 10 years. [187447]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department for Employment and Learning does not hold A level grades for entrants to higher education institutions nor information by faculty. From 1994–95 to 2001–02 A level points scores and in 2002–03 tariff scores are held for full-time undergraduate entrants that accessed higher education through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

In each of the years between 1994–95 and 2002–03 the lowest recorded A level point-tariff score of students enrolled at both Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster was equivalent to one E at A level. Information on 2003–04 enrolments is not yet available.

Although this may be the lowest recorded A level score for entrants, institutions may consider a wide range of qualifications and experience in addition to or instead of A levels when considering student applications. It is also the case that A level point-tariff scores may not be available for all students applying directly to the institutions, students making late applications and some students from outside the UK who generally do not take A level examinations.

West Belfast Festival/Gasyard Feile

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money has been allocated to the *(a)* West Belfast Festival and *(b)* Gasyard Feile in Londonderry in each of the last three years, broken down by Department. [183788]

Angela Smith: The amount of public money allocated by Northern Ireland Departments and their associated public bodies to *(a)* West Belfast Festival and *(b)* Gasyard Feile is as follows.

	West Belfast Festival	*Gasyard Feile*
2001–02	258,030	0
2002–03	358,138	0
2003–04	317,321	0

Detailed breakdown by department is as follows.

£

	Gasyard Feile			*West Belfast Festival*		
DCAL	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Arts Council grant in aid ArtsDev Fund	—	—	—	45,000 ASOP	45,00 ASOP	80,000 ASOP
Strategic Review	—	—	—	—	—	4,850
Arts and Business	—	—	—	—	—	7,500

£

DCAL	Gasyard Feile 2001–02	Gasyard Feile 2002–03	Gasyard Feile 2003–04	West Belfast Festival 2001–02	West Belfast Festival 2002–03	West Belfast Festival 2003–04
Foras Na Gaeilge DCAL	—	—	—	23,000	12,000	16,000
NI Events Co	—	—	—	—	—	20,000
NIFTC	—	—	—	—	—	0

£

	Gasyard Feile			West Belfast Festival		
DSD						
BRO	—	—	—	10,000	46,200	105,160
VCU	—	—	—	—	—	68,811
EU	—	—	—	150,330	113,024	—
NWDO	—	—	—	—	—	—
DFP						
BLSP	—	—	—	—	121,914	—
DETI						
NITB	—	—	—	20,000	20,000	15,000
OFMDFM						
CRU	—	—	—	9,700	—	—
Total Public Funding Support	—	—	—	258,030	358,138	317,321

PRIME MINISTER

Government Information

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Prime Minister whether Ministers are required to *(a)* consult and *(b)* notify other Ministers before deciding not to comply with recommendations by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration under the Code of Practice on access to Government information. [186609]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

Consultation between Ministers is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code.

2012 Olympic Games

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what plans he has to create a new ministerial post with specific responsibility for London's bid for the 2012 Olympic Games; whether the post will carry Cabinet status; and if he will make a statement; [187183]

(2) what discussions regarding the creation of a new ministerial post with specific responsibility for London's bid for the 2012 Olympic Games he has held with *(a)* the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *(b)* London 2012 and *(c)* other bodies; and if he will make a statement. [187184]

The Prime Minister: Current ministerial arrangements already provide for a Cabinet Minister with explicit responsibility for the Olympic bid. In this capacity, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport represents the Government, alongside the Mayor and the Chairman of the British Olympic Association, on the Stakeholders Panel, which is overseeing the delivery of the bid.

EU Army

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Prime Minister what his policy is on the French Government's position on the establishment of an EU army. [186597]

The Prime Minister: The framework for the European Security and Defence Policy was set out in the European Council Conclusions from Nice in December 2000. These were unanimously agreed by all member states. They explicitly say that this policy "does not involve the establishment of a European army".

Intelligence Services

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Prime Minister what research his Office has commissioned regarding reform of the United Kingdom's intelligence services. [186595]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to my statement of 14 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1431.

Iraq

Mr. Marshall-Andrews: To ask the Prime Minister on what date he was informed of the withdrawal of the Iraq intelligence reports to which paragraph 405 of Lord Butler's report refers. [186799]

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Prime Minister which official at No.10 Downing Street was first informed, by whom, and on what date, of the withdrawal of the intelligence on Iraqi production of chemical and biological agent referred to in paragraph 405 of the Butler Report. [186804]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. and right hon. Members to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr (Mr. Adam Price), on 21 July, *Official Report*, column 285W.

Ministerial Visits

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the local authority areas he has not visited as Prime Minister. [186994]

The Prime Minister: The information is not held in the format requested. For visits I undertook during 2003, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Mr. Norman Baker) on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 829–30W.

North Korea

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Prime Minister if he will meet representatives from North Korea to discuss *(a)* its nuclear weapons programme and *(b)* security on the Korean peninsula. [186973]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so.

US Presidential Elections

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Prime Minister whether he plans to meet *(a)* Mr. John Kerry and *(b)* President George W. Bush before the US presidential elections. [186593]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Prime Minister what research he has commissioned into the threats from weapons of mass destruction programmes in hostile countries. [186974]

The Prime Minister: The Government keep such threats under constant review.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Prime Minister what plans he has to meet leaders of other United Nations Security Council member states to discuss methods of resolving the humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe. [186596]

The Prime Minister: I have regular discussions with members of the United Nations including on Zimbabwe. We are considering the next steps at the UN with colleagues on the Security Council and in the General Assembly.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

House Prices

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the percentage change in house prices in Suffolk was in each of the last seven years. [187211]

Keith Hill: The annual average property prices in Suffolk and the year-on-year percentage price changes for the past seven years have been as follows:

	Annual average price (£)	*Year-on-year percentage change*
1996	62,205	—
1997	68,377	9.9
1998	73,669	7.7
1999	81,221	10.3
2000	93,495	15.1
2001	106,018	13.4
2002	129,167	22.3
2003	149,167	15.1

Notes:
1. The figures reflect prices at the completion stage.
2. Purchases by sitting tenants (under "Right-to-Buy" schemes) are excluded because the prices are below market value.
3. Prices below £1,000 or above £20 million are also excluded—so that the average prices are not affected by outliers.
4. The average prices are simple averages, not mix-adjusted averages. The reason for this is that the number of transactions obtained through the Survey of Mortgage Lenders is relatively small for a single county. Consequently Land Registry figures have been used instead. However, these can only be presented as simple averages. It should be noted, however, that changes in simple average prices from one period to the next may reflect both actual price change and change in the mix of properties sold in the respective periods.

Source:
Land Registry

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list average house prices by region in each year since 1997. [187325]

Keith Hill: The mix-adjusted average house prices by region for each year since 1997 have been as follows:

£

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
North East	56,503	58,965	63,866	66,599	69,656	82,391	94,590
North West[1]	62,951	67,555	72,158	77,923	85,059	99,122	108,956
Yorkshire and Humber	60,874	63,312	67,644	71,416	77,833	94,116	107,325
East Midlands	62,656	68,907	71,532	80,259	89,226	111,511	133,215
West Midlands	69,598	75,840	81,315	92,055	99,200	120,618	132,898
East	84,306	95,478	102,525	118,718	129,666	158,248	181,494
London	107,968	123,921	150,909	174,727	188,342	206,960	236,476
South East	98,329	113,194	124,490	147,220	161,049	187,562	213,115
South West	75,064	83,269	92,171	106,202	118,902	146,784	170,560
England	79,814	89,714	100,012	114,335	123,149	144,081	165,834

[1] Published figures for the whole of North West region are not available prior to 1999. So the figures shown for 1997 and 1998 are estimates derived from a weighted combination of published prices for Merseyside and for "North West excluding Merseyside".

Notes:
1. Mix-adjustment nullifies the effect of changes in the mix of properties sold from one period to the next through the use of fixed weights. New weights are introduced in January each year.
2. The above figures are based on mortgage completions only—i.e. they exclude purchases for cash.
3. Up to 2002, the figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample of completions obtained through the Survey of Mortgage Lenders. From 2003, the figures are based on a substantially larger sample.

Source:
Survey of Mortgage Lenders

Housing Demand

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what his Department's estimate is of demand for housing units in each decade to 2050, broken down by UK region; [187330]

(2) what his Department's estimate is of extra demand for housing units by decade to 2050, by UK region. [187334]

Keith Hill: The following table shows growth in household numbers using the 1996-based household projections for English regions. These give the additional households projected to form if demographic trends continue. They are not estimates of demand as they do not take account of future economic trends and housing supply.

The household projections are to 2021 only. The figures show projected additional households between 2001 and 2011 and between 2001 and 2021.

Households in Thousands:

	2001 Base	*Growth to 2011*	*Growth to 2021*
England	20,992	1,527	3,008
North East	1,099	36	68
North West	2,875	122	235
Yorks. and Number	2,136	124	236
East Midlands	1,764	140	269
West Midlands	2,189	110	209
East	2,284	210	417
London	3,128	249	517
South East	3,403	332	657
South West	2,115	202	400

Mortgages

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average mortgage taken out by first time buyers was in each year since 1997. [187331]

Keith Hill: The average advance (mortgage) taken out by first-time buyers across the whole of the UK during each year since 1997 has been as follows.

Year	Average advance (£000)
1997	46,600
1998	50,900
1999	57,400
2000	60,500
2001	67,000
2002	80,300
2003	82,600

Note:
The term "first-time buyer" refers to buyers who were not homeowners immediately prior to this purchase.
Source:
Survey of Mortgage Lenders.
Figures are shown to the nearest 100.

Post Offices

Mr. Battle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the Urban Deprived Fund will be extended to include post offices in the 20 per cent. most deprived wards. [186732]

Phil Hope: The Deprived Urban Post Office Fund (DUPOF) was created as a one-off programme to target the most deprived areas with a fixed amount of funding (£15 million) which will be fully allocated by the end of October.

There are no plans to extend the scheme.

Affordable Housing

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what impact the additional funding granted to his Department in the 2004 Spending Review will have on the provision of affordable housing *(a)* in the Bridgwater parliamentary constituency and *(b)* in the South West; and what assessment he has made of the likely impact on the greenbelt and green spaces. [186540]

Keith Hill: The funding provided in the Spending Review will, along with efficiency improvements, produce 75,000 social rented homes and 40,000 homes for essential public sector workers and low cost homeownership over the three years to 2007–08. Decisions have not yet been taken on how Regional Housing Pot funding for 2006–07 and 2007–08 (including the additional funding for affordable housing) is split between regions. This needs to reflect the different pattern of needs across regions and the Government's national housing priorities, including development of the growth areas, and targets. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is aiming to complete this work, which raises some complex issues, by the end of the year.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will announce decisions on allocation of funding within regions next summer in the light of recommendations from Regional Housing Boards, which are due in May next year.

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research his Department has carried out to assess the impact of expanding shared ownership schemes on the production of affordable rental housing for key workers and low-income groups. [187530]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published the results of an Evaluation of the Housing Corporation funded Low Cost Home Ownership Programme in 2002. The research found that shared ownership proved good value for money for both the public purse and for the consumer.

Shared ownership provides a means of helping key workers, existing social tenants and those on housing waiting lists into home ownership while at the same time helping to reduce pressure on housing waiting lists and freeing up existing social rented accommodation for those in priority housing need. The balance between social rented and shared ownership accommodation is dependent on the Government's national housing priorities together with regional and local housing strategies and investment priorities.

The funding provided in the Spending Review 2004 will, along with efficiency improvements, produce 75,000 social rented homes and 40,000 homes for essential public sector workers and low cost home ownership over the three years to 2007–08.

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the credit needs of low and moderate income borrowers in relation to accessing affordable privately-rented accommodation. [187531]

Keith Hill: None.

Audit Commission

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many full-time equivalent staff of the Audit Commission were working *(a)* in the Inspection Directorate, *(b)* in the Housing Inspectorate, *(c)* on the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, *(d)* on local authority audits and *(e)* in administration and management in each financial year since 2000–01. [187561]

Mr. Raynsford: This is an operational matter for the Audit Commission. I will ask the chief executive to write to the hon. Member and ensure that copies of the letter are made available in the Library of the House.

Building Regulations

Tom Cox: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department is taking to ensure conformity of requirements for fire safety under the Building Regulations 2000 and crime prevention measures introduced into the Building Act 1984 by the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill. [186791]

Phil Hope: It is anticipated that the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill will receive Royal Assent during September. It will provide an opportunity for Building Regulations to make a fuller contribution to government policies on sustainability and crime prevention. The regulations and guidance needed to implement the powers given by the Bill have not yet been drafted. When doing so, officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will identify the issues that are

amenable to control through the Building Regulations and seek the advice of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee and key stakeholders. The proposals will be subject to Regulatory Impact Assessment and public consultation in the usual way.

Tom Cox: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether fire safety requirements for occupants' means of escape and emergency access for the fire and rescue service in the current Building Regulations will take precedence over requirements for crime prevention measures due to be introduced into the Building Act 1984 and the Building Regulations by the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill. [186793]

Phil Hope: Security and means of escape and emergency access are important to life safety. However, the practical requirements can conflict if not considered holistically. When new Building Regulations and guidance are drafted for Security, officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will take advice from the Building Regulations Advisory Committee, key stakeholders and other experts, to ensure a sensible and safe balance is achieved. The proposals will be subject to Regulatory Impact Assessment and public consultation in the usual way.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what studies he has undertaken regarding the energy losses occurring in public and private heated swimming pool shells in advance of his forthcoming consultation document on improving the building regulations concerning the conservation of fuel and power. [187385]

Phil Hope: Proposals for amending the Building Regulations energy provisions next summer were published on 21 July 2004. The consultation document indicates that whilst initial studies have shown significant benefits could accrue from defining standards for pools, more investigations are needed to establish the costs and benefits on a national scale, and whether regulating would be cost-effective and proportionate. It will be impossible to complete the investigations in time to influence this amendment but it will be taken into account next time.

Departmental Accounts

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when his Department's resource accounts for 2004–05 will be published; and if he will make a statement. [187565]

Phil Hope: The accounts preparation is progressing according to timetable and publication will be before the statutory deadline of 31 January 2005.

Departmental Travel

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of *(a)* air travel by and *(b)* overnight accommodation for his Department's officials on departmental business was in 2003–04. [186594]

Phil Hope: In 2003–04 the cost of *(a)* air travel was £356,500 and *(b)* overnight subsistence and accommodation was £1.437 million.

Derelict Homes

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate has been made of the number of derelict homes; what proportion of these are council owned; what proportion of these are in *(a)* urban areas and *(b)* in the south east region; and if he will make a statement. [187328]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187320]

Phil Hope: The data requested is set out in the following table for the buildings occupied by officials of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. As indicated, a number of the rooms are shared with other Government Departments (OGDs).

Name	*Number of rooms for smoking*	*Number of rooms for Worship*	*Number of rooms for Nursing mothers and pregnant women*
26 Whitehall—London	1—Shared with OGD	1—Shared with OGD	1—Shared with OGD
Ashdown House—London	1—Shared with OGDs	1—Shared with OGDs	1—Shared with OGDs
Eland House—London	1	1	1
Portland House—London	0	1—Meeting room	1—First aid room.
Exchange Tower—London	2—Shared with OGD	0—(under discussion with OGD)	1—First aid room—Shared with OGD
Ashdown House—Hastings	3—Shared with OGDs	1—"Drop in" room available—shared with OGDs	2–1 "Drop in" room and 1 Medical room can be used—shared with OGDs
Hempstead House—Hemel Hempstead	1—Shared with OGD	1—Room available on request	0
Fire Experimental Unit—Moreton-in-Marsh	0	0	0
Fire Service College—Moreton-in-Marsh	0	1—Muslim Prayer Room 1—multi-denominational chapel	1
Fire Statistics and Research Division—BRE Garston	0	1—Room available on request	1—Room available on request
Housing Care and Support Division—Glossop	0	1—Quiet room available on request	1—Quiet room available on request
Emergency Fire Service—Marchington	1—External Smoking Shelter	0	1—First aid room.
Temple Quay House—Bristol	1	0	0
QEII Conference Centre—London	1	1—private room available on staff request	1—private room available on staff request

Name	Number of rooms for smoking	Number of rooms for Worship	Number of rooms for Nursing mothers and pregnant women
Government Offices	8	2—dedicated (multi-faith) 3—Meeting rooms (can be used for prayer)	7—First aid rooms in 7 locations

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to providing an environment in which staff are able to work in safety and with religious tolerance.

Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government Offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

East of England

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of the East of England was classed as urban area *(a)* 30 years ago, *(b)* 10 years ago, *(c)* five years ago and *(d)* at the most recent date for which figures are available. [187212]

Keith Hill: The following information is available for land area designated for urban settlements with an associated population of 1,000 or more in the East of England.

Year	Percentage
1981	6.0
1991	6.5
2001	7.0

These figures relate to built-up areas, irrespective of administrative boundaries.

Empty Properties

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many empty properties there were in each tenure sector in each authority in Tyne and Wear, according to the latest returns available. [186955]

Keith Hill: The latest available information on empty properties in Tyne and Wear is tabled below. This data has been provided from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Investment Programme returns.

Number of vacant dwellings in Tyne and Wear (Met County) at 1 April 2004

	Local authority	Registered social landlord	Other public sector	Other private sector	Total dwellings
Gateshead	525	94	7	2,936	3,562
Newcastle upon Tyne	1,413	350	385	3,020	5,168
North Tyneside	404	196	6	1,745	2,351
South Tyneside	449	48	0	922	1,419
Sunderland	0	1,401	0	1,185	2,586
Tyne and Wear	2,791	2,089	398	9,808	15,086

Source:
ODPM's Housing Investment Programme (HIP) returns.

EU Groups/Committees

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the working groups and committees at European Union level upon which his Department sits; and if he will list the current agenda of each. [187324]

Phil Hope: The working groups and committees at European Union level upon which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister sits together with their current agendas are listed in the following table.

Name of working group	Current agenda
European Working Group on Land-Use Planning in the context of Article 12 of the Seveso II Directive 1	To provide guidance on the implementation of Article 12 of the Seveso II Directive addressing the issue of land-use planning in the vicinity of establishments handling dangerous substances.
National EIA and SEA experts Committee	To provide updates and exchange examples of good practice in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA).
Raw Materials Supply Group	To discuss a wide range of issues concerning the extractive industries with European industry trade associations. The Group examines improvements to industry environmental performance, such as restoration and aftercare, and other initiatives which may impinge in this sector and its competitiveness.
Working Group of the Environment Council on the proposed EU Directive on management of waste from the extractive industries	To debate and negotiate proposals for new European environmental legislation, and to forward dossiers to the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper).
Energy Performance of Buildings Directive Committee	To assist the Commission in the implementation of the directive.
Standing Committee on Construction (SCC)	To examine any questions posed by the implementation and the practical application of the Construction Products Directive (CPD).
Eurocodes National Correspondents Group	To assist in the implementation of the structural eurocodes.
The Committee on the Development and	To implement Structural Funds Regulations, as required under Article 48 of EU

Name of working group	Current agenda
Conversion of Regions (CDCR)	Regulation 1260/1999. It considers issues such as the simplification of funding rules, and other policy issues affecting funding programmes.
The Structural Actions Working Group	To address the reform of the Structural Funds for the next round of funding (post 2006), in the light of the "Report on the Economic and Social Cohesion of the EU". The committee will be negotiating the terms of the draft Structural Funds Regulations from September, which are likely to be finalised in the second half of 2005.
Urban Environment Expert Group	The current agenda is the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, which is part of the 6th Environmental Action Plan.

Fire and Rescue Service

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the operational efficiency of regional boundaries in relation to the re-organisation of local fire and rescue services. [186613]

Mr. Raynsford: The policy statement accompanying the draft Regional Assemblies Bill published in July 2004 confirmed that where voters choose to have an Elected Regional Assembly there will be a Regional Fire and Rescue Service. A referendum will take place in the North East on 4 November. Other than in regions where referendums are held, the Government have no plans to re-organise local fire and rescue services, which continue to be the responsibility of local Fire and Rescue Authorities.

All local Fire and Rescue Authorities are, however, expected to work together through Regional Management Boards to deliver the functions which are most efficiently and effectively performed at a regional level. These range from secure Regional Control Centres responding to the new dimension of environmental disaster and terrorist threat to purchasing consortia to secure better value for money for the taxpayer.

No new assessment has been conducted of the Government Office regional boundaries, but they are the basis on which a wide range of government activities are organised, including contingency planning to deal with civil emergencies.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the basis was for the decision that a single regional fire control room should be created to cover the South West region; what assessment he has made of the operational advantages of such a reorganisation; and what assessment he has made of the impact on the number of deaths as a result of fire. [186698]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government accept the conclusions of the Mott MacDonald report on the "Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales", published in December 2003. The report concluded that the optimum solution to secure efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of fire and rescue service control rooms would be nine control rooms in England, matched to the areas of the Government Offices for the Regions. Copies of the report are in the Library of the House.

The Government's conclusions about the benefits of a regional approach are set out in the White Paper "Our Fire and Rescue Service" (Cm 5808), and are informed by on a number of reviews of the service, culminating in the report of the Independent Review of the Fire Service published in December 2002. These reports are listed in the White Paper.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice he has sought from *(a)* the Practitioners Forum and *(b)* the Business and Community Safety Forum on plans for a national procurement strategy for the Fire and Rescue Service; what details of his reform proposals each forum has seen; and what recommendations they have made to him. [186967]

Mr. Raynsford: The Practitioners Forum has had a presentation on the National Procurement Strategy. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to make copies of the strategy available to the Business Community Safety Forum shortly. The Strategy will be launched at the Fire Conference in September; formal consultation will take place shortly after its publication. Both groups will be consulted at that stage as part of the wider consultation. We will consider all comments before the publication of the final draft.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to remove the constraints imposed on major procurement to the Fire and Rescue Service in November 2003. [186968]

Mr. Raynsford: Fire Service Circular (11/2004) gave advice to Fire and Rescue Authorities on the arrangements that fire and rescue authorities should adopt before entering into new contracts for major operational equipment. However, the period initially specified may have had the effect of making it impractical to run a tender exercise. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will therefore shortly be issuing guidance setting out revised milestones which will enable authorities to enter into more viable arrangements and create a natural progression to the proposed national arrangements. Where an Authority requires further clarification of whether a proposed contract will conflict with the National Procurement Strategy, they should not hesitate to contact the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, as two authorities have already done.

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what conclusions he has drawn on the effect that a national procurement plan for the Fire and Rescue Service will have on competition in the industries concerned; [186970]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact that plans to reform guidelines for procurement to the Fire and Rescue Service will have on the supply sector's *(a)* small and medium-sized enterprises, *(b)* levels of employment, *(c)* research and development capability and *(d)* exports. [186969]

Mr. Raynsford: Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are preparing a Regulatory Impact Assessment on the draft National Procurement Strategy. This Assessment, which will be issued shortly as part of the consultation document on the draft National Procurement Strategy, will include a competition assessment which will look at the impact for UK customers. It will analyse the impact of the proposed regulation in the relevant markets and on importers into the UK. We will carefully consider any comments arising from this consultation exercise. Officials have recently held very constructive meetings with representatives of the Federation of British Fire Organisations (FOBFO) and the Fire Fighting Vehicles Manufacturers Association (FFVMA). Lead officials will also be participating in the procurement workshop lead by FOBFO at the Fire Conference in September.

Home Buyers

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of home buyers were first-time buyers in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [187326]

Keith Hill: The percentage of house purchases made by first time buyers in the United Kingdomin each year since 1997 is estimated to have been as follows:

	Percentage of house purchases made by first time buyers
1997	45
1998	48
1999	47
2000	44
2001	43
2002	38
2003	29

Notes:
1. The CML figures are based on mortgage completions supplied through the Survey of Mortgage Lenders.
2. The figures exclude cash purchases and also exclude mortgage purchases where the type of buyer was not stated.
3. In the context of the Survey of Mortgage Lenders, the term "first-time buyer" refers to those buyers who were not homeowners immediately prior to this purchase. But they might have been homeowners at an earlier stage in their lives. For example someone who, after a period of home ownership, sold up, moved into rented accommodation and is now returning to home ownership—as a "first-time buyer".

Source:
Council of Mortgage Lenders

Homelessness

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research his Department is conducting into homeless families. [186310]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister currently has four externally commissioned research projects on different aspects of homelessness, which include consideration of homeless families.

1. A nationally representative survey of homeless families will collect data on the characteristics of homeless families and on the reasons for their homelessness. It will also assess the impact of homelessness and living in different types of temporary accommodation on the health and education of children, and collect information on the additional costs faced by families as a result of their homelessness. Findings from the survey will help to inform future policy on homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation. Planning for this major survey has been informed by a successful feasibility study, which reported this summer. This study will complement quarterly statistical data collected on households accepted as statutory homeless by local authorities.

2. Research about the causes of homelessness among black and minority ethnic communities. People from BME groups are disproportionately represented in statutory homelessness statistics. A development guide to assist local authorities and other agencies to address the needs of homeless black and minority ethnic households is expected to be published by the end of this year.

3. A study to evaluate the effectiveness of a range of homelessness prevention initiatives, including family mediation services, help for victims of domestic violence to remain safely in their own homes, and homelessness advice services. This research has recently been commissioned, and will produce good practice guidance for local authorities and service providers, to be published early in 2005.

4. A survey of households receiving Supporting People legacy funded services. This survey was commissioned to measure satisfaction with housing related support services provided by the Supporting People programme. The survey included interviews with 351 families receiving Supporting People funded services for homeless families. The survey reported on their support needs, the help and services that they receive, and on the problems they had experienced. It is due to be published in the autumn of 2004.

House Building

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has issued with respect to levels of new-house building *(a)* within the Bridgwater parliamentary constituency and *(b)* in the south west region; and if he will list for both areas the sites targeted for development. [186533]

Keith Hill: The First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has not issued any guidance in respect of levels of new-house building *(a)* within the Bridgwater parliamentary constituency.

Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10), section 7: Housing gives guidance on new-house building in *(b)* the south west region. General guidance on appropriate levels of house building are also set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold lists of development sites, such information is held by the local authorities.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what targets his Department has set with respect to levels of new-house building *(a)* within the Bridgwater parliamentary constituency and *(b)* in the South West region; and if he will make a statement. [186541]

Keith Hill: The First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has not set any targets for levels of new-house building *(a)* within the Bridgwater parliamentary constituency.

The levels of housing development for *(b)* the South West region are set out in Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10). Policy HOI says the levels of net additional housing for which provision should be made in the South West region over the period 1996–2016 should be based on the average annual rate of 20,200 dwellings per annum.

Key Worker Accommodation

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of public sector employees are in accommodation designated for key workers; and if he will make a statement. [187327]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect information about the proportion of public sector employees that are in accommodation designated for key workers. Information is, however, collected about the public sector employees given assistance with affordable housing through the following schemes:

under the Starter Home Initiative (SHI), 9,000 key workers were helped from the original £250 million budget. In addition, an extra £50 million was found to help a further 1,200 key workers in the SHI pipeline; and

around 3,800 key worker homes are being provided through the Housing Corporation's Challenge Fund; and

Key Worker Living is expected to provide up to 16,000 homes over the next three years.

In addition, English Partnership's London Wide Initiative will provide some 2,000 key worker homes over the next two to three years through a pilot scheme with private sector developers.

Local Authority Housing

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been spent by Northampton borough council in each year since 1997 on *(a)* refurbishment, *(b)* redecoration and *(c)* renewal of its directly-owned housing stock; and what the average spending per property was each year, excluding the amount spent on central Government schemes, including the New Deal. [186516]

Keith Hill: Work carried out on council housing stock is generally categorised as Capital and Revenue. The work carried out under the Capital heading includes installation, replacement or major repairs and could be categorised as refurbishment. Work under Revenue would consist of minor and routine repairs, including redecoration. Figures for Capital and Revenue spend since 1997 are set out in the following table:

	Capital (£ million)	*Revenue (£ million)*	*Total (£ million)*	*Average number of properties*	*Average spend (£)*
1997–98	2,557,000	9,241,851	11,798,851	15,272	773
1998–99	4,027,000	8,812,889	12,839,889	14,965	858
1999–2000	3,444,000	9,931,275	13,375,275	14,779	905
2000–01	6,519,000	9,241,717	15,760,717	14,439	1,092
2001–02	7,593,000	8,480,604	16,073,604	13,999	1,148
2002–03	7,956,000	9,752,773	17,708,773	13,568	1,305
2003–04	8,931,000	9,354,808	18,285,808	13,077	1,398
Total	41,027,000	64,815,916	105,842,916	—	—

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of council-owned homes are directly run by the council. [187329]

Keith Hill: The stock of local authority housing in England is currently about 2.3 million. Of this stock, about 575,000 dwellings are currently managed by Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and about 4,500 dwellings are managed as part of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes. Therefore about three quarters of the stock is directly run by local authorities.

Local Government

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what changes have been made to the 1988 Local Authority Publicity provisions, with particular reference to paragraph 43 on political publicity prior to an election; and if he will make a statement. [186319]

Mr. Raynsford: The Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, (Department of Environment Circular 20/88) was amended in April 2001 to take account of the new council constitutions, particularly the possibility of individual members holding executive positions, and of mayoral referendums and petitions.

The amended Code provides for restrictions on publicity in circumstances where there is a by-election or election affecting the local authority's area, a mayoral referendum or a mayoral petition. The 2001 amendment explicitly enables local authorities to respond to events or enquiries during the period preceding an election or referendum with answers that are factual and not party political.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Audit Commission's latest ratings are for councils in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* the Eastern area. [186534]

Mr. Raynsford: The information is as follows:

(a) The Audit Commission announced the results of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for district councils in the county of Essex in June this year. The outcomes of the assessments for Maldon and Rochford district councils have not yet been published.

The results are listed in the following table along with the results for Essex county council and single tier councils in Essex.

Council	Rating
Essex County Council[1]	Good
Basildon DC	Fair
Braintree DC	Good
Brentwood BC	Good
Castle Point DC	Poor
Chelmsford BC	Good
Colchester BC	Excellent
Epping Forest DC	Good
Harlow DC	Poor
Southend on Sea BC[1]	Fair
Tendring DC	Good
Thurrock[1]	Weak
Uttlesford DC	Fair

[1] Single tier and county councils.

(b) The table below shows the CPA results for councils in the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Norfolk. District councils in the County of Suffolk have yet to be assessed. The exception is Ipswich, in Suffolk, which was a Pathfinder council for the CPA methodology and was rated as a 'good' council. CPA categories for Single Tier and County Councils were last announced in December 2003 and their results will be updated again in December 2004. All district councils will have been assessed by December 2004.

Council	CPA Rating	Date Assessment Published
Bedfordshire County[1]	Poor	18 December 2003
Bedford BC	Good	22 July 2004
Luton BC[1]	Good	18 December 2003
Mid Bedfordshire DC	Fair	22 July 2004
South Bedfordshire DC	Good	22 July 2004
Cambridgeshire County[1]	Good	18 December 2003
Cambridge CC (Pathfinder)	Excellent	22 January 2004
East Cambridgeshire DC	Good	22 July 2004
Fenland DC	Fair	22 July 2004
Huntingdonshire DC	Excellent	22 July 2004
Peterborough CC[1]	Fair	18 December 2003
South Cambridgeshire DC	Fair	22 July 2004
Hertfordshire County[1]	Excellent	18 December 2 003
Broxbourne BC	Good	6 May 2004
Dacorum BC	Good	6 May 2004
East Hertfordshire DC	Good	6 May 2004
Hertsmere BC	Fair	6 May 2004
North Hertfordshire DC	Fair	6 May 2004
St Albans CC	Fair	6 May 2004
Stevenage BC	Good	6 May 2004
Three Rivers DC	Good	6 May 2004
Watford BC	Weak	6 May 2004
Welwyn Hatfield DC	Fair	6 May 2004
Norfolk County[1]	Good	18 December 2003
Breckland DC	Good	13 November 2003
Broadland DC	Fair	13 November 2003
Great Yarmouth BC	Good	13 November 2003
King's Lynn and West Norfolk BC	Good	13 November 2003
North Norfolk DC	Fair	13 November 2003
Norwich CC	Fair	13 November 2003
South Norfolk DC	Good	13 November 2003
Suffolk County[1]	Good	18 December 2003
Ipswich BC	Good	22 January 2004

[1] Single tier and county councils.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many councils in England were assessed as *(a)* excellent, *(b)* good, *(c)* fair and *(d)* weak in the last available assessment. [186535]

Mr. Raynsford: Tables showing the latest results for all single tier and county councils and for all the district councils that have been assessed so far (189 out of 238 councils altogether) have been made available in the Library of the House. Since the Comprehensive Performance Assessment categories for all single tier and county councils were last announced (December 2003), a number of councils have had a corporate re-assessment in 2004, seven of which have now moved up a category. These councils are Coventry, Durham, North Lincolnshire, Southwark, St Helens, Wakefield and Walsall.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has issued relating to local authority websites; whether this includes guidance on external links to councillors' party political websites; and if he will make a statement. [186134]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has issued no guidance specifically concerned with local authority websites.

The Department for Environment, Transport and Regions Circular 06/2001 "Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity", issued under section 4 of the Local Government Act 1986, sets out certain limits on the nature of material to which a local authority may devote expenditure. It recommends that local authorities should not solely rely on websites as a means of disseminating information, and it sets out that local authority publications, including those published on local authority websites, should treat issues in an objective and informative way. The code does not stipulate which sites may or may not be linked to by a local authority website.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will apply the 2001 Census data for the next round of calculating the local government finance settlement; [187598]

(2) whether it is his policy to use the most up-to-date data available for calculating grant distribution to local authorities; and if he will make a statement. [187599]

Mr. Raynsford: On 21 July 2004, I announced to the House that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not intend to use 2001 Census data for the 2005–06 Local Government Finance Settlement, 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 30WS.

This announcement followed work carried out by officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and local government experts during the last year to remodel Formula Spending Shares (FSSs) using the 2001 Census data. Incorporating the new Census data in the funding formula is not a simple task. It is technically incorrect to update the Census data in the police formula; and in other areas the changes needed to incorporate the 2001 Census data would break the current formula freeze, and could cause large changes to the distribution of FSSs. I should also add that, for the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services and the Highways Maintenance formulae, we still do not have all the 2001 Census data we need.

In the Government's December 2001 White Paper 'Strong Local Leadership—Quality Public Services' (CM5237), it was announced that there would be a

freeze on formula changes for 2004–05 and 2005–06 in order to ensure a period of stability for councils. In deciding not to use 2001 Census data in the 2005–06 FSS calculations, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister balanced this aim of providing stability in local authority funding against our desire to use the most up-to-date data in the funding formulae calculations.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost was of the Boundary Committee Review of local government in *(a)* the North East, *(b)* the North West and *(c)* Yorkshire and the Humber. [187254]

Mr. Raynsford: The costs of the local government reviews undertaken by the Boundary Committee were:

	£ million
North East Region	1,272,168
North West Region	1,973,416
Yorkshire and Humber Region	662,983

Non-domestic Rates

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 753W, on the non-domestic rate pool, whether *(a)* the police and *(b)* other agencies in Gloucestershire were allocated funding from non-domestic rates in 2003–04. [186327]

Mr. Raynsford: Distributions from the non-domestic rate pool are currently based on population and the services which a local authority is responsible for. The national amount per head for 2003–04 was £317.1934786, and the relevant population of Gloucestershire for the 2003–04 Local Government Finance Settlement was 565,000. The resulting total of £179,214,316 from the non-domestic rate pool for the Gloucestershire area was allocated between the Gloucestershire billing and precepting authorities as follows:

	£
Gloucestershire County Council	151,436,097
Gloucestershire Police Authority	8,064,644
Cheltenham Borough Council	3,839,576
Cotswold District Council	2,804,945
Forest of Dean District Council	2,792,873
Gloucester City Council	3,836,122
Stroud District Council	3,770,422
Tewkesbury Borough Council	2,669,637

The Fire Authorities in shire areas were not precepting authorities in 2003–04 and so did not receive a share of the non-domestic rate pool in that year. No other agencies in Gloucestershire received a share of the £179,214,316 for the Gloucestershire area.

One North East

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the value of assets transferred from One North East to the partnership with UK Land Estates was; and what the *(a)* cost and *(b)* source of the advice obtained by One North East before the sale was. [186846]

Keith Hill: The assets transferred (as disclosed in the Agency's 2003–04 accounts as a post balance sheet event) were valued at £122 million.

The cost of advice sought was £2.2 million.

The main costs can be broken down as follows:

	£000
1. Legal advice	970
2. Property Consultant costs	544
3. Surveying costs	515
4. Accounting, tax and other technical advice	160

Specialist advice was received from Eversheds (Legal), King Sturge (Property Specialists), PriceWaterhouseCoopers (Tax) and PartnershipsUK (more General advice).

Parliamentary Questions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will reply to the Question tabled by the hon. Member for Meriden on 21 June, reference 180362, on refurbishment of buildings. [186418]

Phil Hope: A reply was given to the hon. Member on 13 August 2004.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many contracts his Office had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg, *(d)* the Bank of Scotland, *(e)* PriceWaterhouseCoopers, *(f)* Deloitte and Touche, *(g)* KPMG and *(h)* Ernst & Young for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186695]

Mr. Raynsford: Since 2001–02, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has had two contracts, one with Ernst & Young and the other with PriceWaterhouseCoopers, both in 2003–04. Ernst & Young was paid £62,734 excluding VAT to review the Fire and Rescue Service private finance initiative programme.

PriceWaterhouseCoopers carried out work on the Housing Private Finance Initiative Procurement Pack. The Housing Procurement Pack was jointly procured with the 4Ps, (Public Private Partnerships Programme) an agency of the Local Government Association set up to provide advice to local authorities on PPP/PFIs. The total fee paid was £57,486 excluding VAT. 50 per cent. of the fees paid by the Office will be recovered from the 4Ps.

Planning

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will require a start on works to activate a time-limited planning approval to represent at least a quarter of the development; and if he will make a statement. [186980]

Keith Hill: Under section 56 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a variety of works is held to constitute the start of development. A material change of use of land may also indicate that development

has started, provided the change is related to the development. There are no plans to amend the law in the manner suggested.

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the minimum requirement of works commenced is for a time-limited planning approval to be activated; and if he will make a statement. [186981]

Keith Hill: The activities that may indicate that a planning permission has begun to be implemented include: any work of construction; demolition of a building on the site; the digging of a trench to contain foundations; the laying of any underground main or pipe to the foundations; laying out an access road; and any material change in the use of the land. The full list is in section 56 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the revised Planning Policy Guidance, PPG22, on renewable energy will be published; and if he will make a statement. [186557]

Keith Hill: Planning policy statement 22 (PPS22) on renewable energy was published on 9 August 2004. Copies of the document are available in the Libraries of the House and have been sent out to all planning authorities in England.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) when the Government will publish good practice guidance for local authorities and developers on the planning obligations; [187150]

(2) when the Government plan to issue a revised circular on planning obligations. [187175]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister aims to publish a Good Practice Guide on planning obligations in early 2005, alongside a new circular on planning obligations. A draft of the new circular is to be issued for consultation in the autumn.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is also continuing work on developing proposals for an optional planning charge, so that decisions on implementation can be made in the context of the Chancellor's decision on a Planning Gain Supplement at the end of 2005.

Jim Knight: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities have conducted needs assessments on sport, recreation and open space facilities as required by Planning Policy Guidance Note 17. [187383]

Keith Hill: PPG17 was published in July 2002. An assessment of its implementation and effectiveness will be undertaken as part of the normal policy review process within five years of publication.

The collection of regular statistics on the implementation of specific national planning policies could be attained only at disproportionate cost. However, Government offices do scrutinise statutory development plans for compliance with national policies before these plans are adopted.

Under the new planning system local development frameworks must be supported by an evidence base comprising data such as that required by PPG17. Where this evidence falls short of such a requirement, inspectors could rule at public examination that the plan did not meet the test of soundness. Subsequently authorities' annual monitoring reports which will report upon policy performance, will also provide a mechanism by which Government offices can assess whether PPG 17 requirements continue to be met.

Postal Voting

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how he assessed the *(a)* support for and *(b)* problems of all postal voting in (i) the North East, (ii) the North West and (iii) Yorkshire and the Humber. [186997]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government listened to the concerns raised in the Commons debates on 19 and 21 July about whether we should go ahead with referendums in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber. In light of these, the Government decided to proceed with the referendum in the North East, subject to the Electoral Commission's report. The Government also decided to reschedule referendums in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber once we had considered the report prepared by the Electoral Commission. This report was published on 27 August.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to prevent the postal vote problems in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber from appearing in the North East. [186998]

Mr. Raynsford: The rules for the North East referendum were approved by Parliament in July. The administration of the North East referendum is for the Chief Counting Officer, Ged Fitzgerald, Chief Executive of Sunderland city council and for the local counting officers.

The Electoral Commission published their report into the June electoral pilots on 27 August and has said:

"The Commission has therefore considered carefully, in the light of our conclusions in relation to postal voting more generally, whether it is appropriate for the referendum in the North East to continue as planned . . . . .our conclusion is that the referendum should proceed as an all-postal ballot without major changes to the process."

In reaching this conclusion the Electoral Commission highlighted the desirability of avoiding late changes in a process already approved by Parliament, and a number of additional factors specific to the North East referendum, as follows:

The form of all postal-voting defined in law for the regional referendum is a significant improvement over that piloted in June, in part as a result of changes advocated by the Commission earlier in the year. For example there is no requirement for a witness to sign the security statement and more assistance and delivery points are provided for and discretion given to counting officers to provide additional points as they see fit.

There is presently no evidence on which to conclude that an all-postal referendum in the North East would be unsafe in terms of fraud or malpractice. To the Commission's knowledge, no allegations of electoral fraud made in the North East in relation to the June all-postal pilot scheme have led to formal prosecutions.

Voters and election professionals in the North East have substantial previous experience of all-postal ballots.

The public is more positive about all-postal voting, and its future use, in the North East than in any other pilot region; and

The capacity of commercial printers and the Royal Mail to manage an all-postal ballot of the scale required in the North East (with approximately 1.9 million electors) was evidenced in June and their capacity will be further enhanced by the lack of competing pressures from other all-postal ballots taking place simultaneously. Additionally, planning between printers, local authorities and other key suppliers is already well under way.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is considering the Electoral Commission's report and will make a statement to Parliament about the implications for the regional referendums soon.

Private Sector Housing

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research his Department has carried out into potential policy mechanisms aimed at stimulating growth in the private rented sector. [187532]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is committed to securing a larger, better-quality, better-managed private rented sector. The Housing Bill currently before Parliament includes a number of measures, the licensing of private rented properties, designed to help achieve this objective.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's research has recently focused on aspects of the condition and management of properties in the private rented sector which are key to building market confidence.

Recent research carried out for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has included: powers for private sector housing renewal; the housing health and safety rating system and houses in multiple occupation; tenancy deposit schemes; the economics of the park homes industry; run-down private sector housing; fiscal policy options to promote affordable housing; voluntary accreditation schemes; and harassment and unlawful eviction of private sector tenants and park home residents.

The English House Condition Survey (EHCS) is also used to monitor overall improvements in the sector.

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures his Department is taking to stimulate private sector involvement in the delivery of *(a)* shared equity and *(b)* privately-rented accommodation. [187536]

Keith Hill: The Housing Bill, currently before Parliament, contains a provision that would allow the Housing Corporation to pay grants to bodies other than Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). Such grants would be essentially for the same housing purposes as the Corporation's grants to RSLs. This could include the provision of shared equity schemes such as Homebuy.

The Government are keen to secure a larger contribution from the private rented sector towards meeting housing need. Measures in the Housing Bill should raise the standards, the professionalism, and the reputation of the sector. Consultations are also under way on ways of encouraging new institutional investment in residential property, including the use of Property Investment Fund.

Public Bodies

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the estimated *(a)* total budget, *(b)* departmental funding and *(c)* cost to his Department of the (i) Property Consultative Group, (ii) Home Buying and Selling Forum, (iii) Central Stakeholder Group, (iv) Building Regulations Advisory Committee and (v) Home Ownership Task Force are for the financial years 2005–06 to 2007–08. [187564]

Keith Hill: With regard to the Property Consultative Group, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1139W.

The Home Buying and Selling Forum and Central Stakeholder Groups are hosted by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, in one of its buildings and the costs falls within its general administration and staff budget: there is no separate budget for these groups. The estimated costs for the financial years 2005–06 to 2007–08 are not expected to change significantly from those quoted for 2004–05, in the answer given on 30 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 294W.

The Building Regulations Advisory Committee does not receive Government funding other than costs internal to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of sponsoring it. We are unable to estimate costs for the financial years 2005–06 to 2007–08, but do not expect them to change significantly from the £70,000 quoted for 2003–04 on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1140W.

With regard to the Home Ownership Task Force, the answer is none. The Task Force's work was completed with the publication of its report "A Home of My Own" on 13 November 2003.

Regional Assemblies

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what information was available to his Ministers on 22 July about the likely outcomes of votes for regional assemblies. [186995]

Mr. Raynsford: Ministers were aware of a number of published surveys and opinion polls. The decision to reschedule the referendums in Yorkshire and the Humber and the North West followed differences of view in the House of Commons about whether the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister should go ahead with those referendums, on the basis proposed involving all postal ballots, by November 4.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will estimate the resources which have been put into preparing for the postponed votes on regional assemblies. [186996]

Mr. Raynsford: The referendums for Yorkshire and the Humber and the North West are being rescheduled, so preparation for them has been and still is necessary. Some of the preparations are common to all three regions. The main costs incurred by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister which can be attributed to the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber are as follows:

The costs for the Boundary Committee's local government reviews in these two regions is included in the answer I am giving to the hon. Member for North Essex (Mr. Jenkin) today (PQ 187254).

Some costs in relation to the Your Say information campaign. These are detailed in the answer I am giving to the hon. Member for North Essex (Mr. Jenkin) today (PQ 187162).

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the total cost is of the Your Say information campaign on elected regional assemblies in *(a)* the North West, *(b)* Yorkshire and the Humber and *(c)* the North East to date; [187162]

(2) what his revised estimate is of the total cost of the Your Say information campaigns in the light of the postponement of the referendums in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber; [187252]

(3) if he will list each item of expenditure undertaken as part of the Your Say information campaign on elected regional assemblies, broken down by the region in which that expenditure was undertaken. [187253]

Mr. Raynsford: Originally, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister proposed a budget for the Your Say information campaign across all three regions of £5 million.

Information campaign activity relating to the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber was suspended on 22 July. The Department has sought to secure refunds for expenditure related to these two regions, wherever possible.

It is estimated that total expenditure until the referendum in November will be approximately £3.2 million.

Expected expenditure to the end of the campaign can be broken down by region, into its main components, thus:

£000

	North West	*Yorkshire and the Humber*	*North East*	*Total*
(a) Production and distribution of leaflets	98	72	308	478
(b) Posters	232	193	86	511
(c) Broadcast media	242	211	223	676
(d) Newspapers	137	158	128	423
(e) Events	49	39	68	156
(f) Other	309	278	408	995
Total	1,067	951	1,221	3,239

Regional Bodies (South-West)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what has been the cost *(a)* each year and *(b)* in total since their inception of the regional bodies in the South West that fall under the remit of his Department; what responsibilities these regional bodies hold; what these regional bodies' total budgets are; what assessment he has made of their impact; and if he will make a statement. [186538]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for no regional bodies in the South West. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for the Government Office for the South West, which is part of central Government and is not a regional body in its own right.

My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has designated a regional chamber for the South West, under the terms of the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998. However, the chamber is an independent, voluntary body and is not the responsibility of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister makes a grant to the chamber to help it fulfil its responsibilities.

Since designation in 1999 the regional chamber has been responsible for scrutinising the work of the South West Regional Development Agency and since 2003 has been the recognised Regional Planning Body for the South West. The chamber has been allocated the following maximum levels of grant:

	£
2001–02	500,000
2002–03	600,000
2003–04	1,613,000
2004–05	2,101,000

Regional Planning

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what rules govern whether a unitary council's area can be treated as a sub-region for the purpose of regional planning arrangements. [187716]

Keith Hill: There is no rule. It is up to each RPB (Regional Planning Body) to decide how best to take sub-regional matters forward and to define the sub-regions in the draft RSS (Regional Spatial Strategies) revision. What might be an effective sub-regional approach in one region may not necessarily suit the circumstances and geography of another.

The definition of need for a sub-regional approach should be based on an assessment of the functional relationship between settlements, such as journey-to-work patterns, or land uses within the area affected by the same strategic planning issue or issues which may well differ from administrative boundaries. This could include consideration, for example, of how the strategic planning system can assist not only in creating and sustaining the economic competitiveness of a city or a cluster of towns but in spreading the benefits of a prosperous city to the wider region (the concept of a 'city-region').

The sub-regional definition should be based on a clearly recognisable 'strategic policy deficit' which cannot be adequately addressed by general RSS policies or by LDDs (Local Development Documents) on their own. In some parts of a region, LDDs may be capable of being prepared within the context of the generic policies of a RSS. In some cases this may need to be on a joint LDD basis and the RPB may need to encourage the relevant LPAs (Local Planning Authorities) to produce a joint LDD in order that the RSS can be effectively implemented. However, in many cases there will be sub-regional strategies issues which cannot be tackled through a joint plan or where the LDDs require a more detailed strategic policy context which cannot be provided by generic policies in a RSS. Therefore, it will be common to have sub-regional policies as part of the RSS revision.

Where the RPB decides that it is appropriate to have RSS policies which are specific to a particular part or parts of the region, section 5(5) of the Act requires a section 4 (4) authority or authorities to be first to make detailed proposals, unless it is agreed that the RPB itself or a district council should do so instead. Providing these section 4(4) authorities agree, there is no reason why an RPB should not continue to take the lead, as it has in the past, in preparing detailed proposals on a partnership basis with these authorities and others.

Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies (PPS11) will be published on 7 September 2004. Until now it was only available as a draft.

Suffolk Fire Authority

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many firefighters were employed by the Suffolk Fire Authority *(a)* in 2004–05 and *(b)* in each of the last 10 years. [187208]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is set out as follows:

Number of firefighters employed by Suffolk

Year[1]	Whole-time	Retained	Total
2004	244	399	643
2003	250	415	665
2002	253	401	654
2001	248	404	652
2000	249	396	645
1999	256	400	656
1998	252	418	670
1997	256	423	679
1996	258	422	680
1995	267	415	682
1994	264	421	685

[1] Data refer to workforce as at 31 March for each year except 1995, where data refer to 1 January.

Supporting People Programme

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to commission research into the effects on vulnerable people of changes in funding for the Supporting People programme. [187523]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister undertakes extensive monitoring and research to assess the success of the Supporting People programme. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will continue to monitor progress to ensure the programme protects vulnerable people in a cost effective and efficient manner.

DEFENCE

Army Recruitment

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* officers and *(b)* other ranks have been recruited into each infantry battalion in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and how many are planned to be recruited in each of the next five years. [187342]

Mr. Ingram: The following tables show the number of officers and other ranks that were recruited into infantry battalions since financial year 2000–01. Statistics prior to this period are not available.

Table 1: Officers commissioned into the Infantry since financial year 2000–01 by regiment

Regiment	Financial year 2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Grenadier Guards	9	7	2	7
Coldstream Guards	6	2	6	12
Scots Guards	4	10	3	7
Irish Guards	8	4	3	3
Welsh Guards	2	6	3	3
Royal Scots	7	3	2	7
Royal Highland Fusiliers	3	6	4	4
King's Own Scottish Borderers	4	4	2	4
Black Watch Highlanders	7	7	5	6
Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders	7	3	8	4
Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment	5	5	7	6
Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	6	6	10	12
Royal Anglian Regiment	12	14	10	8
King's Own Border Regiment	11	8	9	10
King's Regiment	4	4	6	6
Prince of Wales's Own Regiment	2	3	3	4
Green Howards	4	4	4	3
Queen's Lancashire Regiment	1	2	10	5
Duke of Wellington's Regiment	1	3	4	4
Devonshire and Dorset Regiment	6	4	5	2
Cheshire Regiment	6	4	6	3
Royal Welsh Fusiliers	2	1	9	1
Royal Regiment of Wales	6	1	6	5
Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment	3	1	4	1
Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment	1	6	8	4
Staffordshire Regiment	6	6	5	5
Light Infantry	6	3	3	7
Royal Green Jackets	8	10	30	10
Royal Irish Regiment	12	11	12	10
Parachute Regiment	8	1	4	8
Royal Gurkha Rifles	12	16	19	14
	8	10	4	6
Total	188	170	196	148

Table 2: Trained soldiers passing out from Infantry training centre Catterick to the Infantry since financial year 2000–01 by regiment

Regiment	Financial year 2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Grenadier Guards	119	108	78	137
Coldstream Guards	87	50	51	119
Scots Guards	91	78	50	83
Irish Guards	72	87	62	99
Welsh Guards	111	64	57	87
Royal Scots	56	59	79	56
Royal Highland Fusiliers	55	52	97	85
King's Own Scottish Borderers	70	66	47	60
Black Watch Highlanders	78	58	66	88
Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders	16	59	53	59
Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment	55	57	85	72
Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	218	214	224	133
Royal Anglian Regiment	95	122	135	198
	139	127	141	188

Table 2: Trained soldiers passing out from Infantry training centre Catterick to the Infantry since financial year 2000–01 by regiment

Regiment	Financial year 2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
King's Own Border Regiment	83	69	46	55
King's Regiment	85	100	98	74
Prince of Wales's Own Regiment	64	81	76	104
Green Howards	56	62	64	72
Queen's Lancashire Regiment	92	78	117	104
Duke of Wellington's Regiment	94	93	91	71
Devonshire and Dorset Regiment	77	71	52	78
Cheshire Regiment	64	74	56	72
Royal Welch Fusiliers	94	102	87	91
Royal Regiment of Wales	85	104	68	56
Royal Gloucestershire Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment	75	82	54	102
Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment	69	72	88	60
Staffordshire Regiment	80	96	91	120
Light Infantry	136	149	146	170
Royal Green Jackets	12	11	12	10
Royal Irish Regiment	75	83	62	70
Parachute Regiment	379	240	246	190
Total	3,065	2,925	2,845	3,211

The following tables show the latest figures for the number of trained officers and soldiers expected to join infantry over the next five years. At this stage it is not possible to quantify the numbers by individual battalion.

The figures for financial years 2005–06 to 2008–09 take into account my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's (Mr. Hoon) announcement to the House on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–70.

Table 3: Officers

Method of entry	Financial year 2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
Direct entry	165	165	165	165	165
Late entry	31	28	28	28	28
Total	196	193	193	193	193

Note:
Direct entry relates to those who enter the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst direct from education or civilian life. Late entry refers to those who apply for a commission through the ranks.

Table 4: Soldiers

Category	Financial year 2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
Foot Guards	368	405	418	430	430
Line	2,004	2,200	2,134	2,036	2,036
Parachute Regiment	230	225	221	234	234
Total	2,582	2,830	2,780	2,700	2,700

Cheshire Regiment

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the Cheshire Regiment. [186425]

Mr. Ingram: As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Hoon) announced on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–70, the reduction in the number of battalions committed to Northern Ireland, means that the overall requirement for infantry battalions can be reduced by four. This reduction will comprise of one battalion recruited from Scotland and three recruited from England.

Together with the phasing out of the Infantry Arms Plot, a new infantry structure is required. This will seek to preserve the best elements of the regimental system while adapting to ensure operational success for the future. The new structure will be based on large single-cap badge regiments of two or more battalions. Details of the new organisation will be worked through by the Army and announced by the end of the year.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the tours of duty undertaken by the Cheshire Regiment in the last 25 years. [186426]

Mr. Ingram: The tours of duty and operational tours undertaken by 1st Battalion. The Cheshire Regiment, since 1980. are as follows:

Date	Primary Location	Operational Tours	Comment
1980–82	UK (Tidworth)	Belize	
1982–84	Northern Ireland (Ballykelly)		As resident Northern Ireland Battalion (an accompanied tour)
1984–86	Hong Kong		
1986–88	UK (Catterham)	Belize	
1988–91	UK (Chester)	Northern Ireland (Armagh)	
1991–94	Germany (Fallingbostel)	Yugoslavia	
1994–96	UK (Cakington)	Northern Ireland (Fermanagh	
1996–98	Northern Ireland (Ballykelly)		As resident Northern Ireland Battalion
1998–2000	UK (Chepstow)	Northern Ireland	Eight week tour
2000–02	Cyprus	Falkland Islands	Coy only deployed
2002–03	UK (Bulford)	Northern Ireland (Dungannon) Iraq	Unit returns from Iraq in November 2004

Correspondence

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1321W, on deaths in service, when he will write to the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North. [187032]

Mr. Ingram: I wrote to my hon. Friend on 31 August 2004 and a copy of my letter has been placed in the Library of the House.

Drug Smuggling

Mr. Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on recent naval operations to combat international drug smuggling. [186772]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Navy makes a significant contribution towards UK efforts to combat international drug smuggling. At home, the Royal Navy act in support of HM Customs and Excise under the terms of "Military Aid to the Civil Power". In the Caribbean, the RN deployment (Atlantic Patrol Task (North), primarily promotes UK interests in the region and provides security to UK Overseas Territories. It is also tasked to carry out counter-drugs activities as part of its deployment and provides a tangible presence as one element of the UK's broader counter drugs activities in the region. In addition. Royal Navy units East of Suez may also be involved in efforts to reduce narcotics trafficking.

Efficiency Savings

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his oral statement of 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–70, if he will list the principal areas where he expects to make the efficiency savings of £2,800 million; how much will be attributable to each area; and over what time scale these savings will be delivered. [186638]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence is committed to achieving annual efficiency gains in excess of £2.8 billion by 2007–08. The principal areas where it is planned to make efficiency gains are set out in the 2004 Spending Review White Paper (Cm 6237), chapter 13; work is continuing to refine these figures. Further details of the Department's efficiency plans, and bow performance against those plans will be measured, will be included in an Efficiency Technical Note, which will be published on the Department's website by the end of October 2004.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how the Government's departmental efficiency savings are to be implemented in the British Army in the *(a)* current and *(b)* next two financial years. [187341]

Mr. Ingram: An additional £3.7 billion was allocated to Defence over the period of Spending Review 2004. In parallel the Ministry of Defence is committed to achieving annual efficiency gains in excess of £2.8 billion by 2007–08. The principal areas where it is planned to make efficiency gains are set out in the 2004 Spending Review White Paper (Cm 6237), Chapter 13; work is continuing to refine these figures. Further details of the Department's efficiency plans, and how performance against those plans will be measured, will be included in an Efficiency Technical Note, which will be published on the Department's website by the end of October 2004.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British *(a)* officials, *(b)* Ministers and *(c)* service personnel were issued with copies of International Committee of the Red Cross working papers about detainee conditions and treatment in Iraq delivered to Coalition Forces headquarters in October and November 2003. [183523]

Mr. Hoon: The International Committee of the Red Cross produces confidential working papers following visits to detention facilities. The majority of these papers contain information relevant to local Commanders, and concern issues that can be resolved at a local level. However, where working papers have contained more substantive issues, these have been brought to the attention of Ministers.

A working paper dated 11 October 2003 was issued by the International Committee of the Red Cross to US service personnel in Iraq. This working paper was subsequently passed to UK service personnel and MOD Officials. This working paper was not passed to Ministers.

We are not aware of an ICRC working paper having been produced in November 2003.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information has been given to the families of the deceased about the *(a)* progress and *(b)* conclusion of Royal Military Police investigations into deaths allegedly caused by UK forces in Iraq. [185888]

Mr. Ingram: Details of the information passed to the families of Iraqis whose deaths were allegedly caused by UK forces are being withheld under Exemption 12 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Bereaved families are kept informed of progress and results wherever possible, although the prevailing security situation in Iraq has made this difficult to achieve in every case.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel serving in Iraq since 1 January 2003 have been discharged from the forces as a result of injuries sustained from *(a)* road traffic accidents, *(b)* armed conflict and *(c)* other causes; and if he will make a statement. [186378]

Mr. Ingram: As of 31 May 2004 centrally held records show that 16 service personnel who had been deployed on Operation Telic have subsequently been medically discharged from the armed forces as a result of injuries. The main reasons for medical discharges are as follows:

Causes of medical discharge	*Number of military personnel medically discharged*[1]
Road traffic accidents	6
Battle wound or injury	1
Other causes	9
Total number of injuries	16

[1] Numbers of service personnel deployed on Op Telic and subsequent medical discharges excludes special forces personnel.

Mr. Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research his Department has commissioned on the offensive capabilities of enemy insurgents in Iraq. [186773]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has commissioned no external research on the offensive capabilities of enemy insurgents in Iraq. However, MOD continuously evaluates the offensive capabilities being used, working-closely with other relevant

Government Departments. This evaluation draws on a range of materials from a variety of sources, and includes work to identify the weaponry and equipment available to insurgent groups as well as their training and military experience.

Kilve Bend (Somerset)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what future plans his Department has for the use of the range at Kilve Bend in Somerset. [186498]

Mr. Ingram: We plan to continue to use Kilve Bend as a helicopter gunnery range.

NATO/Russian Relations

Mr. Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on relations between NATO and Russia, with particular reference to security in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet bloc. [186771]

Mr. Hoon: Formal relations between NATO and Russia are conducted through the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). The Council facilitates engagement between the twenty-six member-states of NATO and Russia on a number of key issues. It provides a forum where concerns can be aired and practical solutions to problems can be identified. There is an increasing broadening of political dialogue in the NRC to cover key security issues including Afghanistan, the Balkans and counter-terrorism. Our aim is for Russia to be a long-term strategic partner of NATO. Wider European security can only benefit as a result

As many countries of Eastern Europe are now members of NATO, their security—like that of other allies—is part of the normal business of the Alliance. NATO has encouraged Russia to make progress in negotiating with Georgia and Moldova over her presence in the region; this was reflected in the communiqué following the Istanbul Summit (28–29 June 2004). NATO and Russia are working together on a range of security issues including: counter-proliferation; theatre missile defence; arms control and counter-narcotics. They are also conducting work towards joint operations such as Operation Active Endeavour (NATO's counter-terrorist naval mission in the Mediterranean).

Nimrod MRA4 Aircraft

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to agree the production contract for the remaining Nimrod MRA4 aircraft. [184458]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* Under the restructured contract with BAE SYSTEMS, formally amended on 23 February this year, design and development and manufacture have been separated as far as possible to ensure that technology is adequately de-risked before making further commitment to production price and schedule. A decision on full production is dependent on design maturity and price negotiation and is planned for next year.

RAF Aldergrove

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Oral Statement of 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–70, what the future operational size of RAF Aldergrove will be; and whether it will include all present forces, with particular reference to aerial surveillance stationed on the base. [186527]

Mr. Ingram: No decisions have been taken as to the future operational role of RAF Aldergrove which is listed in the Joint Declaration as one of the locations where, in the context of a peaceful society, the regular garrison in Northern Ireland might be based.

RAF Leeming (Nuclear Weapons)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he will make a statement on the security of nuclear weapons stored in transit at RAF Leeming. [186620]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 4 February 2004. *Official Report*, column 890W.

RAF Servicemen and Women

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his plans to reduce the number of RAF servicemen and women; and how many *(a)* military and *(b)* civilian employees will be affected. [186395]

Mr. Hoon: As I announced in a statement to the House of Commons on 23 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 344–71, we must transform our armed forces so that they can continue to respond effectively to the global challenges of the 21st century. This means modernising the structure of our forces, embracing new technology and focusing on the means by which our armed forces can work together with other Government agencies to meet the threat of international terrorism and the forces of instability in the modern world.

A combination of significant advances in capability, both within some existing aircraft fleets and as a result of the introduction to service of new types, such as Typhoon, and changes in investment towards greater deployability, better targeted action and swifter outcomes have enabled us to make a number of changes in the RAFs force structure. These changes, in conjunction with the achievement of planned organisational efficiencies, will lead to a reduced RAF manpower requirement of around 41,000 by 2008, from a current strength of around 48,500.

In addition to the reductions in service manpower, we envisage reductions of around 10,000 civilian jobs across Defence. These will flow from efficiencies as a consequence of the Department's change programme and other initiatives, as well as changes to the force structure.

Royal Irish Regiment

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Oral Statement of 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–70, what the future battalion strength of the Royal Irish Regiment will be; and whether it will include the retention of the three Home Battalions. [186526]

Mr. Ingram: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–370, that the number of Regular battalions in the Army would reduce by four to 36 by April 2008. This will allow the resulting manpower to be redistributed across the Army to create more robust unit establishments under the Future Army Structure. To maintain a regional balance the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment has been exempted from consideration.

The Royal Irish Regiment (Home Service) battalions are fundamental to the armed forces' support of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. No decisions have been taken concerning their future role, as it is premature to come to conclusions about the composition of the long-term garrison.

SA80A2/L85 Components

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what supplies his Department has of replacement components for the *(a)* SA80A2 and *(b)* L85; and what plans he has to replenish these supplies. [186640]

Mr. Ingram: The SA80A2 family consists of the L85A2 Individual Weapon and the L86A2 Light Support Weapon. Stocks of consumables and repairable spare parts, sufficient to meet all operational and training requirements, are currently held in Ministry of Defence depots. Stock levels are regularly reviewed and replenished as necessary.

TREASURY

Civil Service/Public Sector Relocation

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of civil service and public sector jobs presently located in London and the South East that will be relocated to *(a)* Bridgwater and *(b)* the South West following the report by Sir Michael Lyons, Well Placed to Deliver? Shaping the Pattern of Government Service, and the 2004 Spending Review. [186548]

Mr. Boateng: In line, with Sir Michael Lyons' recommendations contained in his report published in March this year and endorsed in the 2004 Spending Review, it will be for departments and public bodies themselves to determine the destination of relocated activities from London and the South East. Departments' decisions will be based on their own business needs and priorities, taking account of the requirement to improve public services, secure greater efficiencies and value for money for the taxpayer as well as of local economic conditions. Departments will also take into account forthcoming locational guidance that will be issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

In the course of the Lyons and 2004 Spending Reviews, some departments, including the Chancellor's departments and the Department for Work and Pensions, have identified the South West as a possible destination for public sector activity. As you know, the South West has already benefited recently following the significant relocation of the Meteorological Office from the South East to Exeter.

EU

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on progress with the agenda for structural reform of the EU. [186624]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury published its latest progress report on economic reform "Advancing Long-Term Prosperity: Economic Reform in an Enlarged Europe" in February. It reaffirms the Government's commitment to the Lisbon agenda on structural reform, assesses progress to date and concludes that, despite some recent actions, if the ambitious goals of the agenda are to be realised further efforts are needed.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the EU target of 70 per cent. employment in 2010 is expected to be met. [186653]

Ruth Kelly: Employment in the European Union has risen considerably in recent years. Since 1999, EU employment has risen from 154.9 million, or 62.5 per cent. of the working age population to 162 million and 64.3 per cent. in 2003. Though the UK's employment rate already exceeds the EU target (74.5 per cent.), it is clear that significant further reforms are necessary, particularly in the new Member States, to meet the target of 70 per cent. by 2010.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what strategy is in place to improve productivity levels in the EU. [186622]

Ruth Kelly: The Government's approach to economic reform in the EU is based around improving both productivity and employment. To this end the progress report on economic reform, published in February of this year, highlighted a number of priority areas. These included:

improving the regulatory framework, building on the four Presidency initiative on regulatory reform;

strengthening the Single Market, with a more pro-active competition policy, further reform of the state aid rules, and by making the Single Market a reality for services as well as goods;

promoting enterprise and innovation, including through new European Centres of Enterprise—local centres of excellence in enterprise policy;

taking a leading role in world trade negotiations, by improving access-to all of Europe's markets and further reform of the Common Agricultural Policy; and

strengthening the transatlantic economic relationship, by tackling the barriers to trade and investment between the ED and the US.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the annual growth rate of the EU was *(a)* in 2002–03 and *(b)* in 2003–04. [186650]

Ruth Kelly: As defined by the UK financial year (i.e., from the second quarter in the preceding year to the first quarter in the following year), annual real GDP growth in the EU25 was 1.7 per cent. for the period 2003–04 and 1 per cent. for the period 2002–03. On the same basis, EU 15 real GDP grew by 1.6 per cent. in 2003–04 and by 0.9 per cent. in 2002–03.

Absenteeism

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the cost to public funds of absenteeism within the public sector; and if he will make a statement. [186339]

Mr. Boateng: The Treasury does not collect data on absence in the public sector but there are other published sources. Figures for the civil service, including estimates of cost, are published annually by the Cabinet Office in "Analysis of Sickness Absence in the Civil Service". The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development published a survey in July titled "Employee absence 2004—A survey of management policy and practice" which included estimates of average sickness absence across the public sector.

Barnett Formula

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if, pursuant to his reply of 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 187W, what the *(a)* increase in the public expenditure programmes used as the comparator spend for the purposes of the Barnett formula for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland between 2000–01 and 2003–04, *(b)* actual increases in the Barnett formula allocations to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland between 2000–01 and 2003–04 and *(c)* increase in public spending between 2000–01 and 2003–04 in the North East for programmes used as comparator programmes for Barnett formula assessments were. [186364]

John Healey: The operation of the Barnett formula is set out in the Statement of Funding Policy. The formula is applied to increases in the spending of the comparable Government Departments. The increases in spending of Government Departments were announced in the 2000, 2002 and 2004 Spending Review White Papers. The increases in spending for the devolved Administrations were also announced in these White Papers. Information on identifiable public spending in the North East is published in Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2004 (Cm 6201). The Barnett formula is not applied to English regional spending.

British Film Production

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost of tax relief on the production of British films was in each of the last five years broken down by scheme. [187141]

Dawn Primarolo: The UK has a number of film tax reliefs that are designed to assist the production of British qualifying films, as certified by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The estimated tax cost of Section 48 film tax relief is £440 million for the period 1997–98 to 2001–02 and the estimated costs for 2002–03 and 2003–04 are £300 million and £140 million respectively. The tax cost of the other film tax reliefs is estimated to be an additional £70 million a year.

Child Poverty

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what resources the Government have provided to reduce child poverty in *(a)* St. Helens and *(b)* the UK, broken down by region, since 1997. [186812]

Dawn Primarolo: St. Helens, like the rest of the UK, has benefited from a range of measures since 1997 to reduce unemployment and make work pay, and to raise the incomes of the poorest families with children. Since 1997, the Government have committed substantial resources to tackle child poverty, both through universal and targeted public services and through financial support. For example, by 2004–05, total spending on financial support for children through tax credits, child benefit and other benefits will have increased by £10.4 billion in real terms from its 1997 level, a rise of 72 per cent. In addition, the Government have increased spending on the Sure Start Unit, and has invested over £2.9 billion on child care, early years and Sure Start local programmes from 1998–99 to 2003–04.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans the Government have to reduce child poverty; and if he will make a statement. [186839]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government are making steady progress towards the PSA target to reduce by a quarter the number of children in low-income households by 2004–05, as a contribution to the longer-term goals of halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020. By 2002–03 there were around half a million fewer children in relative low-income households compared to 1998–99. The 2004 Spending Review announced a new child poverty PSA target, shared by the Department for Work and Pensions and HM Treasury, to halve the number of children in relative low-income households between 1998–99 and 2010–11, on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020. The Government will also set an additional target in the 2006 Spending Review to halve by 2010–11 the number of children suffering a combination of material deprivation and low income. The child poverty review, published alongside the 2004 Spending Review, sets out a range of key measures to reduce child poverty and improve poor children's life chances, thus breaking cycles of deprivation.

Children

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many children *(a)* under two, *(b)* under five and *(c)* aged five to 16 years there were in (i) South-West Surrey constituency, (ii) Waverley borough council, (iii) Surrey county and (iv) England in (A) 1997 and (B) the latest available year; and what the estimate is for (1) 2007 and (2) 2012. [187288]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Virginia Bottomley, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many children *(a)* under two, *(b)* under five and *(c)* aged five to 16 years there were in (i) South West Surrey constituency, (ii) Waverley borough council, (iii) Surrey county and (iv) England in (A) 1997 and (B) the latest available year; and what the estimate is for (1) 2007 and (2) 2012. (187288)

I attach a table showing the 1997 and 2002 mid-year population estimates and the 2007 and 2012 population projections for the areas requested. However, South West Surrey parliamentary constituency is coterminous with the area covered by Waverley borough council.

Please note that population figures for the years shown are presently on different bases and cannot be compared precisely. This is because of work to improve population statistics following the 2001 Census, which is being incorporated progressively into statistical outputs. By November 2004, all the data shown in the tables will be available on a consistent basis.

This follows an announcement made on 8 July 2004 about population estimates, which contains information about population estimate revisions and can be found at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/PEUannouncement_08Jul.pdf

Information about the subnational population projections due for release on 16 November 2004 can be found at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/Subnational/Projections-22July2004.pdf

Estimated and projection populations—Age groups and areas as shown, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012

Thousand

Area	*Age group*	*Year* [1] *1997* [2]	*2002* [2]	*2007* [3]	*2012* [3]
England	All ages	48,635.9	49,561.8	50,503.3	51,527.1
	0–1	1,217.7	1,113.6	1,153.7	1,171.6
	0–4	3,086.2	2,864.0	2,880.2	2,908.4
	5–16	7,490.4	7,594.9	7,244.2	6,943.4
Surrey	All ages	1,039.7	1,059.9	1,090.3	1,106.4
	0–1	25.4	23.6	24.2	24.1
	0–4	64.3	61.5	62.1	60.9
	5–16	150.0	156.0	162.6	160.0
Waverley borough council area	All ages	115.0	116.0	115.4	116.4
	0–1	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5
	0–4	6.7	6.5	6.3	6.3
	5–16	17.2	17.6	16.9	16.3

[1] Important Note—Population figures for the years shown are presently on different bases and cannot be compared precisely. This is because of work to improve population statistics following the 2001 Census, which is being incorporated progressively into statistical outputs. By November 2004, all the data will be available on a consistent basis.

[2] Mid-year estimates

[3] Mid-year projections

Source:

Office for National Statistics, Government Actuary's Department

Civil Service Relocation

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to relocate civil service staff to the South West of England. [186547]

Mr. Boateng: In line with Sir Michael Lyons' recommendations contained in his report published in March this year and endorsed in the 2004 Spending Review, it will be for Departments and public bodies themselves to determine the destination of relocated activities from London and the South East. Departments' decisions will be based on their own business needs and priorities, taking account of the requirement to improve public services, secure greater efficiencies and value for money for the taxpayer as well as of local economic conditions. Departments will also take into account forthcoming locational guidance that will be issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

In the course of the Lyons and 2004 Spending Reviews, some Departments, including the Chancellor's Departments and the Department for Work and Pensions, have identified the South West as a possible destination for public sector activity. As you know, the South West has already benefited recently following the significant relocation of the Meteorological Office from the South East to Exeter.

Correspondence

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the reasons were for the delay by the Chief Executive of Inland Revenue in answering the letter to him from the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight dated 23 April concerning tax credit. [187507]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue aims to deal with letters from Members of Parliament and members of the public promptly and is targeted to deal with 80 per cent. of letters within 15 days. The Tax Credit Office is on line to achieve this target this year.

Unfortunately, although the Tax Credit Office dealt promptly with the points raised in the hon. Member's letter, there was a long delay in replying to the letter itself because of an oversight. The Tax Credit Office has apologised to the hon. Member for the delay.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* average and *(b)* upper decile delay by the Inland Revenue is in answering letters about tax credits from (i) hon. Members and (ii) members of the public. [187508]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available.

Debt Relief

Mr. Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has made to *(a)* the International Monetary Fund, *(b)* the World Bank and *(c)* the G8 regarding further topping up of highly indebted poor countries debt relief in the event of further oil price or other price shocks. [186785]

John Healey: The HIPC Initiative is delivering real benefits to participating countries. It is providing over $70 billion of debt relief, to the 27 countries that have reached decision point. It is helping increase annual social expenditures in countries receiving debt relief. Total social spending has increased by around $4 billion since 1999—equivalent to 2.7 per cent. of GDP. On average, health and education spending account for 65 per cent. of the use of HIPC debt relief.

But there are countries that are forecast to exit the initiative with debt-to- export ratios above the HIPC target of 150 per cent. because of factors beyond their control. The UK continues to push for additional relief to be granted to all these countries at completion point ('topping up' relief). We successfully campaigned for Niger and Ethiopia to receive such additional relief, resulting in over $800 million in additional relief for two of the world's poorest countries.

At the recent G8 Summit at Sea Island, the UK successfully pushed for Heads of Government to reaffirm their commitment to the provision of topping up relief for eligible countries at completion point. The

UK also continues to lobby for a change in the topping up methodology to maximise the quantum of topping up relief.

The UK also believes that more must be done beyond the HIPC Initiative to ensure debt sustainability in the world's poorest countries. We are proposing that the international community review further debt relief for the poorest countries, including making better use of IMF gold using a revaluation or off-market transactions, so that, to match bilateral debt relief, which we provide at up to 100 per cent., we can begin to consider how we provide multilateral debt relief of up to 100 per cent. as well.

However, all low-income countries will need additional aid to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is why the UK has called for an examination of possible financing mechanisms to provide up to 100 per cent. multilateral debt relief for HIPCs, and continues to push the International Finance Facility (IFF), which could provide the much- needed substantial increase in aid—in the form of grants, concessional loans, or further debt relief—needed to attain the MDGs without threatening the long-term debt sustainability of the world's poorest countries.

Departmental Performance (Complaints)

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what action he is taking in response to the comments made by the Parliamentary Ombudsman regarding delays by his Department in responding to complaints under the Code of Practice on access to Government information in her review of departmental performance against requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding published on 30 June; and if he will make a statement. [186661]

Ruth Kelly: The Government takes any delays in responding to complaints under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information seriously.

The Government regrets that delays do unavoidably occur in a minority of complex cases. However, the Ombudsman's review of the first nine months of the Memorandum of Understanding (September 2003—May 2004) shows that in most cases the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding were met.

In all cases, Departments endeavour to ensure that the time limit of three weeks for departments to respond to a "statement of complaint" from the Ombudsman is met. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, Departments aim to enter into dialogue with the investigating officer should there be any difficulty in replying by the date set by the Ombudsman.

Employment Statistics

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the change in numbers in employment was in each industrial sector in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004, broken down by (i) sector, (ii) private sector and (iii) self-employment in each (A) region and (B) county. [186832]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Cousins, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about the change in the numbers of people in employment in each industrial sector. (186832)

I am placing four tables in the House of Commons Library, as follows.

Table A shows the annual changes in the numbers of employee jobs by industry sector and region in Great Britain, for the years 2002 and 2003. The data comes from surveys of employers that provide the most up-to-date source of national and regional information. However, no information is available from them for areas below regional level.

Table B shows the annual changes in the numbers of employee jobs by industry sector and local authority areas in Great Britain during 2002. This data comes from the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI), which provides information below regional level. However, the equivalent changes for 2003 are not yet available.

Table C shows the available information about changes in private sector jobs by industry sector in the year ending June 2003, for the United Kingdom as a whole. This information is compiled annually using a special analysis of the employer survey data. Information is not available for all industry sectors, or by region.

Table, D shows changes in numbers of self-employed people by industry, region and local authority area for the United Kingdom as a whole in the year ending February 2003. This information is obtained using local area data from the Labour Force Survey, which is a survey of people in households across the UK.

Financial Inclusion Fund

Mr Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will outline his plans for a financial inclusion fund referred to at paragraph 5.28 of the 2004 Spending Review; whether it will cover Leeds, West; where it will be piloted; what support the fund will provide to credit unions; and if he will make a statement. [186777]

Ruth Kelly: Further details of the Financial Inclusion Fund, announced in the 2004 Spending Review White Paper to support initiatives to tackle financial exclusion, will be published later in the year

Financial Products

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what efforts he is making to improve public understanding of financial products and services; and if he will make a statement. [186627]

Ruth Kelly: The Government are working closely with the voluntary sector, the financial services industry and others to develop and implement a national strategy for raising levels of financial capability, under the leadership of the Financial Services Authority. This strategy has identified a number of priority areas, based around key life events, from prospective parents to those who are planning for retirement. The Government already provide incentives to encourage long-term savings by giving generous tax treatment on pensions and is also working with industry to set up a suite of simpler savings products. In June this year the Government announced their proposals for the stakeholder suite of savings and investment products to be launched into the marketplace in April 2005. These are a suite of simple, low-cost, risk-controlled products to meet the short, medium and long-term savings needs for all consumers.

Measures to support financial inclusion, such as the Savings Gateway, and the establishment of the Child Trust Fund also serve to encourage people to engage with the financial sector and develop the savings habit.

Financial Services and Markets Act

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what arrangements are in place for the review of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000; and if he will make a statement. [186637]

Ruth Kelly: As explained in my statement to the House of 4 November 2003, the review is considering the impact of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 on competition, changes to aspects of the Financial Services Authority's practices, changes to the Financial Ombudsman Service, and changes to the boundary of regulation. I expect to make an announcement about the outcome of these considerations later this year.

FSA Regulations

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the cost to the financial services industry of complying with Financial Services Authority regulations since 1997. [186353]

Ruth Kelly: In 2003 the Financial Services Authority (FSA) commissioned Europe Economics to undertake a major survey of the financial costs of regulation and published the results. This survey found that the median increase in annual incremental compliance costs from 1998 to 2002 resulting from changes to FSA regulation was less than 1 per cent. of operating costs.

Gross Domestic Product

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the gross domestic product per head was for each of the last 25 years at current prices. [187117]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Chris Ruane, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question asking for the Gross Domestic Product per head for each of the last 25 years at current prices. (187117)

Estimates of current price Gross Domestic Product per head for the UK, for the past 25 years, are shown in the attached table. These are the most recent data available, and are taken from the National Accounts 'Blue Book' 2004.

Gross Domestic Product per head at current prices UK, 1979–2003

Year	GDP per head (£)
1979	3,509
1980	4,096
1981	4,488
1982	4,921
1983	5,376
1984	5,750
1985	6,276
1986	6,727
1987	7,387
1988	8,229
1989	9,010
1990	9,737
1991	10,203
1992	10,607
1993	11,127
1994	11,772
1995	12,402
1996	13,139
1997	13,928
1998	14,727
1999	15,444
2000	16,210
2001	16,837
2002	17,628
2003	18,524

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what national productivity growth rates were in each of the last 25 years. [187129]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Chris Ruane, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician,, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on the rate of change of productivity in the UK economy in each of the last twenty five years. (187129)

The accompanying table shows the rate of change of productivity, as measured by output per worker, for the whole UK economy. The data shown are from 1979 to 2003 inclusive.

Annual change in productivity[1] UK, 1979–2003

Year	Annual percentage change
1979	0.7
1980	-1.4
1981	2.2
1982	4.2
1983	4.0
1984	0.0
1985	2.6
1986	3.4
1987	2.3
1988	1.1
1989	-0.7
1990	0.3
1991	2.0
1992	3.6
1993	3.5
1994	3.7
1995	1.5
1996	1.9
1997	1.4
1998	2.5
1999	1.3
2000	2.8
2001	1.3
2002	0.7
2003	1.0

[1] Measured by output per worker

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which Minister at HM Treasury will be responsible for the proposed HM Revenue and Customs organisation. [187239]

Mr. Gordon Brown: The Chancellor of the Exchequer is responsible for the current revenue departments, and subject to passage of the appropriate legislation this will remain the case for the proposed new department.

House Prices (Consumer Expenditure)

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research has been undertaken into the impact of changes in house prices on the level of consumer expenditure; and if he will make a statement. [186632]

Ruth Kelly: HM Treasury published evidence on the link between the housing market and consumer behaviour in June 2003 as part of the EMU Five Tests Assessment, in the supporting study 'Housing, Consumption and EMU'.

Household Saving

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to increase the level of household saving; and if he will make a statement. [186544]

Ruth Kelly: The Government's strategy for savings and assets is focused on providing individuals with security, opportunity and independence throughout life, and with the information, incentives and income to make savings decisions.

We have delivered this with reforms such as the introduction of Individual Savings Accounts, the application of the 10 per cent. starting rate for income tax to income from savings, and the new Child Trust Fund, as well as creating a stable economy with low interest rates, and radical reform and simplification of financial regulation and pensions. Net household wealth has now risen by over 50 per cent. since 1997.

Inheritance Tax Revenues

Sir Brian Mawhinney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much, and what proportion, of inheritance tax revenues in fiscal year 2003–04 was derived from *(a)* primary homes, *(b)* other homes, *(c)* financial assets, *(d)* land, *(e)* art and similar assets, *(f)* investments overseas, *(g)* individual savings and trusts, *(h)* life insurance and *(i)* other sources, broken down by main categories. [186963]

Dawn Primarolo: IHT receipts were £2.5 billion in 2003–04. A breakdown of this figure into asset types is not yet available. The available information relates to the asset breakdown for taxable estates passing on death in 2001–02 which is published in Table 12.6 of Inland Revenue Statistics, available at http://newinternet.inrev.gov.uk/stats/inheritance_tax/table12–6.pdf.

Loan Repayments

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research is being conducted into the size of *(a)* secured and *(b)* unsecured loan repayments in different (i) socio-economic and (ii) income groups. [186861]

Ruth Kelly: Annex C of "Tackling Over-indebtedness—Action Plan 2004", published on 20 July 2004 by the Department of Trade and Industry, provides a summary of recent research into over-indebtedness. Furthermore, Annex D, of the same document, reinforces the DTI's commitment to developing a monitoring approach, as promised in the Consumer Credit White Paper. "Tackling Over-indebtedness-Action Plan 2004" can be found at http://www.dti.gov.uk/ccp/topics1/pdf1/overdebt0704.pdf.

Long-term Unemployment

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate the Government have made of how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women over the age of 50 were defined as long-term unemployed in each year since 1997; [186930]

(2) what estimate the Government have made of the percentage of men and women over the age of 50 who were defined as long-term unemployed in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [186945]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Shaun Woodward, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about long-term unemployment. (186945, 186930)

Table 1 shows the number of men and women aged 50 and over in long-term unemployment. Table 2 shows the rate of long-term unemployment as a percentage of all unemployment in this age group. Both tables relate to the three month periods ending in May of each year from 1997 to 2004.

Estimates are taken from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability. In particular, estimates for UK regions are based on small sample sizes and are subject to a high degree of sampling variability. They should be treated with caution.

Table 1: Number of people aged 50 and over who are long-term unemployed[1], by gender, UK regions, 1997 to 2004
(three-month periods ending May each year)

Thousand

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Total								
North East	9	10	11	8	6	5	6	6
North West	16	18	15	16	10	9	7	6
Yorkshire and Humberside	14	12	12	5	5	4	9	6
East Midlands	15	7	7	6	5	5	5	5
West Midlands	20	15	13	15	12	10	8	5
Eastern	16	12	10	7	4	7	5	5

Table 1: Number of people aged 50 and over who are long-term unemployed[1], by gender, UK regions, 1997 to 2004
(three-month periods ending May each year)

Thousand

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
London	32	25	24	18	15	13	16	12
South East	18	17	9	10	6	6	5	7
South West	11	12	9	5	5	4	5	2
Wales	7	9	6	5	4	5	2	3
Scotland	17	13	15	18	10	15	11	8
Northern Ireland	7	6	3	4	3	3	3	3
United Kingdom	183	157	134	118	85	87	82	69
Male								
North East	6	9	8	6	5	4	5	5
North West	14	14	12	13	7	7	7	4
Yorkshire and Humberside	12	11	11	4	4	4	7	6
East Midlands	11	5	5	4	4	4	3	4
West Midlands	15	12	10	12	11	8	6	4
Eastern	12	8	7	5	2	5	3	4
London	22	16	18	14	12	9	10	8
South East	15	11	6	7	4	4	5	4
South West	7	9	7	4	3	4	3	2
Wales	6	8	6	4	4	4	1	2
Scotland	13	10	12	15	8	12	9	6
Northern Ireland	6	6	3	3	2	2	3	3
United Kingdom	139	119	104	92	67	66	62	52
Female								
North East	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
North West	3	4	3	4	3	2	1	2
Yorkshire and Humberside	2	1	1	1	0	1	2	0
East Midlands	4	2	2	2	1	1	2	1
West Midlands	6	3	2	3	1	2	2	1
Eastern	4	5	3	2	2	2	2	1
London	10	8	7	4	3	4	6	4
South East	3	6	4	3	2	2	1	3
South West	4	3	2	1	2	1	2	0
Wales	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Scotland	4	3	3	3	1	3	2	2
Northern Ireland	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
United Kingdom	44	38	30	26	17	22	20	17

[1] Unemployed for one year or more.

Note:
Estimates for UK regions are based on small sample sizes and are subject to a high level of sampling variability. They should be treated with caution. In particular, year-to-year changes are likely to show considerable volatility, and should not be used is isolation from the estimates for a sequence of years.

Source:
ONS: Labour Force Survey.

Table 2: Percentage of unemployed people aged 50 and over who are long-term unemployed[1], by gender, UK regions, 1997 to 2004
(three-month periods ending May each year)

Percentage[2]

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Total								
North East	55	55	57	47	47	38	46	49
North West	51	61	43	49	36	40	36	35
Yorkshire and Humberside	53	52	44	24	33	27	44	38
East Midlands	56	48	37	33	37	23	28	32
West Midlands	63	57	44	46	54	38	39	23
Eastern	52	47	46	38	27	38	26	24
London	59	57	55	46	53	38	44	35
South East	41	47	34	36	27	23	18	26
South West	41	51	38	24	35	24	29	15
Wales	57	57	37	47	51	39	17	31
Scotland	51	46	50	50	39	52	49	35
Northern Ireland	73	68	66	55	49	49	40	53

Table 2: Percentage of unemployed people aged 50 and over who are long-term unemployed[1], by gender, UK regions, 1997 to 2004 (three-month periods ending May each year)

Percentage[2]

Region	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
United Kingdom	52.9	52.9	45.4	41.7	40.2	35.4	35.2	31.5
Male								
North East	53	66	60	48	53	40	50	49
North West	55	60	44	54	38	45	43	37
Yorkshire and Humberside	61	59	49	29	39	39	50	46
East Midlands	61	48	43	35	45	25	26	38
West Midlands	64	57	53	56	55	43	43	23
Eastern	53	43	50	43	25	50	30	28
London	64	59	57	50	55	40	45	42
South East	49	46	34	35	26	21	22	26
South West	38	59	42	32	39	31	31	17
Wales	76	72	45	52	55	55	15	33
Scotland	55	51	55	51	43	58	52	35
Northern Ireland	74	77	73	60	49	48	47	62
United Kingdom	57.3	56.7	49.6	46.0	43.8	40.3	38.5	34.5
Female								
North East	62	24	49	47	31	33	32	52
North West	38	62	40	37	31	30	12	30
Yorkshire and Humberside	32	25	25	16	11	11	33	11
East Midlands	45	49	27	27	23	18	29	19
West Midlands	59	54	25	27	38	27	30	23
Eastern	49	54	38	27	30	22	20	17
London	50	53	51	36	46	34	41	26
South East	23	49	34	39	29	29	10	28
South West	47	35	30	11	29	12	26	10
Wales	18	24	11	32	31	18	26	27
Scotland	40	35	35	47	23	37	39	38
Northern Ireland	63	20	38	43	49	50	20	23
United Kingdom	42.7	43.7	35.0	31.4	30.6	26.0	27.8	25.0

[1] Unemployed for one year or more.
[2] Long-term unemployed people as a percentage of all unemployed people.
Note:
Estimates for UK regions are based on small sample sizes and are subject to a high level of sampling variability. They should be treated with caution. In particular, year-to-year changes are likely to show considerable volatility, and should not be used is isolation from the estimates for a sequence of years.
Source:
ONS: Labour Force Survey.

Mortgage Market

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what action he is proposing to improve the working of the UK mortgage market following the Miles Review; and if he will make a statement. [186633]

Ruth Kelly: On 12 March 2004 David Miles published his review of the UK mortgage market. His remit was to undertake analysis of supply and demand side factors limiting the development of the longer-term fixed-rate mortgage market in the UK, and to examine whether there has been any market failure that has held back the market for longer-term fixed-rate mortgages. In Budget 2004 the Chancellor endorsed the conclusion in David Miles review of the UK mortgage market that "urgent reform is desirable to make the market work better for consumers in a number of areas". The Treasury has been discussing the recommendations with a range of stakeholders including the Financial Services Authority, and intends to provide a detailed update in the Pre-Budget Report.

Older Workers

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 5 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 602W, on people of retirement age, how many people above state pension age were in employment for the same period in each year since 1992. [186770]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about people of retirement age in employment. (186770)

The attached table gives the estimates of the number of people above state pension age in employment for the three months ending May each year from 1992 to 2004.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are subject to sampling variability.

Number[1] of people above state pension age[2] in employment, United Kingdom, 3 month periods ending May each year from 1992 to 2004

Thousand	*Number of people*
1992	814
1993	770
1994	779
1995	794
1996	770
1997	802
1998	775
1999	817
2000	831
2001	819
2002	887
2003	933
2004	995

[1] Seasonally adjusted.

[2] This refers to men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over.

Source:
ONS: Labour Force Survey.

One-parent Households

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate the Government have made of *(a)* how many and *(b)* what percentage of children lived in one parent households in (i) St. Helens and (ii) the UK, broken down by region, in each year since 1997. [186821]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Shaun Woodward, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning the number and percentage of children living in one-parent households in *(a)* St. Helens and *(b)* the United Kingdom broken down by region in each year since 1997. (186821)

The attached table shows estimates of the numbers of dependent children living in one-parent families in private households, and the proportions they represent of all dependent children living in families in private households. These estimates have been derived from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), apart from the year 2001 for which that year's Census data are shown.

The LFS provides estimates for the United Kingdom, countries of the UK and Government Office regions as well as local authority data for certain variables. However, the most recent year for which estimates are available on children in one-parent families in St. Helens local authority is 2002. Estimates for this specific variable are not available at local authority level before 2001.

Number of dependent children living in lone parent families—UK Government Office Regions, 1997–2004

Thousand

Area of residence	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
United Kingdom	2,762	2,916	2,905	2,863	3,043	3,037	3,033	3,084
North East	142	146	145	148	144	149	164	158
North West	392	428	405	397	410	464	430	411
Merseyside	116	129	116	103	107	122	125	111
St. Helens	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	11	12	[1]	[1]
Yorkshire and Humberside	241	247	242	242	260	248	249	262
East Midlands	175	174	163	162	196	195	187	170
West Midlands	240	258	251	257	279	269	254	255
Eastern	197	206	205	196	222	226	219	230
London	427	458	486	487	461	480	485	554
South East	298	289	289	285	325	325	328	315
South West	181	193	192	175	209	197	192	191
Wales	144	169	181	169	165	160	157	166
Scotland	231	250	249	246	269	233	259	261
Northern Ireland	93	98	95	100	103	94	108	110

Percentage of dependent children living in lone parent families—UK Government Office Regions, 1997–2004

Percentage

Area of residence	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
United Kingdom	20.8	22.0	21.9	21.6	23.3	23.2	23.2	23.6
North East	24.3	24.8	24.7	26.2	26.3	27.4	30.5	30.6
North West	24.7	26.8	25.7	25.4	26.7	28.9	26.7	26.3
Merseyside	31.9	37.1	35.2	32.8	34.0	35.3	36.3	316
St. Helens	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	26.9	27.2	[1]	[1]
Yorkshire and Humberside	21.4	22.4	21.9	22.2	23.3	23.5	23.5	24.5
East Midlands	19.1	19.1	17.6	18.0	21.3	20.9	20.3	18.7
West Midlands	19.8	21.8	21.2	21.4	23.1	22.7	21. 8	21.4
Eastern	16.6	17.4	17.4	16.6	18.6	18.7	18.1	19.1
London	26.0	27.6	28.8	28.2	29.0	28.1	27.9	31.2
South East	17.3	16.4	16.3	15.9	18.6	18.7	19.4	18.1
South West	17.4	18.6	18.4	16.2	20.3	19.3	19.2	18.6
Wales	22.1	25.0	26.6	25.2	25.4	24.1	24.9	26.3
Scotland	21.2	23.1	23.8	23.7	25.3	23.0	24.9	26.0
Northern Ireland	19.3	20.9	21.1	22.6	22.9	21.1	24.0	24.9

[1] Not available.

Source:
Labour Force Survey and 2001 Census, ONS
2001 Census Northern Ireland Statistics
2001 Census General Register Office for Scotland

Pensions (Tax Relief)

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost to public funds was of tax relief for individuals on pension contributions in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [186634]

Dawn Primarolo: Available estimates of the cost of tax relief on private pensions are contained in table 7.9 of Inland Revenue Statistics. The latest version is on the Inland Revenue website:

http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/pensions/table7 9.pdf These estimates are due to be updated in September 2004.

Personal Income Tax Allowance

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the effects would be on the incomes of households in each quintile of the income distribution of raising the personal income tax allowance to £10,000 per annum. [186783]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows.

Percentage increase

Quintile	*Percentage change in net equivalised household income (before housing costs)*
1	1.4
2	3.1
3	4.9
4	5.9
5	5.1

These changes in household income are based on IGOTM tax and benefits model using the Family Resources Survey 2002–03.

Personal Tax Allowance

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to change the personal tax allowance for those of pensionable age. [186582]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government's policy is to increase the age-related personal allowances for those 65 and over at least in line with earnings for the remainder of the Parliament.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many contracts his Department had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186662]

Ruth Kelly: None

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what level of costs for insurance is included in PFI/PPP schemes agreed in the last two years; what review of insurance costs has been undertaken; and what conclusions have been reached. [186845]

Mr. Boateng: The contractor in a PFI consortium is responsible for procuring the necessary insurance for a PFI scheme. The costs will vary depending on the nature of the project as well as the conditions in the insurance market at the time the insurances are taken out.

There has been no official review of PFI insurance costs by HM Treasury. However, guidance on the treatment of insurance costs is contained in the HMT Standardisation of Contracts Version 3 (SOPC3) and OGC Business and Operational Guidance "PFI Contracts: Insurance Costs". SOPC3 states that the risk of increases in insurance costs should be borne by the contractor, while recognising that it will not represent best value for money if bidders price in worst case scenarios for future insurance premium levels in to their bids. The OGC guidance therefore sets out a mechanism for sharing insurance cost increases should there be exceptional circumstances in the international insurance market.

Population Changes

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the change in population arising from changes in *(a)* net indigenous population and *(b)* net immigration in each decade to 2050, broken down by region. [187335]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. John Hayes, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the change in population arising from changes in net indigenous population and immigration in the decades to 2050, by region. (187335)

The attached table shows population projections at Government Office Region level for the years 2000, 2010 and 2020. These figures are 1996-based and are the latest basis on which long-term subnational population projections are currently available. These projections have a 25 year "horizon" and so only figures to 2020 are available at this geographical level.

The projected natural population change (number of births less number of deaths) and the assumed level of net international migration, for each region, are also shown in the table. It should be noted that these two components are not independent, and that the level of natural change projected for the future is itself partly dependent on the assumed level of net migration.

The figures shown in the table for England are not the latest 2002-based projections produced by GAD but are 1996-based to be consistent with the subnational projections shown. Please note that these include a lower assumption for international migration than the latest set which can be found at: http://www.gad.gov.uk/Population/index.asp

A note considering the overall impact of assumed net migration on future population growth is available from the Government Actuary's Department website at: http://www. gad.gov.uk/Population/2002/methodology/mignote.htm. This is a UK level analysis from GAD's latest (2002-based) national projections. Comparable analysis is not available for the 1996-based projections.

The Office for National Statistics will publish 2003-based subnational population projections on 16 November. Information about this release can be found at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/Subnational/Projections-22July2004.pdf

Projected Population by Government Office Region for Decades—Total population for Government Office Regions as shown, 2000, 2010, 2020

Thousand

Area	*Population*	*2000*	*Year 2010*	*2020*
England	Total population	49,730.2	51,031.6	52,361.2
	(10-year change)		1,301.5	1,329.6
	Net natural change		640.8	669.0
	Net international migration		658.6	658.6
North East	Total population	2,584.0	2,539.4	2,511.8
	(10-year change)		-44.7	-27.6
	Net natural change		-18.7	-16.5
	Net international migration		10.9	10.9
North West	Total population	6,875.4	6,823.7	6,809.4
	(10-year change)		-51.7	-14.3
	Net natural change		25.5	36.5
	Net international migration		-5.3	-5.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	Total population	5,065.2	5,122.9	5,193.5
	(10-year change)		57.7	70.6
	Net natural change		43.1	56.1
	Net international migration		34.3	34.3
East Midlands	Total population	4,217.0	4,369.4	4,510.4
	(10-year change)		152.4	141.0
	Net natural change		25.2	20.2
	Net international migration		41.7	41.7
West Midlands	Total population	5,338.5	5,369.2	5,407.5
	(10-year change)		30.7	38.3
	Net natural change		53.3	47.5
	Net international migration		42.4	42.4
East	Total population	5,418.8	5,678.4	5,918.1
	(10-year change)		259.6	239.8
	Net natural change		63.2	44.5
	Net international migration		58.2	58.2
London	Total population	7,191.6	7,442.6	7,712.3
	(10-year change)		251.0	269.7
	Net natural change		422.8	480.8
	Net international migration		310.0	310.0
South East	Total population	8,088.6	8,496.5	8,869.5
	(10-year change)		407.9	373.0
	Net natural change		81.8	67.2
	Net international migration		113.5	113.5
South West	Total population	4,951.0	5,189.6	5,428.7
	(10-year change)		238.6	239.1
	Net natural change		-55.4	-67.3
	Net international migration		53.0	53.0

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Post-65 Population

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how the percentage of the population over the age of 65 has changed in each year since 1975. [186946]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Woodward, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the annual change in the percentage of the population aged over 65 since 1975. (186946)

I attach a table showing the population estimates for England and Wales, the percentage of the population aged 65 and over, and the annual change in this percentage. The table incorporates interim revised estimates for England and Wales for mid-1992 to mid-2000, which take account of research carried out into population estimates following the 2001 census.

Population estimates for mid-1992 to mid-2002 are subject to future revision. Information about population estimate revisions can be found at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/Methodology_by_theme/revisions_popestimates.asp.

Total population and change in the percentage of population aged 65 and over England and Wales, 1975–2002

Thousands

Year[1]	*Total population*	*Population aged 65 and over*	*Percentage population aged 65 and over*	*Change in percentage population aged 65 and over*
1975	49,469.8	7,033.5	14.2	—
1976	49,459.2	7,119.1	14.4	0.18
1977	49,440.4	7,214.2	14.6	0.20
1978	49,442.5	7,315.8	14.8	0.20
1979	49,508.2	7,409.6	15.0	0.17
1980	49,603.0	7,505.4	15.1	0.16
1981	49,634.3	7,548.1	15.2	0.08
1982	49,581.6	7,550.0	15.2	0.02
1983	49,617.0	7,505.2	15.1	-0.10
1984	49,713.1	7,482.6	15.1	-0.07
1985	49,860.7	7,646.9	15.3	0.29
1986	49,998.6	7,767.6	15.5	0.20
1987	50,123.0	7,865.7	15.7	0.16
1988	50,253.6	7,931.9	15.8	0.09
1989	50,407.8	7,997.1	15.9	0.08
1990	50,560.6	8,033.0	15.9	0.02
1991	50,748.0	8,080.3	15.9	0.03
1992	50,873.5	8,115.8	16.0	0.03
1993	50,983.0	8,145.0	16.0	0.02
1994	51,109.3	8,157.8	16.0	-0.01
1995	51,252.2	8,191.5	16.0	0.02
1996	51,385.5	8,213.7	16.0	0.00
1997	51,528.2	8,228.1	16.0	-0.02
1998	51,685.3	8,249.2	16.0	-0.01
1999	51,884.2	8,251.6	15.9	-0.06
2000	52,070.7	8,275.3	15.9	-0.01
2001	52,297.3	8,330.8	15.9	0.04
2002	52,480.5	8,389.5	16.0	0.06

[1] Mid-year estimates. Population estimates for 1992–2000 are subject to revision

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Productivity

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what has been the rate of change of productivity in the UK economy in each of the last seven years. [186210]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Kenneth Clarke, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on the rate of change of productivity in the UK Economy in each of the last seven years. (186210)

The accompanying table shows the rate of change of productivity, as measured by output per worker, for the whole economy. The data shown are from 1997 to 2003 inclusive.

Percentage

	Annual growth rate
1997	1.4
1998	2.5
1999	1.3
2000	2.8
2001	1.3
2002	0.7
2003	1.0

Public Sector Jobs (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the implications of the Spending Review for public sector jobs in Gloucestershire. [186313]

Mr. Boateng: There will be an overall gross reduction in posts of 84,150 by 2008 and Departments will pursue these reductions in line with business need. Departments are still developing their plans concerning the SR04 work force changes.

Redundancy

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what information the Government have collated on the percentage of people over the age of 50 who have been made redundant in each year since 1997 *(a)* nationally, *(b)* by region and *(c)* in St. Helens. [186875]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Shaun Woodward, dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about redundancy. (186875)

The attached table gives estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) of redundancy rates for people aged 50 and over for the UK as a whole and by region for the three month periods ending in May of each year from 1997 to 2004.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability. The LFS sample sizes were too small to yield meaningful estimates for St Helens local authority.

Redundancy rates[1] for people aged 50 and over—UK regions, 1997 to 2004 (3 month period ending May of each year)[2]

Rate per 1,000 employees[2]

Area of residence	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
United Kingdom	8.7	8.1	9.1	8.0	7.1	9.S	7.2	7.1
Great Britain	8.7	8.2	9.3	7.9	7.3	9.6	7,3	7.2
England	8.8	8.1	9.2	8.1	7.2	10.0	7.2	6.8
North East	20.0	7.9	2.2	6.1	6.0	17.1	12.6	1.7
North West	13.1	6.7	15.8	9.3	7.2	8.1	5.5	4.2
Yorkshire & Humberside	7.4	9.5	11.2	8.5	6.8	8.3	6.3	8.0
East Midlands	13.3	12.8	9.1	8.0	12,3	15.7	14.0	7.9
West Midlands	7.9	9.5	10.3	10.1	10.1	12.6	11.3	12.2
Eastern	5.1	11.1	8.2	5.4	7.2	8.5	3.6	8.8
London	4.0	5.3	7.0	8.1	9.0	9.2	1.0	4.9
South East	9.0	7.6	7.7	8.5	3.7	10.3	7.3	6.0
Southwest	5.9	3.9	8.0	7.8	5.1	4.9	8.7	5.6
Wales	7.8	4.8	9.8	3.7	9.9	9.1	8.8	7.7
Scotland	9.0	10.7	9.7	7.8	6.1	6.1	7.3	10.4
Northern Ireland	9.1	2.6	0.0	13.5	0.0	6.5	3.1	1.8

[1] The redundancy rate is based on the number of people resident in an area who are made redundant in the three months prior to interview in the LFS expressed as a proportion (per 1,000 employees) of the total number of employees
[2] Not seasonally adjusted
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Residential Stamp Duty

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the revenue from residential stamp duty was in *(a)* 1996–97, *(b)* 2001–02, *(c)* 2002–03 and *(d)* 2003–04; and what the projected revenue is for 2004–05. [186950]

Ruth Kelly: Estimates of the revenue from stamp duty on residential property in 1996–97, 2001–02 and 2002–03 are given at http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/stamp_duty/03IR152.pdf.

Estimates of the revenue from stamp duty on residential property for 2003–04 will be published later in the year. Projections for 2004–05 are not available.

Savings Gateway Pilot

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what evaluation has taken place of the impact of the Savings Gateway pilot on levels of savings among low-income consumers; and if he will make a statement. [186631]

John Healey: The Saving Gateway pilot final evaluation is due in early 2005. No substantial conclusions can be drawn until we receive the full research findings, however indicators so far are good. The latest interim evaluation report showed that 1,478 accounts had been opened (the target was 1,500), and the participants were mostly drawn from young families with children. The total amount saved by account-holders was approaching £300,000 by the end of February 2004, and there was little evidence that people had transferred money from existing savings accounts or borrowed to save. This report is available on the HM Treasury website.

Staff Recruitment

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what media outlets are used for the recruitment of each level of staff in his Department; and if he will make a statement. [187087]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury uses a wide variety of different publications for recruitment advertising, tailored according to the nature of the vacancy to be filled. This includes the use of professional journals and magazines, national and local newspapers, and websites.

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how vacancies are publicised within his Department; how non-fast streamers are recruited to work in his Department; and if he will make a statement. [187088]

Ruth Kelly: HM Treasury publicises its internal vacancies on the Treasury's intranet site, and the Civil Service Recruitment Gateway. For external recruitment of non-fast streamers, HM Treasury uses a wide variety of different publications for advertising, tailored according to the nature of the vacancy to be filled. This includes the use of professional journals and magazines, national and local newspapers, and other relevant websites, including HM Treasury's website (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/careers). Recruitment in HM Treasury is based upon the Civil Service Commissioners Recruitment Code of fair and open competition, and selection on merit.

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Treasury spent on recruitment in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [187089]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1211W. The costs of recruiting staff fall largely to individual teams, and are charged to team budgets. Therefore, information on the total cost of recruiting staff is not available centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people the Treasury recruited in each of the last three years. [187090]

Ruth Kelly: The number of new recruits to HM Treasury, as recorded in the Treasury's Departmental Report, can be found in the following table:

	2001	*2002*	*2003*
Permanent appointments	135	80	103
Fixed-term appointments	20	9	13
Permanent transfers/reinstatements	2	0	2
Secondments in	17	15	19
Casual appointments	42	32	45
Total	212	136	182

Unemployment Payments

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of unemployment payments *(a)* in total and *(b)* as a percentage of national income in each of the last 25 years. [186102]

Mr. Pond: I have been asked to reply.

The information is in the table.

Unemployment benefits (£ million)

	Nominal terms[1, 2]	*2004–05 prices*[1, 2]	*Percentage of gross domestic product*[1]
1979–80	1,176	3,752	0.6
1980–81	2,074	5,600	0.9
1981–82	3,214	7,923	1.2
1982–83	4,067	9,364	1.4
1983–84	4,753	10,464	1.5
1984–85	5,308	11,104	1.6
1985–86	5,803	11,519	1.6
1986–87	6,070	11,676	1.6
1987–88	5,453	9,934	1.3
1988–89	4,152	7,070	0.9
1989–90	3,364	5,352	0.6
1990–91	3,810	5,618	0.7
1991–92	5,804	8,071	1.0
1992–93	7,139	9,615	1.2
1993–94	7,389	9,693	1.1
1994–95	6,482	8,381	0.9
1995–96	5,925	7,445	0.8
1996–97	5,112	6,215	0.7
1997–98	3,893	4,615	0.5
1998–99	3,558	4,099	0.4
1999–2000	3,255	3,670	0.4
2000–01	2,882	3,213	0.3
2001–02	2,606	2,832	0.3
2002–03	2,624	2,760	0.2
2003–04	2,548	2,606	0.2

[1] Unemployment benefits totals are rounded to the nearest million; the percentage of gross domestic product has been rounded to nearest 0.1 per cent.

[2] Unemployment benefits include: unemployment benefit, which was replaced by jobseeker's allowance contribution-based in October 1996; supplementary benefit paid to unemployed people, which was replaced by income support for the unemployed in April 1988, and was further replaced by jobseeker's allowance (income-based) in October 1996.

Women Workers

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimates the Government have made of the percentage of women in *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time employment in (i) St Helens and (ii) the UK, broken down by region, in each year since 1997. [186926]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Sean Woodward dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about females in full-time and part-time employment. (186926)

The attached table' shows the percentages of females in full-time, and part-time employment and the number of women in employment in St. Helens Local Authority and each region of the UK for the three month periods ending in May of each year from 1997 to 2004.'

Estimates are taken from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling Variability. Estimates for St Helens Local Authority District are based on small sample sizes and are subject to a high level of sampling variability. In particular, year-to-year changes are likely to show considerable volatility.

Female employment: percentages in full and part-time 3 months ending May each year from 1997 to 2004 not seasonally adjusted

March to May

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Full Time[1]								
United Kingdom	55.1	55.2	55.6	55.5	55.6	55.9	55.6	55.6
Great Britain	55.0	55.0	55.3	55.4	55.4	55.8	55.5	55.4
England	54.7	54.7	55.2	55.5	55.4	55.7	55.4	1 55.3
North East	51.4	54.1	52.2	52.9	53.5	53.9	53.8	56.3
North West:	55.7	55.2	55.7	56.6	57.1	57.5	57.2	57.4
St Helens (Local Authority)[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	44	56	56	59	63
Yorkshire and Humberside	52.5	51.3	51.0	52.9	51.5	52.8	52.1	52.3
East Midlands	51.0	51.8	52.8	53,0	52.7	52.4	54.0	53.7
West Midlands	54.2	54.8	53.8	54.7	54.8	54.7	54.9	53.6
Eastern	54.4	54.0	55.3	53.0	53.9	53.8	55.1	52.1
London	65.6	64.3	66.2	65.6	66.3	66.9	65.9	66.1
South East	53.4	53.7	53.8	54.6	54.4	54.3	52.6	53.5
South West	47.9	49.2	50.0	50.6	48.4	49.3	48.9	49.5
Wales	53.6	54.8	55.0	53.3	53.7	55.3	56.1	54.2
Scotland	57.9	57.6	56.5	55.5	56.8	57.6	56.6	57.8
Northern Ireland	61.3	61.6	63.6	58.5	61.8	58.8	59.0	62.5
Part Time[1]								
United Kingdom	44.9	44.8	44.4	44.5	44.4	44.1	44.3	44.3
Great Britain	45.0	45.0	44.6	44.6	44.5	44.1	44.4	44.5
England	45.3	45.2	44.7	44.5	44.6	44.3	44.6	44.7
North East	48.6	45.9	47.7	47.1	46.5	46.1	46.2	43.6
North West:	44.3	44.8	44.3	43.4	42.9	42.5	42.8	42.6
St Helens (Local Authority)[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	56	44	44	41	37
Yorkshire and Humberside	47.5	48.7	48.9	47.0	48.5	47.2	47.9	47.7
East Midlands	49.0	48.2	47.2	47.0	47.3	47.6	45.9	46.3
West Midlands	45.8	45.1	46.2	45.3	45.2	45.3	45.0	46.4
Eastern	45.5	46.0	44.7	47.0	46.1	46.1	44.9	47.9
London	34.4	35.6	33.7	34,4	33.7	33.1	33.9	33.8
South East	46.6	46.2	46.2	45.3	45.6	45.7	47.4	46.4
South West	52.1	50.8	50.0	49.4	51.6	50.7	51.0	50.4
Wales	46.3	45.2	45.0	46.7	46.3	44.6	43.8	45.8
Scotland	42.1	42.4	43.5	44.5	43.1	42.4	43.4	42.1
Northern Ireland	38.6	38.2	36.4	41.5	38.2	41.1	41.0	37.4
Total in employment (thousands)								
United Kingdom	12,000	12,092	12,294	12,471	12,617	12,764	12,847	12,971
Great Britain	11,697	11,792	11,984	12,175	12,307	12,442	12,520	12,647
England	10,091	10,179	10,359	10,534	10,636	10,764	10,767	10,893
North East	485	469	469	483	489	507	489	515
North West:	1,339	1,322	1,346	1,365	1,418	1,420	1,433	1 ,445
St Helens (Local Authority)[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	35	34	37	35	35
Yorkshire and Humberside	986	1,006	1,006	1,039	1,044	1,034	1,056	1,077
East Midlands	881	884	891	908	886	919	918	944
West Midlands	1,045	1,067	1,086	1,082	1,086	1,099	1,109	1,119

Female employment: percentages in full and part-time 3 months ending May each year from 1997 to 2004 not seasonally adjusted

March to May

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Eastern	1,118	1,144	1,164	1,190	1,225	1,221	1,228	1,265
London	1,466	1,474	1,537	1,554	1,557	1,576	1,534	1,543
South East	1,731	1,768	1,790	1,833	1,839	1,859	1,883	1,856
South West	1,040	1,046	1,070	1,081	1,091	1,128	1,118	1,128
Wales	551	545	555	560	560	559	625	605
Scotland	1,054	1,068	1,070	1,081	1,111	1,119	1,129.	1,149
Northern Ireland	304	300	310	296	310	321	327	324

n/a no available data

[1] Percentage of all women in employment. Percentages are based on total that includes people who did state whether they were full or part-time who did not answer the full or part time question

[2] Estimates for St. Helens Local Authority are based on smaller sample sizes and are therefore subject to a higher degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution and, in particular, changes from year to year should not be used in isolation from the figures for a run of years.

Source:

ONS Labour Force Survey

Work Force Statistics

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the *(a)* female work force aged between 50 and 60 and *(b)* male work force aged between 50 and 65 have been in employment in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [186929]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Sean Woodward dated 7 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment of people aged 50 and over. (186929)

The attached table shows the percentage of *(a)* men aged 50–64 and *(b)* women aged 50–59 who are in employment in each region for the three months ending in May each year from 1997 to 2004.

Estimates are taken from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Percentage of men aged 50–64 and women aged 50–59 in employment UK regions, 1997 to 2004
(three month period ending May of each year)

Percentage

Area of residence	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Men aged 50–64 in employment								
United Kingdom[1]	67.2	67.7	68.4	68.5	70.0	69.7	71.7	71.7
Great Britain	67.3	68.0	68.6	68.8	70.3	69.9	71.8	71.9
England	68.4	69.1	69.9	69.9	71.3	71.0	72.6	72.5
North East	54.6	53.5	54.3	54.1	58.2	55.1	60.0	58.0
North West	61.9	60.6	62.8	63.6	64.3	64.0	68.7	68.0
Yorkshire and Humberside	61.8	64.6	62.7	68.1	67.9	70.1	69.1	71.4
East Midlands	70.2	70.8	71.6	74.0	72.6	72.1	75.5	73.8
West Midlands	71.0	71.3	71.3	67.6	68.9	70.6	73.3	69.9
Eastern	72.8	76.9	74.7	75.3	78.4	77.6	77.2	76.2
London	67.7	65.2	68.8	67.7	69.7	68.8	68.6	70.7
South East	74.5	77.4	78.9	76.8	77.8	77.8	77.7	79.3
South West	72.8	72.4	73.3	72.9	75.2	72.8	75.6	75.7
Wales	58.2	57.7	58.7	60.6	60.1	62.4	64.5	66.1
Scotland	62.9	63.1	61.8	62.5	66.7	63.9	69.1	69.5
Northern Ireland	60.7	57.7	61.2	58.6	61.0	62.7	66.5	64.8
Women aged 50–59 in employment								
United Kingdom[2]	60.7	62.2	62.8	63.9	64.9	65.3	67.3	67.5
Great Britain	61.0	62.5	63.1	64.2	65.3	65.6	67.6	67.9
England	62.0	63.7	64.0	65.3	66.0	66.5	68.0	68.3
North East	52.3	48.1	52.5	57.8	60.6	59.9	58.6	54.7
North West	56.0	58.3	58.8	57.9	60.9	61.7	68.5	65.8
Yorkshire and Humberside	59.0	61.6	60.8	64.0	63.8	62.6	67.9	67.3
East Midlands	64.8	66.0	62.3	66.3	68.0	67.1	67.0	68.5
West Midlands	60.6	63.3	63.9	64.8	64.0	66.2	65.7	67.3
Eastern	65.9	66.5	67.3	68.7	68.3	69.3	72.8	73.7
London	60.6	61.5	63.3	63.2	64.8	63.9	64.0	64.4
South East	66.7	71.1	69.3	71.6	72.0	73.4	72.5	72.4
South West	67.5	67.4	69.5	68.7	67.6	68.5	67.9	72.4
Wales	55.7	50.7	52.9	56.7	56.8	54.5	62.7	62.2
Scotland	53.9	57.7	60.9	58.1	63.5	63.5	66.1	66.7
Northern Ireland	50.3	49.0	52.7	53.4	48.4	54.1	56.4	54.3

[1] As a percentage of male population aged 50–64

[2] As a percentage of female population aged 50–59

*Not seasonally adjusted

Source:

ONS: Labour Force Survey

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Archaeological Sites (Theft)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what studies her Department has made of *(a)* the incidence of theft from or criminal damage to and *(b)* the market value of items or artefacts stolen from sites of archaeological interest in England and Wales since 1 June 1997. [187180]

Mr. Caborn: This information is not currently available. English Heritage, however, is in the process of designing a data system that will centrally compile the statistics for damage to English sites.

Free Television Licences

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will introduce free television licences for blind and partially sighted people. [187569]

Estelle Morris: The Government introduced a 50 per cent. reduction in the television licence fee for registered blind people in April 2000. We have no plans at present to change the concessionary arrangements but will consider all aspects of BBC funding, including concessions, as part of the BBC Charter review process.

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many old age pensioners in the Great Yarmouth constituency have benefited from the introduction of free television licences. [186708]

Estelle Morris: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, 2001 Census data for parliamentary constituencies indicate that there are approximately 8,600 people aged 75 or over living in the Great Yarmouth constituency.

Arts Council Grants

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many individuals who have received an Arts Council grant have had to pay back part or all of their grant because they did not meet the standard conditions for grants in each year since 1997. [187283]

Estelle Morris: Since April 2003, one grant to an individual has been reduced due to a breach of the standard conditions.

Figures for individuals are only available from April 2003, when Arts Council England introduced Grants for the Arts, Individuals. Previously, Arts Council England funding programmes did not make a distinction between organisations and individuals; therefore they do not hold records of this nature.

Arts Programmes

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much is being spent by the Government on arts programmes in *(a)* Yorkshire and *(b)* England (i) directly and (ii) indirectly. [186850]

Estelle Morris: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not fund the arts directly, but through Arts Council England, who are responsible for distributing public money from Government.

The following table supplied by Arts Council England provides a breakdown of the allocation of Government Grant-in-Aid, 2004–05.

Arts Council England—Allocation of grant-in-Aid, 2004–05

£

	National	*Yorkshire*
Regularly Funded Organisations (over 1,300 organisations receive guaranteed funding corresponding with the Spending Review)	280,081,000	21,363,000
Total flexible funds (awards to one-off projects through an open application system)	28,000,000	—
Grants for the arts, individuals (1 April 2004—10 August 2004)	2,988,000	291,000
Total	315,581,000	21,654,000

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the government-sponsored arts programmes in *(a)* London, *(b)* Yorkshire and *(c)* England (i) in 2004 and (ii) in the next five years. [186949]

Estelle Morris: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not fund the arts directly, but through Arts Council England, who are responsible for distributing public money from Government.

Arts Council England's funding allocations correspond with the Treasury's Spending Review—the current allocations run from 2003–04 to 2005–06. Arts Council England's Spending Plan 2003–06 for Regularly Funded Organisations lists the 1,300+ organisations that receive Government Grant-in-Aid, categorised by region, and is available on their website—www.artscouncil.org.uk

Arts Council England will announce its funding allocations for the period 2006–07 to 2007–08 in 2005.

Culture (Improved Access)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to improve accessibility to *(a)* sports and *(b)* arts for older people. [186450]

Mr. Caborn: My Department fully recognises the benefits participation in activities like sport and the arts can bring to older people.

Arts Council England funds a number of arts organisations which aim to encourage older audiences and engage older people in artistic opportunities. Older people were also a focus of the Arts Council's recent New Audiences pilot project. Over £250,000 was awarded to projects targeting older people. Projects designed for older people addressed barriers such as lack of transport, price and having no one to go with. Information about successful New Audiences projects will be disseminated to arts practitioners and arts organisations across the country.

On Sport, Game Plan, our strategy for delivering Sport and Physical Activity Objectives, identified older people as one of the key priority groups for increasing physical activity. Following discussions with the British Heart Foundation, Sport England's 9 Regional Plans for Sport are providing the framework for regional action. Older people are also one of the target groups for Local Exercise Action Plans (LEAPs). The Public Health White Paper due in the autumn will set out the Government's proposals for increased activity across the population.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which her Department is responsible. [187313]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS leases all or part of four buildings. Two of those have a room set aside for smokers. One building has a room available to an Islamic worshipper. There are no discrete facilities for nursing mothers as children are not brought to work and pregnant women have the facility of a first aid/ medical rest room in each building.

Digital Television (Bridgwater)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people in the Bridgwater constituency do not have access to digital television. [186499]

Estelle Morris: Digital television in the UK can be accessed through Satellite, Cable or Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT).

The BBC calculate that, of the 40,800 households in the Bridgwater constituency, around 19 per cent. (7,600) do not have access to DTT services (including Freeview). Therefore 81 per cent. (33,200) of households should be able to receive DTT from either the Mendip or Stockland Hill transmitter, compared with 73 per cent. nationwide.

According to Ofcom figures, Digital Satellite television is available to the vast majority (96–98 per cent.) of households in the UK. Unfortunately, it is not possible to give a breakdown of Digital Satellite coverage in individual areas.

Digital Cable is not currently available to any households in the Bridgewater constituency.

English Institute of Sport

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the budget for the English Institute of Sport is for *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06 and *(c)* 2006–07. [186932]

Mr. Caborn: The English Institute of Sport (EIS) is funded by a grant from Sport England.

For the financial year 2004–05 the budget for EIS is £8.5 million.

For each of the financial years 2005–06 and 2006–07 the budget currently agreed by the EIS and Sport England is also £8.5 million for each year.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time staff are employed at each English Institute of Sport Hub. [186933]

Mr. Caborn: The number of full-time and part-time staff employed (as of 30 July 2004) at the nine regional English Institute of Sport Hubs are as follows:

	Full-time	*Part-time*	*Total*
East	4	0	4
East Midlands	13	2	15
London	2	3	5
North East	7	1	8
North West	11	1	12
South East	11	1	12
South West	7	1	8
West Midlands	4	1	5
Yorkshire	8	1	9

Freeview

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many more Freeview broadcasting licences the Government are planning to grant. [186858]

Estelle Morris: Digital television services, except those provided by the BBC, S4C and TeleG, are licensed by the Office of Communications (Ofcom) under the powers granted to it by the Broadcasting Acts of 1990, 1996 and the Communications Act 2003. With the exception of the public service channels (Channel 3, 4 and 5), the choice of whether a licensed television programme service is available free of charge or as part of a subscription package is for the broadcaster to decide. Where services are to be broadcast via satellite, Ofcom does not limit the number of licences available to either pay-TV or free channels and it will issue licences to any eligible organisation wishing to broadcast television programme services provided they meet the relevant regulatory requirements, for example as to content, advertising and sponsorship issues. In relation to the digital terrestrial platform, however, spectrum capacity is a key factor in determining how many services may be licensed at any one time.

Gaming Machines

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions her Department has held with owners of category D gaming machines in relation to the proposed ban on them in the Government's response to the Joint Select Committee on Gambling, broken down by *(a)* mini-cab offices, *(b)* fish and chip shops, *(c)* kebab shops, *(d)* other take-away food outlets and *(e)* others; and if she will make a statement. [187181]

Mr. Caborn: Many, if not most gaming machines, are owned by machine suppliers who have rental agreements with retail outlets. While the Department has had no recent discussions with trade associations representing any of the above categories of outlets, it

meets regularly with trade associations who represent suppliers and manufacturers of gaming machines to discuss a range of matters relating to the Gambling Bill.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessments her Department has made of the likely impact of the ban on category D gaming machines proposed in the Government's response to the Joint Select Committee on Gambling on *(a)* mini-cab companies, *(b)* fish and chip shops, *(c)* kebab shops, *(d)* other take-away food outlets and *(e)* others; and if she will make a statement. [187182]

Mr. Caborn: The Department will publish a full Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) for the Gambling Bill when publishing it. In the meantime, consultations on the RIA continue.

The Department's policy on the siting of Category D gaming machines acknowledges that their removal from unlicensed premises may reduce the turnover which they would otherwise have had; but we take the view that it is necessary to give more weight to the difficulties of ensuring that children are adequately supervised when using gaming machines in unlicensed premises and ensuring that unlawful machines are not sited there. We do not intend to cut back on entitlements to install machines conferred by current permits prior to their expiry.

Government Policies

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the Government's policy on *(a)* sport, *(b)* culture and *(c)* art. [186951]

Mr. Caborn: The Government's policy is to improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities and to support the pursuit of excellence and to champion the creative and leisure industries.

To achieve this we have developed four strategic priorities:

Strategic Priority 1: Children and Young People

Further enhance access to culture and sport for children and give them the opportunity to develop their talents to the full and enjoy the full benefits of participation.

Strategic Priority 2: Communities

Increase and broaden the impact of culture and sport, to enrich individual lives, strengthen communities and improve the places where people live, now and for future generations.

Strategic Priority 3: Economy

Maximise the contribution which the tourism, creative and leisure industries can make to the economy.

Strategic Priority 4: Modernising Delivery

Modernising delivery by ensuring our sponsored bodies are efficient and work with others to meet the cultural and sporting needs of individuals and communities.

Human Remains

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects to publish the Government's response to the report on the retention of human remains conducted by the Working Groups on Human Remains. [187262]

Estelle Morris: On Wednesday 28 July DCMS launched a consultation to assess the necessity and appropriateness of the recommendations of the Working Group on Human Remains. The consultation will run for three months, and the Government will make their response after that point.

Lower Priority Olympic Sports

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what definition the Government uses of the term "lower priority Olympic sports". [186376]

Mr. Caborn: All sports were assessed in 1997–98 against UK Sport classification criteria (significance in the UK, significance internationally, international success) and more refined indicators which were: the recent record of success or achievement in the international arena, recognition as an Olympic sport, the quantity and quality of the competitive field, the number of world class performers in the UK, the public profile of the sport in the UK and the number of affiliated members in the UK.

Based on these criteria, a number of sports were not considered to be high priority for support from UK Sport. The Olympic Sports Development Fund established by UK Sport and the BOA attempts to help such sports achieve their potential.

National Lottery

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will estimate the National Lottery-derived balances held by *(a)* lottery funds, *(b)* each arts council and *(c)* each national sports body as at 1 April (i) 2002, (ii) 2003 and (iii) 2004. [186836]

Estelle Morris: The information is in the table.

£

	1 April 2002	*1 April 2003*	*1 April 2004*
Lottery bodies			
Community Fund	401,424,347.40	299,618,282.83	213,264,652.72
Heritage Lottery Fund	993,667,076.93	1,019,998,113.28	942,584,325.01
Millennium Commission	386,384,791.53	217,263,126.69	155,697,623.33
New Opportunities Fund	826,417,473.31	877,706,762.87	737,229,803.65
Total	2,607,893,689.17	2,414,586,285.67	2,048,776,404.71
Arts lottery bodies			
Arts Council England	246,267,031.91	245,670,398.81	224,087,590.60
Scottish Arts Council	44,642,966.34	49,568,856.98	41,965,097.49
Arts Council of Wales	32,542,529.69	30,410,338.37	23,972,897.04
Arts Council of Northern Ireland	33,555,929.90	34,925,265.14	35,643,987.16

£

	1 April 2002	1 April 2003	1 April 2004
UK Film Council	67,640,453.91	75,587,327.45	44,281,587.69
Scottish Screen	3,637,995.37	2,273,214.37	2,194,824.31
Total	428,286,907.12	438,435,401.12	372,145,984.29
Sport lottery bodies			
Sport England	382,438,489.79	268,225,324.48	201,571,121.41
Scottish Sports Council	72,899,223.81	78,840,531.03	65,033,163.09
Sports Council for Wales	39,765,549.00	31,719,079.87	21,471,242.28
Sports Council for Northern Ireland	19,539,173.47	21,070,644.46	23,487,949.83
UK Sports Council	8,011,661.64	3,630,659.65	3,786,512.05
Total	522,654,097.71	403,486,239.49	315,349,988.66
Overall lottery total	3,558,834,694.00	3,256,507,926.28	2,736,272,377.66

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many contracts her Department had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186689]

Mr. Caborn: The Department (including the Royal Parks Agency) has had no contracts with any of these firms for advice on Public Private Partnership contracts.

Public Bodies

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people *(a)* the National Lottery Commission, *(b)* the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, *(c)* the Film Council, *(d)* the Football Task Force, *(e)* the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, *(f)* Historic Royal Palaces, *(g)* the Millennium Commission, *(h)* the New Opportunities Fund, *(i)* the New Millennium Experience Company Ltd., *(j)* Resource, *(k)* the Spoliation Advisory Panel, *(l)* the Treasure Valuation Committee, *(m)* the Working Group on Human Remains, *(n)* the Craft Council, *(o)* the British Film Institute, *(p)* the National Film and Television School, *(q)* the Alcohol Education and Research Council, *(r)* the Gaming Board for Great Britain and *(s)* the Horserace Betting Levy Board employs on a (i) full-time and (ii) part-time basis. [187138]

Mr. Caborn: The information is shown in the table.

Body	Full-time staff	Part-time staff
(a) National Lottery Commission	41	0
(b) Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment	65	13
(c) UK Film Council	89	1
(d) Football Task Force (wound up in 1999)	—	—
(e) National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts	91	6
(f) Historic Royal Palaces	526	65
(g) Millennium Commission	52	0
(h) New Opportunities Fund[1]	333	30
(i) New Millennium Experience Company Ltd. (in voluntary solvent liquidation)	0	0
(j) Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (formerly known as Resource)	75	2
(k) Spoliation Advisory Panel	0	0
(l) Treasure Valuation Committee	0	0
(m) Working Group on Human Remains (dissolved in 2003)	—	—
(n) Crafts Council	39	17
(o) British Film Institute	385	81
(p) National Film and Television School	65	20
(q) Alcohol Education and Research Council	0	2
(r) Gaming Board for Great Britain	73	3
(s) Horserace Betting Levy Board	23	2

[1] Figures for 1 April 2004. The New Opportunities Fund has since undergone an administrative merger with the Community Fund. The merged body is now operating as the Big Lottery Fund.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total salary bill has been for *(a)* the National Lottery Commission, *(b)* the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, *(c)* the Film Council, *(d)* the Football Task Force, *(e)* the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, *(f)* Historic Royal Palaces, *(g)* the Millennium Commission, *(h)* the New Opportunities Fund, *(i)* the New Millennium Experience Company Ltd, *(j)* Resource, *(k)* the Spoliation Advisory Panel, *(l)* the Treasure Valuation Committee, *(m)* the Working Group on Human Remains, *(n)* the Craft Council, *(o)* the British Film Institute, *(p)* the National Film and Television School, *(q)* the Adult Education and Research Council, *(r)* the Gaming Board for Great Britain and *(s)* the Horserace Betting Levy Board in each year since its creation. [187139]

Mr. Caborn: The information is shown in the tables.

(a) National Lottery Commission

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	1,750
2002–03	1,380
2001–02	1,294
2000–01	1,375
1999–2000	1,367

The figures cover the years since the National Lottery Commission's inception in its current form.

(b) Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	2,231
2002–03	1,013
2001–02	543
2000–01	331
1999–2000 (from 29 September—31 March)	136

(c) UK Film Council

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	5,010
2002–03	4,161
2001–02	3,922
2000–01	2,928
1999–01	176

(d) the Football Task Force had no staff

(e) National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	3,932
2002–03	3,429
2001–02	2,282
2000–01	1,380
1999–2000	944
1998–99	222

(f) Historic Royal Palaces

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	17,774
2002–03	16,142
2001–02	14,611
2000–01	13,415
1999–2000	12,917
1998–99	12,577

The figures cover the years since Historic Royal Palaces's inception in its current form.

(g) Millennium Commission

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	2,647
2002–03	2,754
2001–02	3,460
2000–01	3,834
1999–2000	3,181
1998–99	3,249
1997–98	2,115
1996–97	1,818
1995–96	1,076
1994–95	283
Up to 31 March 1994	12

(h) New Opportunities Fund

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	11,597
2002–03	9,769
2001–02	7,036
2000–01	4,591
1999–2000	2,329
1998–99	401

(i) New Millennium Experience Co. Ltd.

	Salary bill (£000)
January—December 2001	4,642
January 2000—December 2000	40,055
April 1999—December 1999	14,194
April 1998—March 1999	7,121
February 1997—March 1998	2,493

(j) Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (formerly known as Resource)

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	3,062
2002–03	2,601
2001–02	2,380
2000–01	2,053

(k) the Spoliation Advisory Panel has no staff

(l) the Treasure Valuation Committee has no staff

(m) the Working Group on Human Remains had no staff

(n) Crafts Council

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	not yet available
2002–03	1,481
2001–02	1,376
2000–01	1,199
1999–2000	1,019
1998–99	1,118

The earlier figures for the years since the Crafts Council's creation could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(o) British Film Institute

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	not yet available
2002–03	15,381
2001–02	13,243
2000–01	11,034
1999–2000	11,383
1998–99	10,981

The earlier figures for the years since the British Film Institute's creation could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(p) National Film and Television School

	Salary bill (£000)
2003	2,387
2002	2,551
2001	2,611
2000	2,850
1999	2,639

The earlier figures for the years since the National Film and Television School's creation could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(q) Alcohol Education and Research Council

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	63
2002–03	74
2001–02	61
2000–01	61

The earlier figures for the years since the Alcohol Education and Research Council's creation could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(r) Gaming Board for Great Britain

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	2,399
2002–03	2,391
2001–02	2,236
2000–01	2,090
1999–2000	2,073

The earlier figures for the years since the Gaming Board for Great Britain's creation could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(s) Horserace Betting Levy Board

	Salary bill (£000)
2003–04	1,046
2002–03	1,037
2001–02	925
2000–01	961
1999–2000	909

The earlier figures for the years since the Horserace Betting Levy Board's creation could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people who work for *(a)* the National Lottery Commission, *(b)* the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, *(c)* the Film Council, *(d)* the Football Task Force, *(e)* the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, *(f)* Historic Royal Palaces, *(g)* the Millennium Commission, *(h)* the New Opportunities Fund, *(i)* the New Millennium Experience Company Ltd, *(j)* Resource, *(k)* the Spoliation Advisory Panel, *(l)* the Treasure Valuation Committee, *(m)* the Working Group on Human Remains, *(n)* the Craft Council, *(o)* the British Film Institute, *(p)* the National Film and Television School, *(q)* the Adult Education and Research Council, *(r)* the Gaming Board for Great Britain and *(s)* the Horserace Betting Levy Board are entitled to a final salary pension scheme. [187140]

Mr. Caborn: The information is shown in the table.

Body	*Number entitled to a final salary pension scheme*
(a) National Lottery Commission	40
(b) Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment	78
(c) UK Film Council	55
(d) Football Task Force (wound up in 1999)	—
(e) National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts	31
(f) Historic Royal Palaces	445
(g) Millennium Commission	0
(h) New Opportunities Fund (Figure for 1 April 2004. The New Opportunities Fund has since undergone an administrative merger with the Community Fund. The merged body is now operating as the Big Lottery Fund)	363
(i) New Millennium Experience Company Ltd. (in voluntary solvent liquidation)	0
(j) Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (formerly known as Resource)	77
(k) Spoliation Advisory Panel	0
(l) Treasure Valuation Committee	0
(m) Working Group on Human Remains (dissolved in 2003)	—
(n) Crafts Council	10
(o) British Film Institute	264
(p) National Film and Television School	42
(q) Alcohol Education and Research Council	0
(r) Gaming Board for Great Britain	77
(s) Horserace Betting Levy Board	21

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the remit is of *(a)* the National Lottery Commission, *(b)* the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, *(c)* the Film Council, *(d)* the Football Task Force, *(e)* the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, *(f)* the Millennium Commission, *(g)* the New Opportunities Fund, *(h)* the New Millennium Experience Company Ltd., *(i)* Resource, *(j)* the Spoliation Advisory Panel, *(k)* the Treasure Valuation Committee, *(l)* the Working Group on Human Remains, *(m)* the Craft Council, *(n)* the British Film Institute, *(o)* the National Film and Television School, *(p)* the Alcohol Education and Research Council, *(q)* the Gaming Board for Great Britain and *(r)* the Horserace Betting Levy Board. [187142]

Mr. Caborn: The terms of reference for public bodies are contained in the annual Cabinet Office publication Public Bodies. Copies are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

The bodies listed are contained in Public Bodies 2003, with the following exceptions:

The Football Task Force, which was dissolved in 1999.

The New Millennium Experience Company Ltd., which is in voluntary solvent liquidation.

The Crafts Council. The object of the Crafts Council shall be to advance and encourage the creation of works of fine craftsmanship and to foster, promote and increase the interest of the public in the work of craftspeople and in the accessibility of those works to the public.

The British Film Institute. The objects of the British Film Institute are contained in its Royal Charter, available on the British Film Institute website (www.bfi.org.uk).

The National Film and Television School. The mission of the National Film and Television School is to educate the best creative talent to the highest professional standard for tomorrow's screen media industries.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what annual Government expenditure on *(a)* the National Lottery Commission, *(b)* the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, *(c)* the Film Council, *(d)* the Football Task Force, *(e)* the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, *(f)* the Millennium Commission, *(g)* the New Opportunities Fund, *(h)* the New Millennium Experience Company Ltd., *(i)* Resource, *(j)* the Spoliation Advisory Panel, *(k)* the Treasure Valuation Committee, *(l)* the Working Group on Human Remains, *(m)* the Craft Council, *(n)* the British Film Institute, *(o)* the National Film and Television School, *(p)* the Alcohol Education and Research Council, *(q)* the Gaming Board for Great Britain and *(r)* the Horserace Betting Levy Board was in each year since its creation. [187143]

Mr. Caborn: Expenditure on the National Lottery Commission, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, UK Film Council, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (formerly known as Resource), the National Film and Television School and the Gaming Board for Great Britain is shown in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Annual Report 2004, Vol. 1 (Cm 6220) and in previous editions. Copies are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Gaming Board for Great Britain has been sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport since 2001. Expenditure figures for earlier years are contained in the Annual Reports of the Home Office, which are available from the Libraries of both Houses.

Expenditure on the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts is contained in its 2002–03 Annual Report, copies of which are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Millennium Commission and the New Opportunities Fund are funded by money raised from the National Lottery. (The New Opportunities Fund has undergone an administrative merger with the Community Fund and the merged body is now operating as the Big Lottery Fund). The New Millennium Experience Company Ltd. (now in voluntary solvent liquidation) was funded by the Millennium Commission.

The Spoliation Advisory Panel and the Treasure Evaluation Committee (and the Working Group on Human Remains and Football Task Force, when they existed) form part of the Administration and Research budget of DCMS; they are not recipients of grant-in-aid. Their administration costs are borne by the DCMS, whose staff provide secretariat support, accommodation and legal advice. These costs are centrally budgeted and could be disaggregated only at disproportionate cost. Details of the Department's administration costs are published in the Department's Annual Report.

The Crafts Council is funded mainly by Arts Council England and earned income and has not received any direct Government funding since 1998–99.

The British Film Institute is funded by the UK Film Council and earned income and has not received any direct Government funding since 1999–2000.

The Alcohol Education and Research Fund is vested in and administered by the Alcohol Education and Research Council (AERC) and the AERC does not receive any direct Government funding.

The Horserace Betting Levy Board is funded by collection of a statutory levy and does not receive any direct Government expenditure.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people who work for *(a)* Culture North East, *(b)* the East Midlands Cultural Consortium, *(c)* Living east, *(d)* the North West Cultural Consortium, *(e)* the South East England Cultural Consortium, *(f)* the South West Regional Cultural Consortium, *(g)* the West Midlands Life Cultural Consortium and *(h)* the Yorkshire Cultural Consortium are entitled to a final salary pension scheme. [187145]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is in the table. The Regional Cultural Consortiums do not at present directly employ any staff themselves. Those who work for the Consortiums are employed by other regional agencies and partners and may be entitled to join the pension schemes of the organisations which employ them. Not all those entitled to join a final salary pension scheme are currently members of that scheme.

Consortium	*Staff entitled to a final salary pension scheme*
Culture North East	3
East Midlands Cultural Consortium	1
Living East	3
The Cultural Consortium England's Northwest	4
South East England Cultural Consortium	2
Culture South West	0
West Midlands Life	4
Yorkshire Culture	5

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total salary has been for *(a)* Culture North East, *(b)* the East Midlands Cultural Consortium, *(c)* Living east, *(d)* the North West Cultural Consortium, *(e)* the South East England Cultural Consortium, *(f)* the South West Regional Cultural Consortium, *(g)* the West Midlands Life Cultural Consortium and *(h)* the Yorkshire Cultural Consortium in each year since its creation. [187146]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is not available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The Regional Cultural Consortiums do not at present directly employ any staff themselves. Those who work for the Consortiums are employed by other regional agencies and partners and paid by those organisations. In most cases, the salary costs are subsequently invoiced to the Department for payment from the resources allocated to the Consortiums, but the Department does not record these costs separately from other Consortium expenditure.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people *(a)* Culture North East, *(b)* the East Midlands Cultural Consortium, *(c)* Living east, *(d)* the North West

Cultural Consortium, *(e)* the South East England Cultural Consortium, *(f)* the South West Regional Cultural Consortium, *(g)* the West Midlands Life Cultural Consortium and *(h)* the Yorkshire Cultural Consortium employs on a (i) full-time and (ii) part-time basis. [187147]

Mr. Caborn: The Regional Cultural Consortiums do not at present directly employ any staff themselves. Those who work for the Consortiums are employed by other regional agencies and partners and seconded to work for the Consortiums. The number of people currently working full-time and part-time for each Consortium is shown in the table.

Consortium	*Full-time staff*	*Part-time staff*
Culture North East	3	0
East Midlands Cultural Consortium	1	1
Living East	3	0
The Cultural Consortium England's Northwest	3	2
South East England Cultural Consortium	1	1
Culture South West	4	0
West Midlands Life	4	0
Yorkshire Culture	5	0

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the Government expenditure on *(a)* Culture North East, *(b)* the East Midlands Cultural Consortium, *(c)* Living east, *(d)* the North West Cultural Consortium, *(e)* the South East England Cultural Consortium, *(f)* the South West Regional Cultural Consortium, *(g)* the West Midlands Life Cultural Consortium and *(h)* the Yorkshire Cultural Consortium was in each year since its creation. [187148]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is in the table.

Regional Cultural Consortiums Annual Expenditure, from DCMS funds

£

Consortium	*1999–2000*[1]	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*[2]
Culture North East	1,355	41,855	32,415	92,952	197,326
East Midlands Cultural Consortium	857	34,366	15,927	108,880	141,267
Living East	388	26,358	31,621	110,150	184,763
The Cultural Consortium England's Northwest	230	21,995	32,890	93,686	240,695
South East England Cultural Consortium	968	20,229	36,929	30,242	204,862
Culture South West	4,823	33,609	22,043	152,725	213,750
West Midlands Life	1,613	31,089	6,097	120,100	223,217
Yorkshire Culture	829	29,800	17,326	131,450	217,629

[1] The Regional Cultural Consortiums were established in October 1999.
[2] Expected outturn.

Public Swimming Pools

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what action she has taken to ensure that access to public swimming pools in London increases; [186923]

(2) what action she *(a)* can and *(b)* will take to increase the number of swimming pools in London. [186924]

Mr. Caborn: Sport England is working with the Amateur Swimming Association on an agreed strategy "From Armbands to Gold Medals" to support the development of swimming in London and across the country.

At present, Sport England is working with the Greater London Authority (GLA), London Development Agency (LDA) and London 2012 on the provision of new swimming facilities in Stratford which will be built whether the Olympic bid is successful or not.

Sport England is also working to encourage greater investment in privately owned swimming facilities that provide public access.

Under the Community Club Development Programme, the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) will receive £1.6 million from the Government's Capital Modernisation Fund to invest strategically in community swimming clubs in all parts of the country.

The overall aim of the programme is to both increase and widen participation in sport at a local level and encourage an active lifestyle. It is expected that this programme will help to raise the number of people, particularly juniors, involved in competitive sport and will also help to improve the health of the nation through encouraging people of all ages to become involved in the sport of their choice.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* public lidos and *(b)* swimming pools have closed in London since 1997. [186925]

Mr. Caborn: Since 1997, three public lidos and five swimming pools have closed.

Of the five swimming pools that have closed, one is due to be replaced in 2005 (Swiss Cottage Baths).

There are currently 104 pools in London open to the public. This includes two pools that are currently run independently of local authorities, but fully open to the public (these are Brockwell Lido and Hampton outdoor pool).

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many public swimming pools there are in Coventry, South. [187302]

Mr. Caborn: There are 18 swimming pools within a five-mile distance of the CV1 postcode in Coventry, South. Full details of all public swimming pools in the area can be found by visiting the Active Places website at www.activeplaces.com

Public Transport

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has held with *(a)* the Department of Transport, *(b)* transport authorities, *(c)* public transport user groups and *(d)* companies operating public transport services on ensuring that public transport services are able to respond to the increased demand for late night services arising from increased use of late licences resulting from powers granted to licensing authorities under the Licensing Act 2003. [187157]

Mr. Caborn: The implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 can have no impact on the demand for late night transport services until November 2005 at the earliest. The content of the Licensing Act 2003 and the Licensing Guidance issued by the Secretary of State on 7 July this year, following approval by Parliament, were discussed with and approved by the Department for Transport. There have been no direct discussions with individual transport authorities, public transport user groups and companies operating public transport services other than through the public consultations that preceded the introduction of the Licensing Bill and the laying of the Guidance in Parliament. At paragraph 3.50, the Licensing Guidance advises licensing authorities when developing local statements of licensing policy to have regard to the existing policies and strategies of the relevant local transport authority as set out in their local Transport Plan. Local Transport Plans are the mechanism by which local authorities are expected to work in partnership with all appropriate bodies to deliver effective local transport services that meet the needs of local people. These are expected to include provision of night-time and evening services, where this is appropriate to the local situation. It is for local authorities to identify where and how to take action.

Regional Cultural Consortiums

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the remit is of the regional cultural consortiums. [187149]

Mr. Caborn: The remit of the Regional Cultural Consortiums is set out in the Cabinet Office publication "Public Bodies", copies of which are available in the Libraries of both Houses. The role of the Consortiums is to champion the whole spectrum of cultural and creative interests in the regions, including tourism and sport. The Consortiums have responsibility for implementing the regional cultural strategies and they have a role in central policy-making, regional data collection and research.

School Sports

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many children aged between five and 16 years she estimates have not participated in at least two hours per week of physical activity and sport at school this year. [186504]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is not held centrally for all pupils.

As a result of the 2004 Spending Review the PE, School Sport and Club Links PSA target is being increased and extended to 2008. The ambition is to further increase the percentage of five to 16-year-olds spending a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and school sport from 75 per cent. in 2006 to 85 per cent. by 2008. The target also seeks to ensure that all School Sport Partnerships are able to demonstrate that at least 75 per cent. of their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and schools sport. From this month, 50 per cent. of schools will be in a School Sport Partnership.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many schools in the Bridgwater constituency *(a)* are and *(b)* are not participating in a school sports partnership. [186505]

Mr. Caborn: Within the constituency of Bridgwater there is one School Sport Partnership, based around the hub school, King Alfred's, and comprising four secondary schools, 25 primary schools and two special schools. All schools within Bridgwater will be within a School Sport Partnership by September 2006.

Shooting

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she plans to meet the governing bodies of shooting in the near future. [186922]

Mr. Caborn: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no plans to meet the governing bodies of shooting in the near future. Officials from the Home Office and Defra have recently met representatives from the governing bodies of shooting to discuss the Home Office consultation on firearms. DCMS officials will continue discussions with Home Office and Defra officials to ensure that the interests of shooting clubs are given appropriate consideration.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she last met representatives of the governing bodies of shooting to discuss the impact of recent legislation on the sport. [186935]

Mr. Caborn: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not met representatives of the governing bodies of shooting to discuss the impact of recent legislation.

Sport England

Joyce Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the budget of Sport England in the North East region of England was in each of the last three years. [186428]

Mr. Caborn: The following table provides figures for Sport England's budget in the North East region for each of the last three financial years and the current financial year.

£ million

North East budgets	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Exchequer	1.16	1.17	2.59	1.17
Lottery[1]	15.23	18.70	5.33	11.49
Total budget	16.39	19.87	7.92	12.66

[1] Lottery includes Community Schemes and Awards for All

Sports Lottery Fund

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total reserves in the Sports Lottery Fund are. [186931]

Mr. Caborn: Balances held by each of the sports Lottery distributors as at 1 August 2004 are shown in the table.

Distributing body	*Balance (£)*
Sport England	193,912,849.51
Sport Scotland	60,688,533.81
Sports Council for Wales	17,974,275.50
Sports Council of Northern Ireland	24,127,137.58
UK Sport	2,880,357.25
Total	299,583,153.65

St. Kitts Maritime Archaeological Project

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to assist maritime archaeology of sunken British vessels in the waters off Commonwealth countries, with particular reference to wrecks off St. Kitts being researched by the St. Kitts Maritime Archaeological Project. [185002]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: We have no current plans to assist the St. Kitts Maritime Archaeological Project.

Tourism

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much revenue she estimates tourism generated for *(a)* the East of England and *(b)* Suffolk in each of the last seven years. [187210]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The available figures for tourism expenditure in the East of England region are shown in the table.

Tourism expenditure in the East of England region by year[1]

£ million	*Visits by overseas residents*	*Trips by domestic residents with an overnight stay*	*Tourism day trips by domestic residents*	*Total*
1997	500	n/a[2]	n/a	n/a
1998	550	n/a[2]	2,870	n/a
1999	550	n/a[2]	n/a	n/a
2000	650	1,540	n/a	n/a
2001	520	1,800	n/a	n/a
2002	620	1,700	2,930	5,250
2003	590	nya	n/a	n/a

[1] Sample sizes at this level of detail will be small which means that the estimates will be subject to a high margin of error. Particular caution should therefore be exercised when comparing any two of the estimates.
[2] Figures for overnight stays by domestic tourists are taken from the UK Tourism Survey. Comparable figures at regional level prior to 2000 are not available due to a major change in survey methodology.
n/a = not available,
nya = not yet available
Sources:
International Passenger Survey, UK Tourism Survey, GB Leisure Day Visits Survey

(b) The available figures for tourism expenditure in Suffolk are shown in the table. Figures for tourism day trips are only available at regional level.

Tourism expenditure in Suffolk by year[1]

£ million	*Visits by overseas residents*	*Trips by domestic residents with an overnight stay*	*Tourism day trips by domestic residents* [1]	*Total*
1997	30	n/a[2]	n/a	n/a
1998	40	n/a[2]	n/a	n/a
1999	55	n/a[2]	n/a	n/a
2000	50	225	n/a	n/a
2001	40	310	n/a	n/a
2002	70	160	n/a	n/a
2003	40	nya	n/a	n/a

[1] Sample sizes at this level of detail will be small which means that the estimates will be subject to a high margin of error. Particular caution should therefore be exercised when comparing any two of the estimates.
[2] Figures for overnight stays by domestic tourists are taken from the UK Tourism Survey. Comparable figures at regional level prior to 2000 are not available due to a major change in survey methodology.
[3] Due to small sample sizes in the GB Day Visits Survey, data are not available below Government Office Region level.
n/a = not available
nya = not yet available
Sources:
International Passenger Survey, UK Tourism Survey

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Government are taking to support the tourism industry in Bridgwater. [186506]

Mr. Caborn: Since April 2003, the Regional Development Agencies have had strategic responsibility for tourism development in the regions, reflecting its importance as a driver of regional economies. Over 2003–06, South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) will receive £403,000 per annum from my Department for tourism development activity, which is currently passed to the Regional Tourist Board, South West Tourism (SWT), as core funding. The board of SWRDA has recently endorsed the new tourism strategy, 'Towards 2015' and additional funding of £1.5 million per annum for the next four years has been proposed to cover its implementation. SWRDA has also funded other projects which benefit tourism in the region, including regional marketing, the Tourism Skills Network and capital investment in regional attractions.

DCMS has made available to VisitBritain in 2004–05 grant in aid of £35.5 million to promote Britain overseas and £12.9 million to lead the domestic marketing of England. Tourism in Bridgwater benefits from this expenditure, as does the rest of the country.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to visit Herefordshire to promote it as a tourist destination for *(a)* British and *(b)* foreign holiday-makers. [186823]

Mr. Caborn: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State currently has no official plans to visit Herefordshire. However, Herefordshire is promoted

both globally and domestically in many of VisitBritain's campaigns. Domestically, it is featured in the flagship £2.5 million 'enjoyEngland' campaign and other themed promotions. For example, in the 'Outdoor England' campaign the region's natural attractions, such as the Wye Valley walk and the Forest of Dean are featured. Internationally, the county is included in campaigns such as 'Good Living', 'Lifestyle & Culture' and 'Hidden Britain'. Further information can be obtained from VisitBritain's website www.visitbritain.com.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 8 September 2004

PRIME MINISTER

Freedom of Information

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Prime Minister (1) on what date he issued the direction to set up the Ministerial Committee on Freedom of Information (MISC 28); for what reasons he decided to set up this committee; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the direction setting up this committee; [186606]

(2) how many times the Ministerial Committee on Freedom of Information (MISC 28) has met since it was set up; on what dates it has met; when it was set up; and whether the committee has discussed the issue of deciding what level of fees should be charged for requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [186607]

The Prime Minister: It is established practice, as reflected in the Ministerial Code and under Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of the Cabinet and its committees.

I announced the establishment of the Ministerial Committee on Freedom of Information (MISC28) to Parliament on Thursday 27 May 2004. The Committee was established to oversee the Government's strategy on Freedom of Information, particularly as Government Departments make final preparations for the full implementation of the Freedom of Information Act in 2005. Details of the membership and terms of reference of the Committee are available in the Libraries of both Houses and on the Cabinet Office website.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Public Records

Lynne Jones: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to his answer of 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 535W, on public records, under what legal provision files that have passed the normal 30 years disclosure period laid down by the Public Record Act 1958 have been either closed or retained; how many of the closed files have been closed to protect personally sensitive information; for what categories of reason the remainder are closed; and what plans there are for the future publication of the retained files. [187622]

Mr. Lammy: Records may at present be kept closed to public access longer than 30 years under s5(1) of the Public Records Act or specifically to prevent a breach of good faith under s5(2). S3(4) allows for retention in Departments beyond the 30 year period. In all these cases the approval of the relevant Minister and the Lord Chancellor, who takes account of the views of his Advisory Council on National Records and Archives, is required. Variations of the 30 year closure period are authorised by an Instrument signed by the Lord Chancellor.

The 1993 Open Government White Paper set out the criteria against which applications for extended closure have been assessed. Since 1993 76.9 per cent. of records which have been closed relate to personally sensitive information. The other criteria for extended closure are described in the White Paper.

The Open Government White Paper of 1993 requires Departments to review retained records, and to consider whether actual damage would be caused by their release. These arrangements will continue.

Information on Access to Public Records can be found on the National Archives website at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/advice/schedules.htm

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Metropolitan Police (Artefacts)

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the closure on 14 July of the warehouse containing the Metropolitan Police Service's collection of artefacts is permanent; and if she will make a statement. [187475]

Estelle Morris: This a matter for the Metropolitan Police Authority. I understand that the closure is to allow staff time to carry out work needed to ensure compliance with the Freedom of Information Act when it comes into force on 1 January 2005.

Conditions at the storage facility in which the collection and archives are held raise health and safety issues for staff and visitors. I understand the Metropolitan Police Service is committed to looking for a more suitable location for the artefacts and is exploring ways in which the collection can be displayed, without placing a burden on police funds.

Shooting

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has held with the London 2012 Olympics bid team on the venue for shooting events. [186934]

Tessa Jowell: London 2012 is responsible for selecting the venues for the bid to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games and announced on 16 January that Bisley would host the shooting events. Following the report from the IOC Working Group on 18 May which highlighted potential problems that may result from the number and geographical spread of venues, London 2012 have been considering alternative sites nearer to the Olympic Zone.

A firm decision will be made for inclusion in the Candidate File that will be submitted to the IOC on 15 November 2004.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Corporate Plan

Mike Gapes: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission when the Electoral Commission's Corporate Plan for 2004–05 to 2008–09 was approved by the Speaker's Committee. [186592]

Mr. Viggers: The Electoral Commission's Corporate Plan for 2004–05 to 2008–09 was approved by the Speaker's Committee at its meeting on 14 July. The Plan was laid before the House by the Speaker, on behalf of the Speaker's Committee, on 22 July as House of Commons Paper No. 797, copies of which are now available in the Vote Office. I understand that the Electoral Commission has also sent copies to all Members.

CABINET OFFICE

Absenteeism

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the average number of working days lost per employee through illness was in his Department in each of the last five years; and what targets for days lost were set for each year. [186599]

Mr. Alexander: Information on working days lost per employee due to illness in the Cabinet Office is published each year in "Analysis of Sickness Absence in the Civil Service". The latest publication covers 2002 and is available in the Library of the House. The figures for 2003 are expected to be published in autumn 2004. Information for the available years requested are set out in the following table.

	Working days lost per employee
1998	6.2
1999	6.8
2000	4.6
2001	5.7
2002	4.8

Cabinet Office targets for reducing levels of sickness absence cover three years as follows:

	Target for working days lost per employee
2001	6.4 days or less
2003	6.1 days or less
2010	5.1 days or less

To further reduce short-term sickness absence, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor announced in the Spending Review an examination of the use of self-certification in the civil service.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will withdraw payment for an initial period of absence from working through illness in the Civil Service and public sector; and if he will make a statement. [186537]

Mr. Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced during the Spending Review on Monday 12 July 2004 that the Cabinet Secretary and I will consult on, and negotiate changes to the current arrangements for self-certifying absence in the civil service.

In such circumstances it would not be appropriate for me to pre-empt this exercise by making changes to the way that payment is made for sickness absence.

Although this review will encompass solely the civil service, it is hoped that any change made to the self-certification system will serve as an example of good practice for the wider public sector.

Civil Contingencies

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will make a statement on his Department's role in projects to be funded following the announcement relating to civil contingencies in the Spending Review. [186673]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office has lead responsibility within Government for local authorities' civil protection activities. It has secured a doubling of the Government's contribution to the cost of local authorities' civil protection work.

The wider programme of increased investment in the counter-terrorism and resilience area falls to a range of Government Departments, and will be overseen by the Home Secretary, who has overall responsibility for domestic security and resilience.

Freedom of Information

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what action he is taking in response to the comments made by the Parliamentary Ombudsman regarding delays by his Department in responding to complaints under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information in her review of departmental performance against requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding published on 30 June; and if he will make a statement. [186611]

Mr. Alexander: The Government take any delays in responding to complaints under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information seriously.

The Government regret that delays do unavoidably occur in a minority of complex cases. However, the Ombudsman's review of the first nine months of the Memorandum of Understanding (September 2003 to May 2004) shows that in most cases the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding were met.

In all cases, Departments endeavour to ensure that the time limit of three weeks for Departments to respond to a "statement of complaint" from the Ombudsman is met. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, Departments aim to enter into dialogue with the investigating officer should there be any difficulty in replying by the date set by the Ombudsman.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many contracts the Cabinet Office had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186612]

Mr. Alexander: The Department has not entered into any such contracts with any of these companies.

Press Officers

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how much was spent by his Office on press officers, broken down by grade, in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available. [185241]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* Financial and human resource information for periods, prior to, and including 1996–97 is not held on the Cabinet Office's current databases. Hence, information for 1996–97 could be provided in the manner requested only at disproportionate cost. However, information about the number of press officers working in Cabinet Office press office during this period is available in Appendix 11 to PASC—Sixth Report.

Press office provides a service to the Minister for the Cabinet Office; Minister without Portfolio; Leader and Deputy Leader of the Commons; Leader of the Lords; Cabinet Secretary; Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator and the Permanent Secretary Government Communications. It is also responsible for supporting the Managing Director of the Cabinet Office and the Heads of Management Units in the Cabinet Office.

The last year for which information is available is 2003–04. At January 2004 the Cabinet Office Press Office had the following press officer posts:

a full-time head of news post—SCSI;

two full-time chief press officer posts—G7;

two full-time senior press officer posts—TIS3/SIO;

a senior press officer—TIS3/SIO who spent 50 per cent. of her time on press office duties;

three full-time press officers—TIS2/1O and B2.

Some of these posts remained vacant for a large part of 2003–04. The total salary costs, including employer contributions and overtime, for the above posts in the 2003–04 financial year was £436,433.00. These figures are subject to final audit by the National Audit Office (NAO). In order to protect the privacy of the individuals concerned it would be inappropriate to break down the cost by grade.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Metropolitan Police (Horse Dung)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what the estimated amount in tonnes is of horse excrement deposited by police horses belonging to the London Metropolitan Police on public byways and spaces in London in the last year for which figures are available; [187289]

(2) what the estimated cost to local authorities was of collecting excrement from police horses belonging to the London Metropolitan Police from public byways and spaces in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by local authority; [187290]

(3) what *(a)* tonnage and *(b)* percentage of excrement produced by horses belonging to the Metropolitan Police was recycled in the form of manure or other compost in the last year for which figures are available; [187291]

(4) what obligations there are on the Metropolitan Police to clean up excrement left by its horses on public byways and spaces in London. [187292]

Alun Michael: There are no figures available for the amount of horse manure excreted by horses belonging to the Metropolitan Police in London, the cost to local authorities for cleaning up horse excrement, nor for the amount of excrement that authorities have collected.

The Metropolitan Police have no obligation to clear up horse excrement.

Advertising

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was spent by her Department on *(a)* advertising and *(b)* public relations consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) in the latest year for which figures are available. [186014]

Alun Michael: The Department does not maintain separate records of its expenditure for advertising and promotional literature. The expenditure for publicity by Defra's Communications Directorate, includes marketing, advertising, publications, events, shows and direct mailings, and is recorded for the financial years since Defra's creation in June 2001 as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	6.6
2002–03	4.7
2003–04	2.5

This includes communications on a wide range of matters, much of it necessary or beneficial to the public and the wide range of industries in which Defra has an interest, together with local government, voluntary organisations and other bodies.

Figures on expenditure on public relations consultants by all sections of Defra are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. There has been no expenditure on public relations consultancy by the Defra's Communications Directorate since the Department was set up. Some firms which include public relations activities among the range of services they provide to clients have been employed by some sections of Defra, but not primarily for that purpose.

Departmental Costs

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost of running the Department's canteen facilities was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [184378]

Alun Michael: Defra came into being in June 2001. From information held centrally, the cost of running the Department's canteen facilities in financial year 2001–02 was £398,058 and in financial year 2003–04 the cost was £443,025.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was spent by her Department on public relations consultants in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* in the last year for which figures are available. [184381]

Alun Michael: Defra was formed in June 2001. Figures on expenditure on public relations consultants by all sections of Defra are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. There has been no expenditure on public relations consultancy by the Defra's Communications Directorate since the Department was set up. Some firms which include public relations activities among the range of services they provide to clients have been employed by some sections of Defra, but not primarily for that purpose.

Hunting

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make a statement on the Hunting Bill. [188252]

Alun Michael: The Government intends to fulfil its manifesto commitment to enable Parliament to deal with the issue of hunting with dogs.

Some opponents of hunting want this issue to be dealt with as a matter of great urgency, while supporters of hunting want nothing to change and many other people regard it as being less important than many other policies.

The Government has made it clear that the issue does not have as high a priority as issues like jobs and schools and hospitals and transport, to name a few. But it is an issue that has absorbed an enormous amount of valuable Parliamentary time, over several years, and before the last election we acknowledged that it was time to enable Parliament to reach a conclusion.

The Government has made efforts to find a constructive way forward, based on the evidence, through the Burns Committee Report and my own work which culminated in public hearings in Portcullis House in 2002. The proposals put to the House last year would have banned hunting except where a particular activity could be proved—to the satisfaction of an independent tribunal—to be necessary for pest control and to involve less suffering than available alternatives. The House decided by a substantial majority on a free vote to go further and require a complete ban apart from a few very restricted statutory exceptions.

The Other Place then considered the Bill but failed to return it to this House before the end of the Session last November. That was disappointing and the only way the Government can be sure to fulfil its manifesto commitment is now to reintroduce the Bill in the form it left this House last year. I am therefore giving notice of the Bill's re-introduction in this House.

It will be a matter for this House to decide, but the Government believes that the provisions of the Parliament Acts will be available if an unaltered Bill is sent to the Other Place.

In addition to the Bill, I shall ask the House to agree a motion to commence the Bill's provisions in relation to hunting, but not hare-coursing events, two years after its enactment. Special procedures exist under the Parliament Act 1911 for changes to be made if agreed to by both Houses. This period will give those involved in hunting more than adequate time to cease the activities which are to be banned, for humane arrangements like the dispersal or re-homing of dogs, and for re-focusing any business activities on alternatives like drag-hunting or disposal of fallen stock if they wish to do so.

These welfare considerations do not apply to hare coursing events. Violence and intimidation associated with illegal coursing events is a real and pressing problem in many areas of the countryside today. We have received many representations asking us to take firm and speedy action to enable the police to tackle these associated evils. That can only be done if the nature of the relevant offences is changed from that of trespassing to the activity of hare-coursing itself, which is a clear provision of the Bill. There can be no justification for delaying further in giving the police the powers they need to crack down on the criminals involved. So the offences in the Bill banning hare-coursing events should continue to come into force three months after the Bill is passed.

The Government has condemned threats of illegal action by some supporters of hunting and believes that most people involved are law-abiding people who are prepared to respect the will of Parliament. Extra time for implementation will make it even clearer that illegal actions and threats or intimidation are totally unjustified. If people wish to continue their opposition to legislation, they have the option of the ballot box through which to express their views.

Animal welfare is also a major consideration for the Government—in terms of dogs and horses as well as the wild animals which are hunted. Dogs used for hunting are normally shot when they are no longer needed but the extra time for implementation will mean that there is even less reason for any suffering to be caused to them because of the ban. The RSPCA has offered to help with re-homing hounds—an offer for which I am very grateful—based on its experience of re-homing a considerable number of greyhounds each year. Drag-hunting offers alternative activities for those who have to give up hunting. And the horse industry in this country is buoyant, with increasing activity in a variety of leisure and sporting activities.

As has consistently been the case, right hon. and hon. Members on this side of the House will have a free vote on the Hunting Bill. That free vote will apply to Ministers and Whips as well as to back-benchers. While this legislation is not a Government priority, it is an issue on which hon. Members have expressed strong and consistent views over many years.

My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House will address the handling of the Bill in the Business Statement.

Marine Protection

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research has been carried out on the cost of creating a series of marine parks around Great Britain. [186283]

Mr. Bradshaw: A meaningful assessment of the cost of creating a series of marine parks would depend on a variety of factors, including the number, scale and purpose of such areas, as well as the nature of any management, enforcement and monitoring.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Intellectual Property Rights

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what type of intellectual property rights are owned by the Government. [187101]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

Intellectual property rights in the UK comprise:

statutory rights which are registered and granted through the Patent Office, comprising patents, registered trade marks, registered designs, plant breeders rights;

statutory, but unregistered rights, such as copyright and unregistered design rights.

In addition common law rights such as those relating to confidential information, trade secrets, and unregistered trademarks, and passing-off are often included within the wider definition of intellectual property.

Government Departments currently hold just over 1,200 live patents, 600 live trademarks and 20 live registered designs around the world. There is no record of any plant breeders rights.

The number of patents held has reduced considerably in recent times as a result of the establishment of QinetiQ Ltd. as a separate company. A substantial part of the Ministry of Defence's patent portfolio was vested in QinetiQ at its foundation.

The figures given above exclude patents held by various national health bodies.

No central records are held for copyright or unregistered designs, nor of common law rights. But all works (including computer software) made by Government servants are Crown Copyright, and the number of copyright materials held by Government Departments is, in consequence, immense.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Equatorial Guinea

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will list the projects *(a)* initiated, *(b)* funded (i) partially and (ii) fully and *(c)* run by his Department since 1997 in Equatorial Guinea; and if he will make a statement; [187266]

(2) how much *(a)* monetary aid and *(b)* aid in kind his Department has (i) pledged and (ii) delivered to Equatorial Guinea per annum since 1998; and if he will make a statement. [187265]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not have a significant bilateral programme partnership with Equatorial Guinea, but does provide a Small Grants Scheme (SGS) fund co-ordinated at the British High Commission in Yaounde, Cameroon. This fund supports non-governmental and civil society organisation projects which are in line with DFID's development objectives.

The Small Grants Scheme has funded eight such projects in Equatorial Guinea since 1997, with a combined value of £53,372. Two projects supported community health centres; four projects provided water and sanitation and one assisted livelihoods work in palm oil production. The SGS also supported the studies of two students from Equatorial Guinea.

Of the official development assistance given to Equatorial Guinea through the European Community, the UK's share was £0.2 million in 1998, £0.1 million in 1999, £0.3 million in 2000, and £0.3 million in 2001. Figures for 2003–04 are currently unavailable.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the economic and political developments in Equatorial Guinea since 1998; and if he will make a statement. [187267]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has no significant development partnership with Equatorial Guinea and so makes no formal assessment of economic and political developments. However, DFID does support the EU Declaration of 17 June which states that the Government of Equatorial Guinea must adhere to democratic principles in an internationally accepted manner. HM Government continues to monitor the situation.

Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action he is taking to ensure that the Government fulfils the commitments it made in the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. [186829]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: A fundamental aim of the International Plan of Action is the eradication of poverty. DFID's aim is also the elimination of poverty in poorer countries. A key objective of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing is to ensure that issues relating to ageing are taken into account at all stages in both international and national development

plans and policies. DFID's policy is to support developing countries' own development agendas, known as Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs). DFID seeks to ensure that groups representing the interests of older people are included in PRS consultations.

Older people are often among the poorest. The problems they face are therefore included in the policy analyses currently being carried out by DFID on chronic poverty and on social exclusion. DFID has also recently funded research at the Centre for Chronic Poverty and Development Policy at Manchester, in partnership with Help Age International, into older people living in poverty; at the University of Wales into migration of older people from South Asia and at Manchester University into non-contributory pensions and poverty prevention.

The Action Plan advocates the active participation of older people in society and development. DFID's approach recognises the human rights of poor people, including older people and seeks to ensure that they are consulted on policies and decisions that affect them. This increases understanding of how they perceive their rights and of the obstacles they face in obtaining their entitlements.

Examples of projects funded by DFID country programmes include support for the development of services for older people in the Kemerovo region of Russia and projects in the Overseas Territories of Montserrat and St. Helena to provide sheltered housing and other support for elderly people to live in the community.

DFID also has a Programme Partnership Agreement with Help Age International (HAI), under which we are providing funding of £2.46 million to HAI over three years. The purpose is to influence the development of policies and practices that promote rights and opportunities for older people and to maximise their contribution to society. HAI's work includes support for setting up effective groups of older citizens in developing countries; strengthening them to monitor how their governments carry out their commitments to reduce the poverty of older people, including the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing; encouraging dialogue between governments, civil society and older people to ensure that effective policies and programmes are developed to reduce poverty among older people; disseminating information about ageing; raising awareness of the impact of HIV/AIDS on older people and supporting work to inform older people of their rights.

TRANSPORT

A40/M40

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance he has given to the Highways Agency on how to take account, in framing the A40/M40 management strategy, of *(a)* the environmental impact of the motorway on people living in South Buckinghamshire and *(b)* Wycombe district council's air quality management strategy. [187370]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency follows a consistent approach for all route management strategies whereby the problems and issues of a route are grouped under five main categories, one of which is environment. Issues such as noise and air quality are considered within this category.

Wycombe district council's air quality management area is recorded in the M40/A40 draft route management strategy. Wycombe's air quality action plan includes a number of measures to improve air quality, two of which directly involve the Highways Agency. Layout changes to the Handy Cross junction are already in the targeted programme of improvements for the agency and the draft route management strategy contains possible options to reduce future traffic volumes on the M40.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of people who live up to *(a)* 50 metres, *(b)* 100 metres, *(c)* 250 metres and *(d)* 500 metres from the M40 between junctions 3 and 6. [187372]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency do not hold figures for the number of people who live within 50, 100, 250 and 500 metres of the M40 between junctions 3 and 6.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the accident rate per number of vehicles on the M40 between *(a)* junctions 3 and 4, *(b)* junctions 4 and 5 and *(c)* junctions 5 and 6. [187373]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency publishes accident rates per million vehicle kilometres travelled. On this basis the accident rates for the three sections of the M40 are as follows:

	Accident rate
(a) Junctions 3 to 4	0.129
(b) Junction 4 to 5	0.047
(c) Junctions to 6	0.125

These rates have been calculated using accident data for the last five years.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents there have been in each of the last five years on the M40 between *(a)* junctions 3 and 4, *(b)* junctions 4 and 5 and *(c)* junctions 5 and 6. [187374]

Mr. Jamieson: For each of the last five years, the following injury accidents have been recorded on the M40.

	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Junction 3 to 4					
Fatal	3	0	0	0	0
Serious	7	5	7	3	6
Slight	21	17	25	21	19
Junction 4 to 5					
Fatal	0	2	0	1	0
Serious	4	2	3	1	4
Slight	17	15	21	20	10
Junction 5 to 6					
Fatal	0	1	0	0	0
Serious	3	2	2	3	2
Slight	11	17	10	17	16

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his latest estimate is of the average daily flow of traffic on the M40 between junctions 3 and 6. [187375]

Mr. Jamieson: The latest annual average daily traffic flows for each section of the M40 motorway between junctions 3 and 6 were collected in 2003 and are shown in the following the table:

Motorway section	*Combined Northbound and Southbound traffic flows (vehicles)*
Junctions 3 to 4	101,812
Junctions 4 to 5	93,036
Junctions 5 to 6	92,923

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions in each of the last five years traffic has been diverted off the M40 at Junction 5 or 6 to travel along the A40 through Stokenchurch. [187381]

Mr. Jamieson: For the five-year period in question, no formal diversions have been implemented by the Highways Agency that required traffic to be diverted off the M40 at Junction 5 or 6 to travel along the A40 through Stokenchurch.

A65

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funds he has *(a)* been asked for and *(b)* agreed to provide for the A65 bus lane scheme. [186735]

Dr. Howells: Leeds city council initially asked for £20 million for this scheme, and my Department provisionally accepted it for funding at this cost in December 2001. Subsequently, a revised scheme costing £29 million, along with a lower cost alternative for £21 million, has been submitted which is currently being considered by my Department.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187323]

Mr. McNulty: DfT central has a significant presence in nine buildings shown in the following table, which also shows the number of rooms available for smokers, prayer (non-denominational) or for the use of nursing mothers or pregnant women.

Building	*Smoking room*	*Prayer room*	*Nursing mothers*
Great Minster House, London	1	1	1
Southside, London	0	0	1 (first aid room)
MAVIS Crowthorne	0	0	1 (first aid room)
Ashdown House Hastings[1]	3	1	1 (first aid room)
Air Accidents Investigation Branch, Farnborough	1	0	0
Marine Accident Investigation Branch, Southampton	0	0	0
Temple Quay, Bristol[1]	1	0	1 (first aid room)
Ashdown House Victoria, London	1	1	1
Portland House, London[1]	0	1	1

[1] Facilities shared with other Government Departments (OGDs)

Highways Agency

Joyce Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the budget of the Highways Agency in the North East of England was in each of the last three years. [186430]

Dr. Howells: The budget of the Highways Agency in the North East of England in the last three years was £49.133 million for 2002–03, £52.323 million for 2003–04 and £49.588 million in 2004–05.

London Gateway Port Harbour Empowerment Order

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will delay his decision on the London Gateway Port Harbour Empowerment Order until he is satisfied that a reasonable compensation package has been offered to local fishermen; and if he will make a statement. [187591]

Mr. Jamieson: The inspector's report of the Public Inquiry held into the London Gateway proposals is with this Department for consideration as part of the statutory process. I understand that fisheries issues were raised at the inquiry and the Secretary of State will of course take into account all relevant considerations in reaching his decision.

Rail Services (London)

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport over what length beyond the boundaries of the current Greater London Authority area he expects the Mayor of London to have jurisdiction for the railways. [186790]

Mr. Darling: "The Future of Rail" White Paper said that we will look at whether it is feasible to give the Mayor the right to specify and pay for services that provide additional capacity in London, and acknowledges that some of these services start or end their journeys outside London. However, the White Paper also made it clear that it would be essential to ensure that the rights and interests of rail passengers outside of London are protected, and will consult fully with the GLA and neighbouring regional and local bodies before reaching a conclusion on this proposal.

Road Maintenance/Schemes

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road maintenance schemes requiring completion are outstanding; and when he expects they will be completed. [186734]

Mr. Darling: Road maintenance is an ongoing activity for highway authorities, with new schemes starting or completing on time. The Department does not keep central records of what works are planned or are in progress other than for the Highways Agency. Other maintenance is a matter for individual highway authorities.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the eight major schemes listed in the Highways Agency's business plan for 2004–05

scheduled to start in this financial year will proceed according to timetable following publication of The Future of Transport. [187540]

Mr. Jamieson: Five of the schemes listed in the Highways Agency's business plan—A14 Rookery Crossroads grade separated junction, A249 Iwade-Queenborough Improvement, A47 Thorney Bypass, A5 Weeford-Fazeley Improvement and A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction—have already been given approval to start works in the current financial year. Decisions on the other three schemes will be taken shortly.

Road Safety

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the use of speed limiters in lorries has been assessed to determine efficiency in preventing traffic accidents. [187404]

Mr. Jamieson: The accident involvement rate on motorways (per hundred million vehicle kms) fell from 6.4 for all HGVs in 1991 (before the mandatory fitting of speed limiters was introduced) to 4.3 in 2002—which is a 34 per cent. decrease. This is significant, particularly as traffic volume increased by 33 per cent. over the same period.

The above figures include accidents involving currently non-speed limited HGVs between 3.5 and 7.5 tonnes. However, the reduction in accidents for exclusively speed limited vehicles may be even more significant. Almost all articulated HGVs are speed limited and the accident involvement rate for that class of vehicle fell from 6.7 in 1991 to 3.9 in 2002—a 42 per cent. decrease.

Other contributing factors may also have influenced that decline but speed limiters have clearly played a part.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many lorries are fitted with speed limiters. [187405]

Mr. Jamieson: All goods vehicles over 7.5 tonnes are required to have speed limiters fitted. As at 31 December 2003 there were 276,000 such vehicles licensed.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents involving lorries occurred during overtaking manoeuvres in each of the last 10 years; and how many of these involved lorries fitted with speed limiters. [187406]

Mr. Jamieson: The number of accidents occurring during overtaking manoeuvres involving HGVs on motorways for the last 10 years is set out as follows:

Accidents

	Fatal	*Serious*	*Slight*	*All*
1994	6	34	236	276
1995	9	25	214	248
1996	7	38	233	278
1997	7	37	255	299
1998	9	29	259	297
1999	7	40	280	327
2000	11	38	338	387
2001	7	28	291	326
2002	5	35	298	338
2003	8	42	305	355

Although it has been a requirement to fit speed limiters to vehicles over 7.5 tonnes since 1992, we have only been recording HGVs over 7.5 tonnes on our database as a separate category of vehicles since 1999. All of the accidents from 1999 onwards quoted above involved HGVs fitted with a speed limiter.

The rise in the number of accidents involving HGVs can largely be attributed to the increase in traffic—indeed, the number of accidents involving all categories of vehicle has increased over the last 10 years. However, the accident rate per vehicle kilometres has changed little during the same time period and, in the case of HGVs, the accident rate per vehicle kilometres has actually fallen quite substantially since the introduction of speed limiters (a decrease of 34 per cent. between 1991 and 2002).

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people are employed by the Humberside Safety Camera Partnership. [186205]

Mr. Jamieson: The Humberside Safety Camera Partnership employs a complement of 49.6 full time equivalent posts. Eight of these posts are filled by police officers, the rest civilians.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he proposes to take to raise public awareness of the guidelines that are in place for Safety Camera Partnerships. [186206]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department for Transport website contains information on the rules of the safety camera programme on the deployment, signing and visibility of safety cameras, as does the website of the National Safety Camera Liaison, which provides information on Safety Camera Partnerships' activities. The Handbook of Rules and Guidelines for the next year's operation of the programme is currently being prepared. When it is issued, we will publicise it, and make it available through the Department's website.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he intends to implement to make Safety Camera Partnerships more responsive to complaints received from members of the public. [186207]

Mr. Jamieson: Members of the public who have a complaint about an alleged offence caught on a safety camera can challenge it in a Magistrates Court. Partnerships are made up of police, local and magistrates courts authorities, each of which will have a complaint procedure. Partnerships consider, investigate and respond to complaints in line with those. Partnerships also provide extensive information on their activities, including information on camera sites, through their websites and local media.

Transport Funding (Warrington)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much Government funding has been allocated for transport improvements in Warrington in each of the past five years. [180082]

Mr. McNulty *[pursuant to my reply, 12 August 2004, Official Report, c. 699W]:* Funding for transport improvements allocated to Warrington in the last five years is as follows.

£ million

	Improvement	Maintenance
2004–05	3.0	2.9
2003–04	2.2	2.8
2002–03	2.2	2.5
2001–02	2.0	2.4
2000–01	2.0	2.4

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 23 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1461W, on domestic violence, if he will list the radio stations, women's press and supermarkets where the helpline was advertised; and if he will list the sites of the washroom posters. [187072]

Phil Hope: The following list contains the radio stations, women's press and supermarkets where the helpline was advertised. A separate list of the washroom sites has been made available in the Library of the House.

Radio:

95.8 Capital FM (London)
105.4 Leicester Sound FM
Magic 105.4 FM (London)
103.2 Power FM (Portsmouth/Southampton)
96.4 FM BRMB (Birmingham)
Century 100–102 (North East)
100.7 Heart FM (W. Mids)
Vibe.101 (Severn Estuary)
Galaxy 102 (Manchester)
Galaxy 102.2 (Birmingham)
Heart 106.2 FM (London)
Galaxy 105 (Yorkshire)
106 Century FM (E. Mids)
Vibe FM (East Anglia)
105.4 Century FM (North West)
Galaxy 105–106 (North East)
Southern FM (Brighton/East Sussex)
Total East Anglian Radio
Total Beacon Radio (Wolverhampton)
96 Trent FM/Classic Gold Gem (Notts)
RAM FM/Classic Gold Gem (Derby)
Mercia FM/Classic Gold 1359 (Coventry)
GWR FM/Classic Gold (Brunei) (Bristol, Bath, Swindon)
Essex FM
Metro Radio/Magic 1152 (Newcastle)
TFM/Magic 1170 (Middlesbrough)
Key 103/Magic 1152 (Manchester)
Radio City 96.7/Magic 1548 (Liverpool)
97.4 Rock FM/Magic 999 (Preston)
96.3 Radio Aire/Magic 828 (Leeds)
Hallam FM/Magic AM (Sheffield)
96.9 Viking FM/Magic 1161 (Hull)

Women's press:

Cosmopolitan
Family Circle
She
More
Bella
Best
Chat
Closer
Heat
Hello
Now
OK
Real
Take a Break
That's Life
Woman
Woman's Own
Mail on Sunday—You magazine
M Celebs—Sunday Mirror Supplement

Supermarkets:

Sainsbury's
Budgens
Spa
Nisa
Lidl
Wilkinson and Superdrug.

Fraud/Theft

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the cost of fraud to Government Offices of the Regions in each of the last five years. [186400]

Phil Hope: The cost of fraud to Government Offices for the Regions in the last five years has been £4,618.73.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the equivalent monetary cost of theft to the Government Office of the Regions has been in each year since 1997. [186407]

Phil Hope: The equivalent monetary cost of theft from the Government Offices since 1997 is tabled as follows:

	£
1997–98	9,400
1998–99	0
1999–2000	653
2000–01	4,137
2001–02	30,000
2002–03	4,000
2003–04	8,500
2004 to date	9,550
Total (since 1997)	66,240

Homelessness

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households were living in temporary accommodation in the Bury St. Edmunds constituency

in each year since 1997; and how many of those households included dependent children. [187203]

Phil Hope: Information is not collected at constituency level, only at local authority level. A summary of information reported by St. Edmundsbury district council about the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation as at 31 March of each year since 1997 is tabled as follows. The number of households in temporary accommodation containing dependent children or expectant mothers has only been collected since March 2002.

Households in temporary accommodation[1] arranged by St. Edmundsbury district council, as at 31 March

	Total households	*Of which: with dependent children[2]*
1997	29	n/a
1998	26	n/a
1999	28	n/a
2000	31	n/a
2001	36	n/a
2002	22	not reported
2003	16	13
2004	36	28

[1] Households in temporary accommodation arranged by the local authority pending inquiries, or after being accepted, under homelessness legislation.
[2] Includes an expectant mother. Data only collected since March 2002.
Source:
ODPM PIE homelessness returns (quarterly).

Neighbourhood Schemes (Newcastle upon Tyne)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* street warden, *(b)* neighbourhood warden and *(c)* neighbourhood management schemes he has approved in the City of Newcastle upon Tyne; what the value of each was; what schemes have been rejected; and which schemes have been bid for but not yet determined. [186856]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister funds one street warden scheme operating in the Byker Ward of Newcastle upon Tyne. The scheme has received £300,000 in ODPM funding, which started in 2001 and will end on 31 March 2005. There are no neighbourhood warden or neighbourhood management pathfinder schemes operating in Newcastle upon Tyne which are funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. No other schemes were rejected or bid for but not yet determined.

Power Lines (Residential Properties)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance he has issued concerning the building of residential properties under or near power lines. [186155]

Keith Hill: The Government have not issued guidance concerning the building of residential properties near power lines.

However, following the publication of the National Radiological Protection Board's (NRPB) new Electromagnetic Field (EMF) guidelines in March 2004 and the associated advice to Government, the Government are committed to taking forward the issue of building near power lines in consultation with all the relevant stakeholder groups.

Safer and Stronger Communities Fund

Mr. Battle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will outline his plans for a safer and stronger communities fund referred to in paragraph 5.32 of the 2004 Spending Review; whether it will cover Leeds, West; where it will be piloted; and if he will make a statement. [186782]

Phil Hope: The Safer and Stronger Communities Fund announced in the Spending Review 2004 will be put in place across England from April 2005. The fund will address the issues of high crime levels, anti-social behaviour and disorder and the frequent poor quality of public spaces, particularly in deprived areas.

Guidance on how the fund will operate in practice will be issued later in the year. The administration of the fund will enhance local flexibility and help to reduce bureaucracy through the development of agreements based on the principles for the wider Local Area Agreements, which the Government will also be piloting next year.

Supporting People Programme

Mr. Battle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has had from *(a)* local authorities, *(b)* caring organisations and *(c)* people with learning disabilities regarding the review of the Supporting People programme; and if he will make a statement. [186727]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister receives representations about the Supporting People programme from a wide variety of stakeholders, including local authorities, MPs, provider organisations and people who receive housing related support, including those with learning disabilities. These representations cover a broad range of issues around the Supporting People programme, from invites to conferences to questions about the current and future workings of the programme following the Independent Review of the programme.

The Independent Review was commissioned by the Government to look at value for money and the variation in dwelling costs and services across local authorities. The Review found wide variations in dwelling costs between authorities and that £1.8 billion is too much to pay for the legacy services. Following this report, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister undertook a comprehensive programme of work on Supporting People programme to inform the Spending Review 2004. On this basis it was recently announced that the settlement for Supporting People is £1.72 billion in 2005–06 and around £1.7 billion in each of the following two years. This is the first time that there has been a three-year settlement in the Supporting People programme. It will create stability for the programme and offer Administering Authorities and providers the opportunity to plan strategically and deliver good quality, value for money services over the next three years and beyond.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Afghan Hijackers

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Solicitor-General what estimate he has made of the legal costs of the case concerning Afghan hijackers at Stansted airport since 2000. [185616]

The Solicitor-General: There have been both criminal proceedings and asylum proceedings arising from the hijack at Stansted airport. In relation to the two criminal trials relating to this matter the costs to the Crown Prosecution Service of Counsel's fees was £428,811.85. This does not include certain costs incurred, such as interpreters fees, as well as fixed costs of the C PS, such as staff. The cost to the Criminal Defence Service of these trials as at 21 July 2004 was £4.32 million.

In relation to the asylum applications following the Stansted hijack, litigation services in relation to such claims are provided to the Home Secretary by the Treasury Solicitors Department. Their costs in relation to claims arising from the hijack are £106,109.41 as at 31 August 2004.

The Legal Services Commission is unable to give a figure for the legal aid costs relating to these asylum claims. This is for two reasons. First, some of the legal aid paid in respect of these claims was covered by the controlled work contract where funding decisions are delegated to suppliers. Under those arrangements the Legal Services Commission does not maintain details about the legal aid funding of specific cases. Secondly, in respect of the legal aid funding not covered by the controlled work contracts, while in principle the Legal Services Commission will be in a position to state the legal aid costs, they are not in a position to provide final figures at this stage as they are still waiting for the individual solicitors to submit bills to them. Services Commission will be in a position to state the legal aid costs, they are not in a position to provide final figures at this stage as they are still waiting for the individual solicitors to submit bills to them.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Buildings

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the total floor space area of buildings owned or leased by his Department was in each year from 1997 to date. [186614]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999. The Office does not own any buildings. The total floor space area of buildings leased from 1 July 1999 to January 2004 was 3,653m^2.

In January 2004, the Scotland Office gave up accommodation in Glasgow which reduced the total floor space area to 2,850m^2.

Sustainable Development

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what parts of his Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [186585]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office, in common with every part of the Government, is covered by all the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps have been taken by his Department since publication of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate to review arrangements for public reporting of sustainable development impacts. [186586]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office is working to ensure that its sustainable development impacts will be reported to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, which is committed to the public reporting of such impacts across its estate.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what arrangements his Department has to report publicly on its key sustainable development impacts. [186588]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office will report its sustainable development impacts to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, which is committed to the public reporting of such impacts across its estate.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what have been identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of his Department's estate. [186589]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Constitutional Affairs is currently reviewing sustainable development impacts across the whole of its estate, including the buildings occupied by the Scotland Office.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Autistic People

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provisions are in place to increase awareness in the criminal justice system of the behaviour patterns of people who have communication-related disabilities, including autism and Asperger's Syndrome, in relation to policy on bringing charges for communication-related offences, with particular reference to *(a)* section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 and *(b)* the offence of being drunk and disorderly. [186921]

Ms Blears: As regards the police, national training highlights the importance of communicating effectively and sensitively with people suffering from a mental disability (including autism).

The aim is to ensure that officers develop awareness and an understanding of mental disorders and the importance of not making assumptions based on a person's behaviour.

In West Mercia, I understand that training has been provided to key staff on Autism and Asperger's Syndrome Disorders (ASD), by Autism West Midlands. This covers strategies for working effectively with people suffering from ASD, paying particular attention to the implications for policing.

The Codes of Practice under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) provide guidance for custody officers on dealings with mentally vulnerable detainees and, other than in exceptional circumstances, an appropriate adult (someone experienced in dealing with mentally disordered or mentally vulnerable people) must be called whenever there is any doubt about a detainee's mental capacity

If there is any concern that a person may be suffering from an underlying physical or mental illness, the police should act urgently in calling an appropriate health care professional for advice.

As for decisions whether or not to bring charges, I understand that the Code for Crown Prosecutors specifically lists the desirability of diverting a defendant who is suffering from significant mental or physical ill health among the relevant considerations. However, this has to be balanced against the need to safeguard the general public. Each case has to be reviewed on its own facts by the Prosecutor applying the general principles laid down in the Code.

In relation to offences under Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986, Home Office Circular 17/2004 provides guidance to Chief Officers to inform local protocols between the police and health services on dealings with people who may have mental health problems, including learning disabilities.

Community Support Officers

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of community support officers recruited are *(a)* men and *(b)* women. [186766]

Ms Blears: In the most recent official figures published in September 2003, 64 per cent. of Community Support Officers (CSOs) were male and 36 per cent. female.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community support officers are assigned, on average, to each police officer in *(a)* London and *(b)* England and Wales. [186905]

Ms Blears: Information about the numbers of Community Support Officers (CSOs) assigned to individual police officers is not held centrally. However, the most recent figures on police numbers released in May 2004 are *(a)* 30,619 police officers in the Metropolitan Police Service (MRS) and City of London forces and *(b)* 139,631 police officers in England and Wales. In the most recent figures released at the end of July 2004 there were *(a)* 1,791 CSOs in the MRS and *(b)* 3,943 CSOs in England and Wales.

Domestic Violence

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are to raise public awareness of female-on-male domestic violence. [185074]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 July 2004]:* The 2001 British Crime Survey's Inter-Personal Violence Module shows that one in four women and one in six men have suffered domestic violence at some point in their lives, though women form the overwhelming majority of those subject to the heaviest abuse in terms of frequency, range of violence and severity of injury. The Home Office information leaflet "You don't have to live in fear of domestic violence" recognises that men can be victims of domestic violence and includes the 'Male Advice Line and Enquiry' run by Devon MALE. Devon MALE is a confidential service which specialises in domestic violence, offering advice and information, safety advice and emotional support via their adviceline. They also have a male outreach worker working in the Devon area.

Drugs Workers

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he permits the inclusion in contracts for providers of drugs services in England and Wales of provisions to exclude a specified drugs worker from the provider's premises. [181824]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have been asked to reply.

Individual contracts for providers of drug services are a matter for negotiation between local commissioners and providers.

Essex Police

Mr. Ivan Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase the number of community support officers in Essex. [186316]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 7 September 2004]:* Home Office officials wrote to all chief officers on 20 August inviting bids for a share of the £50 million which was announced in the Home Office Strategic Plan to kick-start the Neighbourhood Policing Fund. This will allow police forces to recruit additional Community Support Officers (CSOs) in this financial year and we expect that 5,500 will be in place by the end of March 2005. It will be for the chief constable of Essex and his police authority to decide how many extra CSOs they wish to bid for.

The Government have set a target of 20,000 additional CSOs by the end of 2007–08 and further details of how we plan to achieve this will be published in time for the 2006–07 planning round.

Hate Crime

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many reported incidents of race hate crimes there have been in *(a)* St. Helens and *(b)* England and Wales, broken down by region in each year since 1997; and what percentage (i) were brought to court and (ii) resulted in a successful prosecution in each case. [186901]

Ms Blears: The available information relates to the number of racist incidents in each police force area in England and Wales from 1996–97 to 2002–03. This information is contained in Table 3.1 of the Section 95 publication "Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System—2003", a copy of which is available in the Library and also on the Home Office website. Table 3.2 of the same publication gives the number of racially or religiously aggravated offences recorded by the police by

police force area for 2001–02 and 2002–03. Figures for earlier years are available in earlier versions of the Section 95 publication and on the website. Information on racist incidents is not available centrally for St. Helens.

With regard to court proceedings, the available information relates to the number of defendants proceeded against for racially aggravated offences and is given in the table. The available data is from 1997 to 2002.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for racially aggravated offences—England and Wales 1997 to 2002[1]

	1997		1998[2]		1999	
Court/region	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Magistrates court						
St. Helens[3]	[4]—	[4]—	—	—	9	3
Region						
East	[4]—	[4]—	2	—	230	89
East Midlands	[4]—	[4]—	4	1	352	123
London	[4]—	[4]—	44	14	1,523	431
North East	[4]—	[4]—	1	1	109	34
North West	[4]—	[4]—	15	3	451	161
South East	[4]—	[4]—	2	1	248	87
South West	[4]—	[4]—	1	—	153	54
West Midlands	[4]—	[4]—	4	2	248	74
Yorkshire and the Humber	[4]—	[4]—	2	1	229	76
Welsh	[4]—	[4]—	8	4	272	95
England and Wales	[4]—	[4]—	83	27	3,815	1,224

	2000		2001		2002	
Court/region	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Magistrates court						
St. Helens[3]	16	3	9	3	7	3
Region						
East	408	153	567	170	542	200
East Midlands	621	289	621	307	692	297
London	2,073	686	1,657	557	1,684	611
North East	196	78	325	137	419	167
North West	919	354	1,424	532	1,323	527
South East	558	225	602	261	603	260
South West	402	137	454	170	442	195
West Midlands	954	356	1,444	504	1,392	527
Yorkshire and the Humber	456	168	654	237	633	269
Welsh	470	170	540	207	424	187
England and Wales	7,057	2,616	8,288	3,082	8,154	3,243

[1] These data are on the all offence basis.
[2] The Crime and Disorder Act 1988 introduced a series of new racially aggravated offences from 30 September 1988.
[3] Found guilty includes those offenders found guilty at St. Helens magistrates court and the Crown Court where St. Helens was the committing court.
[4] Not applicable.

Passport Checks

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long a wait for passengers to pass through passport checks at London Heathrow he determines as being compatible with the service standards of the Issuing Section Service. [185393]

Mr. Browne: I am not familiar with the Issuing Section Service to which the right hon. Member refers. However the UK Immigration Service is committed to clearing bona fide passengers with minimal delay, and has set standards for passenger processing times, which comply with the international standards. These standards, which are embedded in the UK Immigration Service's annual business objectives and are kept under regular review, are to clear:

100 per cent. of non-EEA passengers in 45 minutes;

90 per cent. of non-EEA passengers in 30 minutes;

EEA passengers with minimal delay.

The UK Immigration Service currently clear 99 per cent. of non-EEA passengers in less than 45 minutes, and 98 per cent. of non-EEA passengers in less than 30 minutes. Although there is no specific measurement of the time taken to process EEA passengers, close monitoring of passenger flows and effective deployment of staff ensure EEA passengers are cleared with minimal delay.

The UK Immigration Service's performance is also measured independently against the British Airports Authority (BAA) quality of service standards, which includes queuing times. The Immigration Service continues to score well against this measure.

Police Animals

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* dogs and *(b)* horses are employed by each police force, broken down by species. [187219]

Ms Blears: There are 305 horses used by the police in England and Wales and 33 in Scotland.

In England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, including the UKAEAC (UK Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary) there are approximately 2,200 dogs used by the police. These are predominately German Shepherd dogs. There are also Malinois (similar to a German Shepherd, but a little smaller, and a handful of Rottweilers. These are generally used for General Purpose and Non-Compliant Attack Dogs. The dogs that are used in connection with scent detection are generally Springer Spaniels and Labradors.

Police Authorities

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he next plans to meet with the heads of police authorities in the UK; and what he plans to discuss. [186819]

Ms Blears: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and I have frequent bilaterals with the Chairman of the Association of Police Authorities, as well as meeting individual chairs rather than heads of individual police authorities, and the discussions cover a very wide range of policing and crime reduction issues.

Security Vetting

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment will be made of vetting arrangements in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Scotland in taking forward recommendations arising from the Bichard Inquiry. [186645]

Ms Blears: Representatives from the Northern Ireland Office and the Scottish Executive sit on the Bichard Implementation Programme Board and Working Groups, taking forward the programme to implement the Bichard Report's 31 recommendations.

The work to enhance vetting procedures in the light of Sir Michael's recommendations will be considered by the Programme Board in the light of the full range of requirements, including those appertaining to Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps will be taken to include relevant organisations and bodies in Northern Ireland in taking forward recommendations arising from the Bichard Inquiry, with particular reference to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. [186646]

Ms Blears: The Bichard Implementation Programme Board will oversee the work to implement all 31 of the Bichard report's recommendations. The President of the Association of Chief Police Officers has accepted an invitation to sit on the Board, convened by the Home Office as co-ordinating Department, and to liaise with Police Service of Northern Ireland on emerging issues and outcomes.

Representatives from the Northern Ireland Office participate in the Programme Board and its feeder Working Groups. This provides a firm link into issues which are specific to Northern Ireland and a connection to other relevant organisations.

Special Constables (Northampton)

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many special constables there are in Northampton; and how many there were in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 1997. [186518]

Ms Blears: Figures for the total number of special constables in Northamptonshire police force are contained in the annually published police service strength figures. The latest are contained in Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/03 and are for the year ending 31 March 2003. They are shown, together with figures for 1997 and 2001. Figures for March 2004 will be published later this year.

	Number of special constables
March 2003	189
March 2001	188
March 1997	316

There are no separate statistics published for the number of special constables in Basic Command Units.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Belarus

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on democracy in Belarus. [186748]

Mr. MacShane: Belarus' record on human rights and democratisation is poor. In the past year numerous independent newspapers, NGOs and opposition parties have faced increased harassment, giving rise to concerns that the Belarusian Government is waging a campaign to stamp out any criticism prior to parliamentary elections in October.

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has condemned previous elections in Belarus for failing to meet OSCE commitments for democratic elections. The Belarusian authorities have so far refused to amend unsatisfactory electoral legislation. EU Heads of Missions in Minsk have already conveyed our concerns to the Belarusian Government. We welcome the recent invitation from the Government of Belarus to ODIHR to send an Election Observation Mission. The UK plans to contribute 10 per cent. of the short and long-term observers as well as the Head and Deputy Head of the mission.

Cyprus

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Tooting (Tom Cox) of 14 July

2004, *Official Report*, column 1184W, on Cyprus, what matters he discussed with members of the Government of Cyprus relating to the outcome of the referenda held earlier this year. [186988]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend and I have discussed with the Government of the Republic of Cyprus a variety of issues relating to the outcome of the referenda held earlier this year. These have focused on the future of the island, particularly now that Cyprus has joined the EU; and on how the EU might deliver on its commitment of 26 April to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots.

EU Enlargement

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the effect of EU enlargement upon the UK-EU relationship. [186647]

Mr. MacShane: Enlargement is one of the EU's greatest policy successes, spreading peace, prosperity and stability across the continent. This Government have consistently championed EU enlargement, demonstrating the constructive role we play at the heart of the EU. We will continue to work closely with all our EU partners, including the new member states, to sustain our influence within the enlarged EU.

EU Funding

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list *(a)* youth, *(b)* campaigning and *(c)* social groups that received EU monies in the last year for which statistics are available, under the A-30 budget lines; and if he will deposit the (i) audits and (ii) original bids in the Library. [187336]

Mr. MacShane: The groups that received money in 2004 under the budget lines formerly known as the A-30 budget lines were as follows:

Old nomenclature (pre-2004)	*Activity based budgeting nomenclature (2004>)*	*Recipient group*
Equality between men and women		
A-3037	04 05 01	European Women's Lobby
A-3046	04 05 03	Women's organisations
Education and Training		
A-3010	25 02 01 01	Historical archives of the European Union
A-3011	15 02 01 03	European University Institute, Florence
A-3012	15 02 01 04	European Law Academy (Trier)
A-3013	15 02 01 05	European Institute of Public Administration (Maastricht)
A-3014	19 04 01	European Inter-university Centre
A-3017	03 02 01	Organisations for co-operation in the field of European Law
A-3022	15 02 01 06	Study and research centre
A-3027	15 02 01 07	International Centre for European Training
A-3044	15 02 01 08	European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education
Youth		
A-3023	15 07 01 01	European Youth Forum
A-3029	15 07 01 02	Support for international non-governmental youth organisations
Culture		
A-3015	15 04 01 01	European Bureau for Lesser-used Languages and Mercator
A-3035	15 04 01 02	Preservation of Nazi concentration camps sites as historical memorials
A-3042	15 04 01 03	Subsidy for cultural organisations advancing the idea of Europe
Promoting European Civic Participation		
A-3016	18 06 03	Association of the Councils of State and Supreme Administrative Jurisdictions of the Union
A-3020	15 06 01 02	"Our Europe" Association
A-3021	15 06 01 03	Grants to European think tanks and organisations advancing the idea of Europe
A-3024	15 06 01 04	Associations and federations of European interest
A-3026	15 06 01 05	European think tanks
A-3030	18 03 01	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
A-3036	15 06 01 06	Support for the Jean Monnet House and the Robert Schuman House
Promoting mutual understanding between EU and non-industrialised regions		
A-3031	19 02 02	Institutes specialising in relations between the European Union and third countries

Organisations seeking A-30 budget lines submit their bids directly to the Commission and are not required to send copies to member state governments. The Council can amend the funding proposed for each of the former A-30 budget lines during annual negotiations on the general budget of the European Communities.

The European Court of Auditors (EGA) audits the EC Budget on an annual basis though its report will not include separate audits of each organisation receiving A-30 budget line funding. However, the ECA may decide to issue a special report on particular activities—a list of these reports is published at the back of the

ECA's latest annual report which has been placed in the Library of the House. Additionally, individual organisations may be required to publish annual accounts under their terms of establishment.

EU Summit

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what outcomes he hopes will be achieved at the EU summit on 29 October. [186787]

Mr. MacShane: I expect the EU Constitution to be signed by Heads of State and Government of EU member states.

EU-US Economic Output

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what forecasts he has received of the relative levels of economic output in the EU and the US in 2010. [186652]

Mr. MacShane: GDP per head in the EU has been persistently lower than that in the US in recent decades. This, allied with the significant demographic challenge that the EU will face in coming years, emphasises the need for significant structural reform if Europe is to close the gap with the US in output per capita.

The Government's February progress report on European economic reform and recent submission to Mr. Wim Kok's Lisbon Mid-Term Review Group, highlight these challenges and set out the Government thinking on how Europe can successfully rise to those challenges.

Copies of both Government papers are available in the Library of the House.

European Constitutional Treaty

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which Minister will attend the signing ceremony of the European Constitutional Treaty on 29 October. [186649]

Mr. MacShane: I cannot confirm at this stage which Minister will attend.

European Neighbourhood Policy

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the impact of the European Union's European Neighbourhood Packages on the UK's diplomatic relations with Russia. [186747]

Mr. Rammell: The UK strongly supports the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy, which offers partner countries closer co-operation in areas of mutual interest, in return for political and economic reform.

The UK maintains close relations with Russia, including through the EU-Russia relationship. We have discussed the European Neighbourhood Policy with Russia and explained how we see it contributing to stability on Europe's eastern borders, which is in both our and Russia's interest.

These packages complement the UK's bilateral relations with Russia.

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the decision to exclude Belarus from the European Neighbourhood Policy; what steps the Government have taken since that decision was taken to end the isolation of Belarus from the European Union; and what steps the Government plan to take to address this situation. [186368]

Mr. MacShane: The UK wants Belarus to become a democratic, stable and increasingly prosperous partner for the enlarged EU. However, Belarus's continuing poor record on human rights and democracy is an obstacle to a closer relationship. We and EU partners have set out the steps that Belarus would need to take in return for ratification of a Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA) and eventual full association with relevant regional EU initiatives, potentially including the European Neighbourhood Policy.

While measures such as restrictions on ministerial contact with the regime remain in place, we do not believe in isolating the people of Belarus. We are doing all we can to bolster civil society and promote democracy, using bilateral programme funds disbursed through our embassy and working via multilateral institutions.

The EU continues to support the people of Belarus in areas including addressing the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe, health education, environment, trans-border and regional co-operation, border management and independent media.

Ferhat Kaya

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Turkish authorities regarding the arrest and alleged torture of Ferhat Kaya. [186730]

Mr. MacShane: UK officials have raised the case of Mr. Kaya with the Turkish authorities on several occasions, most recently at a senior level at the last round of our Human Rights Dialogue with Turkey on 15 July in London. The trial of 11 police accused of beating and torturing Ferhat Kaya on 5 May began on 20 June after a doctor's report certified Mr. Kaya's injuries. Our Embassy in Ankara continues to monitor Mr. Kaya's situation.

Former Soviet Bloc Countries

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what research his Department has commissioned regarding the possibility of further former Soviet Bloc countries applying for membership of the European Union. [186738]

Mr. MacShane: No such research has been commissioned.

Any European state may apply for EU membership in line with Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union.

Israel

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent

assessment he has made of the effects of the security barrier being built by the Government of Israel on Palestinian communities; what representations he has received from non-governmental organisations on the effects of the wall on their work in the occupied territories; and what representations he has made to Israel about minimising possible detrimental effects. [187070]

Mr. Rammell: We remain concerned about the negative impact of the barrier on communities near it. We note that the Israeli Supreme Court has ordered changes to the route of the barrier because of similar concerns.

We receive regular representations on this subject from NGOs working in the Occupied Territories. In response, we encourage the Israeli Government both to consider more seriously the humanitarian impact of its actions there, and to give NGOs clear guidelines to help them maximise the effectiveness of their support for affected Palestinian communities.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to renegotiate the EU-Israeli Association Trade Agreement. [187464]

Mr. MacShane: We have no plans to renegotiate the trade elements of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

Lisbon Agenda

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the mid-term review of the Lisbon agenda in 2005. [186623]

Mr. MacShane: The Government set out their vision for a more focused, results-oriented Lisbon process in a paper submitted to Wim Kok, Chairman of the Lisbon Mid-Term Review Group chair and EU partners in June. The Government are pressing for:

greater focus on economic prosperity as a key to social cohesion;

increased accountability of national governments in delivering reform;

better use of Community rules and instruments to deliver reform, including use of non-regulatory approaches, highlighting the role of the state aids rules and showing how Community spending can better be aligned with the Lisbon agenda; and

key reforms needed to meet Lisbon targets, including reducing the regulatory burden on business, strengthening the Single Market, improving employment flexibility and opening up EU markets to the benefits of global trade.

Copies of the Government's submission to the Lisbon Mid-Term Review will be made available in the Library of the House and can be accessed at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/9A9DB/Mid-term_review_of_the_Lisbon_strategy062004.pdf)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures he will take in order to achieve the targets of the Lisbon Agenda. [186651]

Mr. MacShane: The Government set out their priorities for European economic reform in their progress report in February. Copies are available in the Library of the House. Priorities are to:

promote effective EU regulation—reduce the burden on EU business and ensure that any new legislation encourages not stifles economic growth;

strengthen the Single Market, with a more pro-active competition policy, further reform of the state aid rules, and by making the Single Market a reality for services as well as goods;

to improve the functioning of Europe's labour markets to deliver more and better jobs, including through implementation of Mr. Wim Kok's Employment Taskforce recommendations;

promote enterprise and innovation, including through new European Centres of Enterprise—local centres of excellence in enterprise policy;

promote a successful conclusion to the Doha Trade round; and

strengthen the transatlantic economic relationship, by tackling the barriers to trade and investment between the EU and the US.

The Government continue to work closely with their partners to promote action on all of these priorities, including through the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy, chaired by Mr. Wim Kok. We submitted our vision for a more focused, results-oriented Lisbon process to the Mid-Term Review Group in June (copies will be made available in the Library of the House and can be accessed at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/9A9DB/Mid-term_review_of_the_Lisbon_strategy062004.pdf)

Moldova

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what relationship the Government has with the Government of Moldova; and if he will make a statement. [187043]

Mr. MacShane: The UK enjoys a constructive relationship with Moldova and has a strong interest in its security and development. Since independence, Moldova has achieved progress on promoting human rights and democracy. However, we have concerns in some areas. We have stressed the importance of the parliamentary elections in early 2005 for the Government of Moldova to demonstrate its commitment to the values of democracy, rule of law and human rights.

We remain concerned about the situation in Transnistria, and want to see negotiations on a political settlement brought to an early and successful conclusion. The EU continues to call on the two parties, in particular the Transnistrians, to negotiate constructively and in good faith.

Together with our EU partners we will continue to raise any concerns we have with the Moldovan Government, bilaterally through our embassies in Chisinau, in multilateral fora and through public declarations.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department is giving to *(a)* the economic progress of Moldova and *(b)* the development of democracy there. [187044]

Mr. MacShane: The UK supports economic reform and democratic development in Moldova, including through EU programmes. Moldova is a priority country for the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), launched by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary

in spring 2002 as the Wider Europe initiative. The ENP offers the new neighbours of the enlarged EU greater integration, including deeper trade and economic relations, in return for economic and political reforms.

Our embassy in Chisinau continues to support democratic development and good governance and will support several projects in the run up to elections in early 2005.

In addition to Foreign and Commonwealth Office assistance, the Department for International Development's bilateral programme for Moldova contributed £8.4 million between 2000 and 2003. The planned programme contribution for 2004 is £2.3 million. The UK also supports the IMF, World Bank, and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in their efforts to promote economic reform in Moldova.

Since 1991, the EU has provided assistance to Moldova totalling Euros 253 million including technical assistance under the TACIS programme.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received regarding the Russian forces based in Moldova. [187045]

Mr. MacShane: Several groups have raised their concerns about the dispute in Transnistria and the continuing presence of Russian forces in Moldova with my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary. The Government share these concerns. We want Russia to fulfil commitments made when signing the Adapted Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe Summit in Istanbul in 1999. These commitments include the full withdrawal of arms and ammunition from Transnistria, or their destruction in situ, and the withdrawal of Russian forces. Together with NATO allies we have stated that:

> "we can envisage ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty only in the context of full compliance by all State Parties with agreed treaty limits and consistent with the commitments contained in the CFE Final Act".

PFI/PPP

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many contracts his Department had with *(a)* Barclays Bank, *(b)* the Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* the Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186658]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has had no contracts with Barclays Bank, the Royal Bank of Scotland, UBS Warburg and the Bank of Scotland for advice on private sector finance initiative and public private finance partnership contracts during the period specified.

Qualified Majority Voting

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the conditions of employment for union staff will be decided by qualified majority voting under the European constitution. [187033]

Mr. MacShane: The staff regulations and conditions of employment for officials of the European institutions are currently decided by qualified majority voting under articles 210, 247(8) and 283 of the treaty establishing the European Community. They will continue to be decided by qualified majority voting under articles III.306 and III.333 of the EU constitutional treaty.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the penalties available to the European Court of Justice will be decided by qualified majority voting under the European Constitution; and whether this represents a change from article 229 TEC. [187034]

Mr. MacShane: Article 229 of the treaty establishing the European Community has been reproduced in essentials in the new constitutional treaty as article III-268. The procedures for determining penalties will therefore remain as now: that is, they will depend on the legal base for the specific legal instrument under consideration.

Serbia

Mr. Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on whether ethnic Albanians are being refused entry to Serbia; and if he will make a statement. [187518]

Mr. MacShane: We are not aware of any reports of the authorities in Serbia and Montenegro refusing to allow ethnic Albanians into the country if they have a valid passport.

Sierra Leone

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political climate in Sierra Leone. [186751]

Mr. Mullin: The UK continues to make a significant political, military and financial investment in Sierra Leone to tackle the root causes of the conflict and to ensure sustainable peace.

Sierra Leone has now enjoyed over two years of peace under a democratically elected government. In May, the first local elections for 32 years took place. In the same month, the Special Court for Sierra Leone started its first trials to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for war crimes and atrocities committed during the conflict.

Following extensive security sector reforms, UN peacekeepers expect to withdraw by the end of 2005.

US Visa Requirements

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the US Administration

on the changes requiring UK visitors to obtain a visa in person due to unavailability of biometric data passports; and if he will make a statement. [186422]

Mr. Mullin: We have had regular ministerial and official contacts with the US Administration and members of Congress about maintaining the UK's position within the US Visa Waiver Programme (VWP).

The United States amended its border security legislation on 9 August, extending the deadline by one year to 26 October 2005 for countries in the VWP to introduce a biometric identifier in new passports. The non-availability of biometric passports would have no impact on visa requirements for British passport holders before that date.

The UK's biometric passport programme, on which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is working closely under the Home Office's lead, involves the introduction of cutting edge technology. It is important we get this right. Along with other VWP countries, the UK may need to approach the US for a further extension in the new year to allow adequate time for development and testing before UK biometric passports are issued.

Venezuela

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has had discussions over the last 36 months with the United States Administration regarding its position on unrest in Venezuela; and if he will make a statement. [186391]

Mr. Rammell: We are in regular contact with the US Administration at all levels and our discussions cover a variety of issues, including Venezuela.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support the British Government offered to Venezuela following the referendum which elected President Chavez in December 1999; and if he will make a statement. [186392]

Mr. Rammell: President Chavez was elected to office in 1998 and re-elected in 2000. A referendum was held in December 1999, to approve a new constitution.

We have consistently supported the democratic and constitutional process in Venezuela, particularly the agreement between the Venezuelan Government and opposition in May 2003, which called for a "peaceful, democratic, electoral and constitutional" outcome in Venezuela.

HEALTH

Alzheimer's Disease

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proportion of Alzheimer's patients have access to acetylcholinesterase inhibitors on the NHS; [186432]

(2) what progress he is making with plans for all Alzheimer's patients to have access to acetylcholinesterase inhibitors on the NHS; and when he expects access on the NHS to be available for all. [186434]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the proportion of Alzheimer's patients having access to anti-dementia drugs is not available. In January 2001, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence recommended that the acetylcholinesterase inhibitors, donepezil (Aricept), rivastigmine (Exelon) and galantamine (Reminyl) should be made available on the national health service as one component of the management of those people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease.

Care Homes

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* care homes and *(b)* care home places were available in Suffolk in each of the last six years run by (i) Suffolk county council and (ii) the voluntary independent and private sector in Suffolk. [187178]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of care homes and places run by the council and the voluntary and private sector in Suffolk as at 31 March for the years 1998 to 2001.

Number of care homes and places available in Suffolk at 31 March 1998–2001

	Residential			
At 31 March	*Council staffed*	*Independent sector*	*Nursing*[1]	*Total*
Number of homes[2]				
1998	35	220	75	330
1999	35	215	65	315
2000	35	215	60	310
2001	35	215	60	305
Number of places				
1998	1,195	3,490	2,290	6,975
1999	1,065	3,320	2,195	6,580
2000	1,060	3,365	2,110	6,535
2001	1,070	3,395	2,140	6,605

[1] Includes places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.

[2] Dual registered homes are included under nursing homes.

Note:

Figures for residential care are for Suffolk council with social services responsibilities and for nursing care they are for Suffolk health authority.

Figures may not add up due to rounding.

I understand from the Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Continuing Care

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average time taken to *(a)* review and *(b)* determine appeals by people who believed that they had been wrongly charged for continuing care (i) was before 31 March and (ii) has been since 31 March. [186371]

Dr. Ladyman: It is expected that all retrospective review cases will be completed within two months of receipt of all the relevant documentation. I will be making a statement to the House on retrospective continuing care reviews in due course.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proportion of continuing care cases for which a review was pending at the end of March had been completed by 31 July; [186433]

(2) how many *(a)* families and *(b)* individuals have received compensation for wrongly-assessed continuing care; how many in each case are awaiting payment; and how much compensation has been paid so far. [186435]

Dr. Ladyman: In due course, I will make a statement to the House on the number of completed retrospective continuing care reviews and how many people have been granted recompense.

Dentistry

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to publish an order under section 60 of the Health Act 1999 to amend the Dentists Act 1984 to introduce Clinical Dental Technicians and other Professions Complementary to Dentistry. [186591]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We issued a draft of an Order for consultation on 30 July which, with other amendments to the Dentists Act 1984 to modernise the regulation of dentistry, would give the General Dental Council powers to register additional classes of professional complementary to dentistry including dental nurses, dental technicians and clinical dental technicians. Comments on the draft are requested by 30 October and it will subsequently be laid before Parliament for debate under the affirmative procedure. Subject to approval, we expect the Order to come into force during 2005.

Drug and Alcohol Programmes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take steps to ensure that places on drug and alcohol programmes are not disproportionately allocated to those convicted of criminal activity. [184232]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Treatment Agency is committed to ensuring that treatment services provide a quick and accessible service for all substance

misusers requiring treatment. Drug action teams have local responsibility for ensuring that treatment services are provided.

The Government are committed to doubling the numbers of drug misusers in treatment by 2008 and improving access into treatment from both community and criminal justice routes.

The Government are on track to meet this target. In 2002–03, there were 140,900 drug misusers in treatment.

NHS Dentists

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists there were in Suffolk in each of the last seven years. [187205]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of national health service dentists in Suffolk primary care trusts (PCTs) over the last seven years for which data are currently available is shown in the table.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Central Suffolk PCT[1]	22	24	26	27	24	23	24
Suffolk Coastal PCT[2]	29	29	33	32	30	27	27
Suffolk West PCT[3]	79	78	85	86	95	106	111

[1] Figures for Central Suffolk PCT are based on general dental service (GDS) contracts only. There are no personal dental service (PDS) dentists in this PCT area.

[2] Figures for Suffolk Coastal PCT are based on GDS contracts only. There are no PDS dentists in this PCT area.

[3] Figures are based on GDS and PDS contracts.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* adults and *(b)* children were waiting to be registered with an NHS dentist in each primary care trust in Suffolk in each of the last seven years. [187207]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Prison Health Care

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the differences between the interventions that can be made by a general practitioner when dealing with a patient and a prison doctor when dealing with a prisoner. [187376]

Dr. Ladyman: It would not be practicable to attempt to do so. The Prison Service's standard, "Health Services for Prisoners", has as its overall objective to provide prisoners with access to the same range and quality of services as the general public receives from the national health service. The prison health team is leading and managing a programme of work to develop health services for prisoners that are in line with NHS practice. However, the reality of the prison environment means that it may not always be possible exactly to replicate in prisons every treatment intervention that is available in the community.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what rights a prisoner has to access needle exchange schemes in prison. [187377]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no present plans to introduce needle exchange schemes in prisons, although the position is kept under review.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in what circumstances a prison doctor may order *(a)* physical restraints and *(b)* detention of a prisoner in a special cell. [187378]

Dr. Ladyman: The Prison Service's standard, "Health Services for Prisoners", provides that treatment and emergency care of patients who withhold consent is to be managed in accordance with Prison Service Instruction 38/2002, "Guidance on Consent to Medical Treatment". The associated Prison Service Information and Practice Note 3/2002 sets out the requirements and procedures for dealing with prisoners when there are restraint and control implications alongside health needs.

Prison Service Order 1600, "Use of Force", states that a prisoner may be placed in a special cell only on the prior authority of the governor or controller in charge of the establishment. If he/she cannot be contacted, the decision may be taken by the officer for the time being in charge of the establishment. A prison doctor must be notified as soon as possible and must examine the prisoner as soon as practicable for any clinical contra-indications.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what rights a prisoner has to medical confidentiality. [187585]

Dr. Ladyman: The duty of confidentiality arising from the common law of confidentiality, professional obligations and contracts of employment owed by all healthcare professionals to their patients extends to people in prison. The Prison Service's standard, "Health Services for Prisoners", stipulates that medical information on prisoners must be managed in accordance with relevant legislation, principally the Data Protection Act 1998, and the National Health Service Code of Practice on confidentiality.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what right a homosexual prisoner has to *(a)* HIV tests and *(b)* access to condoms. [187586]

Dr. Ladyman: Prisoners have access to HIV-test counselling and where appropriate, testing in the same way as members of the public. Prison doctors have been advised that they should make condoms available to any prisoner, on application, if in their clinical judgment there is a risk of infection from HIV.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what right a prisoner has to see *(a)* a doctor, *(b)* a dentist, *(c)* a chiropodist, *(d)* a gynaecologist and *(e)* a specialist or surgeon. [187587]

Dr. Ladyman: The overall objective of the Prison Service's standard, "Health Services for Prisoners", is to provide prisoners with access to the same range and quality of services as the general public receives from the national health service. Establishments are required to develop needs-based health services in partnership with local primary care trusts and other NHS agencies which

deliver effective, evidence-based care to individual prisoners and the prison population as a whole. Each establishment must have a clear and observed policy statement about what primary care, dental and other specialist services are available to prisoners, and who is responsible for providing them.

Renal Services

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to publish a delivery plan for the first two modules of the Renal Services national framework published on 14 January. [187588]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Part one of the national service framework for renal services sets out the steps the national health service can take to support delivery of the standards and markers of good practice. A separate delivery strategy is therefore unnecessary as it is integral to the document.

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects the third and fourth modules of the Renal Services national service framework on prevention and palliative care to be published. [187589]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Part two of the national service framework for Renal Services, covering prevention and end of life care, is in preparation and will be published in due course.

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who will have responsibility for monitoring the progress made by primary care trusts in implementing the five steps that need to be taken by 2006 which were outlined in the recently published first two modules of the Renal Services national service framework; and what action will be taken in the event that primary care trusts do not implement those five steps. [187590]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts are accountable to strategic health authorities for monitoring and managing progress against the national service framework (NSF) for renal services. Responsibility for assessing and reporting the performance of individual national health service bodies against national standards published in "National Standards, Local Action", including the adoption of best practice defined in NSFs, rests with the Healthcare Commission.

Waiting Lists

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many inpatients in Great Yarmouth had to wait more than *(a)* three, *(b)* six, *(c)* nine and *(d)* 12 months for treatment in each year since 1997; and what the percentage change in each year was in each case. [186718]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested for the residents of Great Yarmouth, Great Yarmouth Primary Care Trust (PCT), the latest data available, is shown in the table.

Count of elective in-year admissions (waiting list and booked cases) and percentage changes by grouped waiting time, 1996–97 to 2002–03

PCT code (PCT of residence) = 3GT (Great Yarmouth), national health service hospitals, England

	Up to 3 months	Percentage change (up to 3 months)	More than 3 up to 6 months	Percentage change (more than 3 up to 6 months)	More than 6 up to 9 months	Percentage change (more than 6 up to 9 months)	More than 9 up to 12 months	Percentage change (more than 9 up to 12 months)
1996–97	7,410	—	1,329	—	552	—	403	—
1997–98	7,032	−5.1	1,271	−4.4	603	9.2	442	9.7
1998–99	7,326	4.2	1,381	8.7	687	13.9	462	4.5
1999–2000	7,337	0.2	1,355	−1.9	554	−19.4	240	−48.1
2000–01	7,117	−3.0	1,224	−9.7	609	9.9	224	−6.7
2001–02	5,403	−24.1	1,036	−15.4	548	−10.0	260	16.1
2002–03	5,496	1.7	1,046	1.0	740	35.0	591	127.3

	More than 12 months	Percentage change (more than 12 months	Not known	Percentage change (not known)	Elective in-year admissions	Percentage change (elective in-year admissions)
1996–97	182	—	295	—	10,171	—
1997–98	297	63.2	288	−2.4	9,933	−2.3
1998–99	292	−1.7	132	−54.2	10,280	3.5
1999–2000	169	−42.1	137	3.8	9,792	−4.7
2000–01	233	37.9	156	13.9	9,563	−2.3
2001–02	212	−9.0	42	−73.1	7,501	−21.6
2002–03	294	38.7	44	4.8	8,211	9.5

Notes:

1. An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data year. Periods of care ongoing at the end of the data year (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

3. Time waited statistics from hospital episode statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period, whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.

Source:
HES, Department of Health.

West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* managers, *(d)* administrators and *(e)* midwives were employed by the West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust in each of the last seven years. [187201]

Dr. Ladyman: The numbers of doctors, nurses, managers, administrators and midwives employed by West Suffolk Hospitals National Health Service Trust in each of the last seven years are shown in the following tables.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS): medical and dental staff, and non-medical within West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust

Number (headcount)

	As at 30 September each year						
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Medical and dental staff	173	183	177	206	208	215	240
Non-medical staff	1,911	1,812	2,060	2,104	2,271	2,381	2,833
Of which:							
Professionally qualified clinical staff	906	846	963	993	1,103	1,175	1,343
Qualified nurses	688	612	719	728	832	860	1,001
Of which: midwives	14	12	10	9	8	91	96
Qualified scientific, technical and therapeutic (ST&T)	218	234	244	265	271	315	342
	685	666	790	765	802	834	965
Support to clinical staff	630	612	735	714	737	770	888
Support to doctors and nurses	55	54	55	51	65	64	77
Support to ST&T	320	300	307	346	366	372	525
NHS infrastructure support	78	87	95	99	114	112	112
Central functions	196	177	178	213	217	220	368
Hotel property and estate staff	46	36	34	34	35	40	45
Managers and senior managers							

Sources:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.
Department of Health non-medical workforce census.

NHS hospital and community health services: Total Qualified Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting staff and Managers and Support staff employed by the West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust in each specified year

Headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Total	1,911	1,812	2,060	2,104	2,271	2,381	2,833
Professionally qualified clinical staff total	906	846	963	993	1,103	1,175	1,343
Qualified nurses	688	612	719	728	832	860	1,001
Of which:							
Midwives[1]	14	12	10	9	8	91	96
Qualified ST&T	218	234	244	265	271	315	342
	685	666	790	765	802	834	965
Support to clinical staff Total	630	612	735	714	737	770	888
Support to doctors and nurses	55	54	55	51	65	64	77
Support to ST&T	320	300	307	346	366	372	525
NHS infrastructure support Total	78	87	95	99	114	112	112
Central functions	196	177	178	213	217	220	368
Hotel property and estate staff[2]	46	36	34	34	35	40	45
Managers and senior managers							

[1] Prior to the September 2002 census, midwives had previously been miscoded. Therefore, figures for 2002 and 2003 cannot be directly compared to earlier years.
[2] Between the 2002 and 2003 censuses some domestic services staff were transferred from external bodies to the direct employment of the Trust.
Source:
Department of Health non-medical workforce census.

West Suffolk NHS Hospitals Trust

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were carried out by the West Suffolk NHS Hospitals Trust in each year since 1997. [187195]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not held in the format requested. However, the number of finished consultant episodes (FCEs) for each year since 1997 for West Suffolk Hospitals National Health Service Trust is shown in the table.

FCEs, 1996–97 to 2002–03—all operation count of FCEs (four character OPCS4 codes A01.0-X59.9), provider code = RGR (West Suffolk NHS Hospitals Trust), NHS hospitals, England

	FCEs
1996–97	22,282
1997–98	24,286
1998–99	27,336
1999–2000	28,068
2000–01	29,095
2001–02	29,085
2002–03	30,878

Notes:
1. A FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
2. All operations count of episodes: these figures represent a count of all FCE's where the procedure was mentioned in any of the 12 (four prior to 2002–03) operation fields in a HES record. A record is only included once in each count, even if an operation is mentioned in more than one operation field of the record.
3. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:
Hospital episode statistics, Department of Health.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Bereavement Grant

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of providing a bereavement grant of £200 to surviving pensioner partners. [186566]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Estimated costs of and gainers from payment of 200 bereavement grant to surviving pensioner partners, Great Britain, deaths in 2005–06

	Gainers (Thousand)	*Costs (£ million)*
Bereavement grant, no offsetting savings	175	35
Bereavement grant, offset against funeral payments	160	32

Notes:
1. Estimated gainers to the nearest five thousand, costs to the nearest million pounds
2. Numbers of widowed pensioners estimated from GAD projections for England and Wales. Number of cohabiting bereaved estimated from household survey information.
3. Social Fund Funeral Payment information from Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System. It is assumed that 60 per cent. of pensioner claims are with respect to deceased partners.
4. No impact on income related benefits has been estimated. If the amount of the grant was regarded as capital there would be some offsetting reduction in expenditure on these benefits.
5. Take-up of entitlement is assumed to be 100 per cent.

Pension Protection

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether protected rights accrued prior to April 1997 by members of a contracted out occupational pension scheme are underwritten by the Government in the event of a sponsoring employer becoming insolvent and unable to meet those rights; whether any shortfall in those rights will be met by the Pension Protection Fund from April 2005 onwards; and if he will make a statement. [187829]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government do not underwrite protected rights. However, unless an offence has been committed, when a scheme winds-up it should have sufficient funds to pay the protected rights.

The Pension Protection Fund is designed to protect members of defined benefit schemes and defined benefit elements of hybrid schemes. Only in the case of pension scheme fraud will the PPF consider compensating members of defined contribution schemes. Such protection has been provided by the Pensions Compensation Board since April 1997 and the PPF will assume this role when it is up and running in April 2005.

Pensioner Benefits

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost of *(a)* raising the annual Christmas bonus to £79.60, *(b)* giving a winter fuel payment of £300 to every household with a member over 60 years and *(c)* giving a free television licence to every household with a member over 60 years. [187831]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table.

Proposal	*Estimated cost in 2004–05 (£ million)*
Raising the Christmas Bonus to £79.60	1,010
Giving a Winter Fuel Payment of £300 to every household with a member over 60 years	860
Giving a free television licence to every household with a member over 60 years	710

Notes:
1. All figures relate to GB payments only, are in 2004–05 price terms and are rounded to the nearest 10 million.
2. The Christmas Bonus is currently paid to people in receipt of a number of qualifying benefits, some of whom are of working age. These people are assumed to receive the Christmas Bonus at the new rate.
3. Estimated costs for giving Winter Fuel Payments of £300 to every household with a member over 60 years are based on the 2003–04 Pensioner Household data set which is derived from the 2003–04 Winter Fuel Payment administrative data set.
4. Estimated costs for free TV licences are based on the 2002–03 Family Resources and expenditure forecasts produced by the Department's Benefit and Forecasting Model Development Division.

Pensioners (Tax Payments)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners paid *(a)* income tax and *(b)* council tax in the latest year for which figures are available. [187355]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willets, dated 8 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions asking, for the latest year for which figures are available, for the total amount of *(a)* income tax and *(b)* council tax, paid by pensioners and the average tax per pensioner who paid each tax (187351), and how many pensioners paid each tax (187355).

For estimates relating to income tax please see table 3.12 "Income and tax for individuals aged 65 and above, by region and country, 2001–02" on the Inland Revenue website: www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/table-312-2001 -02.pdf. The information in this table relates to individual taxpayers, not households, who are aged 65 and above. This table does not include female taxpaying pensioners aged between 60 and 65. It shows there were about 4.1 million pensioners taxpayers aged 65 or over in the UK in 2001–02, with income tax liability of £8.2 billion. This gives an average tax of about £2,000 per pensioner taxpayer (aged 65 or over).

Estimates for council tax paid by pensioner households have been produced from the Office for National Statistics' analysis "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income" published on the National Statistics website on 6 May 2004 at: www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits

The analysis includes measures of income inequality for households in the United Kingdom as a whole based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey. This is a sample survey covering about 7,000 households in the UK and sample sizes for pensioner households are only sufficient to give very approximate estimates.

Estimates for 2002–03 suggest that that single and couple pensioner households in GB paid about £3.6 billion in council tax net of benefits and discounts. The average council tax paid by the approximately five million pensioner households (single and couples) who paid council tax (i.e. their council tax was greater than zero) was about £700 per year. Council tax is not paid in Northern Ireland. Net council tax is defined as gross council tax less benefits and discounts, where a household reports taking up a council tax benefit entitlement.

These estimates of numbers of pensioners and payments of council tax may not match population data or administrative payments data because of sample size and weighting issues, as well as possible inaccurate reporting by respondents.

Pensioner households have been defined as those where the Household Reference Person is retired or unoccupied and aged 65 or more and male, or 60 years of age or more and female, and economically inactive.

Detailed information on the definition of the Household Reference Person can be found in Appendix D of the document at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/Family_Spending_2002-03/Family_Spending_2002-03_revised.pdf

Pensions

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the level of basic state pension and state second pension *(a)* on retirement and *(b)* at age 75 for a man with annual earnings of (i) £10,000, (ii) £20,000 and (iii) £30,000 over a 40-year working life; and what the projected level of the guarantee part of the pension credit would be, assuming current policies continue; [186436]

(2) what estimate he has made of the state second pension accrual rate that would be necessary for the combined basic state pension and state second pension for a man with annual earnings of *(a)* £10,000, *(b)* £20,000 and *(c)* £30,000 over a 40-year working life to exceed the projected level of the guarantee part of the pension credit (i) on retirement and (ii) at age 75, assuming current policies continue; [186437]

(3) what assessment he has made of the state second pension accrual rate that would be necessary for the combined basic state pension and state second pension for a man with annual earnings of *(a)* £10,000, *(b)* £20,000 and *(c)* £30,000 over a 40-year working life to exceed the projected level of the guarantee part of the pension credit (i) on retirement and (ii) at age 75, assuming that the retirement pension is uprated by the average of earnings and price inflation. [186958]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is provided in the tables.

Table 1 shows the estimated amounts of basic state pension and state second pension that a single male with a 40-year working life, reaching state pension age in 2045 would receive.

Table 1

Annual earnings	*Total state pension (£)*
£10,000	200
£20,000	220
£30,000	229

Notes:

1. Figures are weekly amounts in 2004–05 price terms and are rounded to the nearest £1. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. The weekly level of guarantee credit when this individual reaches state pension age in 2045 is estimated at £236, and at £287 10 years later when the man would be 75. Actual pension credit entitlement depends on both state and private income, savings as well as household circumstances.
3. Currently basic and additional state pension are uprated in line with a minimum of prices and therefore remain constant in real terms.
4. Future policy on calculation and uprating of benefits is for future Parliaments to determine. For the purposes of these projections, it has been assumed that (except where stated) all elements of state pension are uprated in line with prices once in payment and the guarantee credit rises in line with average earnings. Long term assumptions are in line with those for Budget 2004.
5. It is assumed that a man starts paying Class 1 national insurance contributions at age 25 following nine years without any credits and contributes for 40 years.
6. An individual's earnings are assumed to rise in line with average long term earnings' growth and therefore increase in real terms.

Table 2 shows the underlying accrual rate of state second pension required for the basic and state second pension of a man with a 40-year working life reaching state pension age in 2045 to exceed the level of the guarantee credit, at state pension age and at age 75.

Table 2

Basic state pension	*Contributory pension above guarantee credit*	*Annual earnings in 2004* £10,000	£20,000	£30,000
		Required underlying rate of accrual in state second pension		
Increased in line with prices	At state pension age (percentage)	26.20	22.50	21.20
	At age 75 (percentage)	34.70	29.80	28.10
Increased by average of prices and earnings	At state pension age	Current	Current	Current
	At age 75 (percentage)	26.30	22.60	21.20

Notes:
1. Where the current state second pension accrual rate is sufficient to ensure the combined value of basic state pension and state second pension exceeds the value of the guarantee credit, this has been denoted as "Current".
2. The current underlying rate of accrual is 20 per cent. however state second pension is accrued at different rates for different bands of earnings. The rate shown here is the underlying rate that determines the rate in different bands. For example, the person earning £10,000 per year has an accrual rate in state second pension of 40 per cent., which is twice the underlying rate of 20 per cent.
3. Future policy on calculation and uprating of benefits is for future Parliaments to determine. For the purposes of these projections, it has been assumed that (except where stated) all elements of state pension are uprated in line with prices once in payment and the guarantee credit rises in line with average earnings. Long term assumptions are in line with those for Budget 2004.
4. It is assumed that a man starts paying Class 1 national insurance contributions at age 25 following nine years without any credits and contributes for 40 years.
5. An individual's earnings are assumed to rise in line with average long term earnings' growth and therefore increase in real terms.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Bridgwater *(a)* have been contacted about converting to direct payment, *(b)* are still to be contacted about converting to direct payment, *(c)* have not responded to the contact about converting to direct payment and *(d)* have chosen to open a Post Office Card Account. [186508]

Mr. Pond: We do not have the information in the format requested. This could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Key figures on the progress of conversion to Direct Payment are available in the Library updated every four weeks.

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the additional cost of uprating the basic state pension by the average of prices and earnings inflation annually for the next 50 years *(a)* gross and *(b)* net of savings in means-tested benefits and direct taxes. [186957]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is provided in the table:

£ billion

	(a) Gross cost	*(b) Net cost*
2005–06	0.3	0.1
2006–07	0.7	0.4
2007–08	1.0	0.5
2008–09	1.3	0.7
2009–10	1.7	0.9
2020–21	6.3	3.4
2055–56	32.7	17.4

1. Figures are costs for GB and Overseas in 2004–05 price terms, using the GDP deflator index, rounded to the nearest £100 million.
2. For part *(a)*, additional gross basic State Pension costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002 based population projections. Basic State Pension costs refer to the additional costs after allowing for consequential changes to National Insurance Fund benefits and non-means tested vote benefits.
3. For part *(b)*, costs net of income related benefits (savings credit, guarantee credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit) and income tax are calculated using the Department's policy simulation model for 2005–06 and 2006–07. For illustrative purposes it is assumed that the proportion of savings calculated for the 2006–07 year is constant for subsequent years.

TREASURY

EU Productivity

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what action has been set by the EU as highest priority for new member states in generating rapid economic reform. [186788]

Ruth Kelly: The new member states have been integrated into the Broad Guidelines of the Economic Policies of the member states and the Community, for the period 2003–05 (BEPGs).

The 2004 BEPG update highlighted country specific economic measures and priorities that each member state should undertake. Under "economic reforms to raise Europe's growth" potential, the Commission also suggested that the existing guidelines aiming at 'more and better jobs' and at 'increasing productivity and business dynamism' be implemented in a comprehensive and co-ordinated way by the new member states. Given the labour market situation is considerably worse in the new member states, the BEPGs recommend that policy efforts concentrate on a small number of priority areas that are likely to have the largest impact on labour market performances: ensuring that real wage developments reflect productivity growth; improving the financial incentives to work by reforming tax/benefit systems; improving skills and training, through the

provisions of lifelong learning facilities; and undertaking appropriate reforms of labour market regulations.

The BEPGs also indicate that R and D diffusion and technology transfers will be as important as R and D investment in accelerating the transition towards higher value-added activities. Sustaining a high level of foreign direct investment is essential, as is an increased responsiveness of the education and training systems to the changing needs of the labour market.

Bereavement Benefit

Angela Watkinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans the Government has to carry forward into the new regime existing Inland Revenue rules allowing schemes to pay a bereavement benefit of up to £2,500 on the death of a pensioner at any age to cover funeral costs; and whether there will be transitional protection arrangements. [186729]

Ruth Kelly: Under the simplified tax rules for pensions, lump sum death benefits may normally only be paid where the member is under the age of 75 at death. This maintains the principle that pensions are to provide for retirement and not a means for passing capital through the generations.

We have received representations from a small number of occupational pension schemes that pay a tax-free bereavement benefit of up to £2,500. We will be considering these representations carefully.

Child Poverty

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate the Government has made of *(a)* how many and *(b)* what percentage of children grew up in jobless households in (i) St. Helens and (ii) the UK, broken down by region, in each year since 1997. [186822]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Shaun Woodward, dated 8 September 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about children in workless households. (186822)

The attached table gives the available estimates of the number and the percentage of children resident in workless households in St. Helens Local Authority District and each region of the UK, for the three months ending May of each year from 1997 to 2004.

Estimates are taken from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling error. Estimates for St. Helens Local Authority District are based on small sample sizes and are subject to a high level of sampling variability. In particular, year-to-year changes are likely to show considerable volatility.

Number and percentage of children living in workless households [1,2] UK regions, 1997 to 2004 (three months periods ending in May) [3]

Region [4]	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Percentage [5]								
North East	23.3	25.2	25.3	22.6	22.0	19.8	24.9	23.3
North West	22.4	23.6	22.6	19.4	19.1	19.9	20.1	18.0
in which:								
St. Helens LAD [6]	39	34	20	19	14	8	23	29
Yorkshire and the Humber	20.0	20.4	18.5	18.7	16.6	20.9	16.7	15.8
East Midlands	16.3	16.9	14.8	13.1	15.6	14.2	16.0	12.2
West Midlands	18.3	17.9	18.4	17.0	16.5	17.9	15.6	14.3
East of England	14.2	13.5	12.8	11.2	10.1	10.7	10.7	12.4
London	25.8	26.5	27.5	24.7	25.1	26.4	23.9	25.7
South East	12.1	10.9	10.2	9.8	9.6	11.0	10.5	10.0
South West	13.4	13.3	12.9	11.1	10.5	11.1	11.4	11.1
Wales	21.8	20.7	21.2	20.3	21.6	19.7	17.5	19.4
Scotland	19.3	18.6	17.6	17.5	16.1	14.2	16.0	18.4
Northern Ireland	20.1	19.8	19.4	21.1	19.0	20.5	18.2	20.5
United Kingdom	18.7	18.7	18.2	16.8	16.4	17.1	16.5	16.4
Thousand								
North East	122	132	134	117	107	94	120	103
North West	319	335	314	271	264	277	283	245
in which:								
St. Helens LAD [6]	16	12	9	5	3	1	6	7
Yorkshire and the Humber	201	200	182	182	156	194	157	146
East Midlands	132	138	121	103	122	115	132	96
West Midlands	196	190	191	178	173	187	153	144
East of England	146	141	134	116	103	113	113	128
London	356	380	400	365	369	379	342	381
South East	182	164	157	151	149	165	149	146
South West	119	117	118	101	95	99	95	96
Wales	122	118	127	120	124	114	96	108
Scotland	189	181	162	155	145	123	145	155
Northern Ireland	87	83	76	79	74	78	72	79
United Kingdom	2,171	2,179	2,116	1,941	1,879	1,939	1,857	1,825

[1] Children refers to children under 16.

[2] Figures have not been adjusted for households with unknown economic activity status.

[3] Children living in workless households as a percentage of children living in all working-age households with known economic activity status.
[4] Estimates for St. Helens LAD are based on small sample sizes and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variability. They should be treated with caution.
[5] Not seasonally adjusted
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Civil Servants

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the latest available figures are for the cost of *(a)* a Grade 5 civil servant and *(b)* a Grade 7 civil servant for his Department; and if he will make a statement. [187086]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury's ranges F and E correspond to Grades 5 and 7 respectively. For a range F civil servant, the current average salary cost including London Allowances is £61,700, and the current average total staff cost including employer's NI and pension contributions is £78,700. For a range E civil servant, the current average salary cost including London Allowances is £42,200, and the current average total staff cost including employer's NI and pension contributions is £52,900.

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average length of service is for *(a)* a grade 5 civil servant and *(b)* a grade 7 civil servant in his Department; and if he will make a statement. [187091]

Ruth Kelly: In HM Treasury, the average length of Government service for a grade 5 civil servant is 16 years, and for a grade 7 civil servant is 10 years.

Climate Change Levy

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the operation of the Climate Change Levy, with particular reference to its effect on the Government's waste hierarchy. [186984]

John Healey: The Government continually review the use of all economic instruments, including the Climate Change Levy, across a broad range of areas. The first stage of the "Review of Environmental and Health Effects of Waste Management" was published earlier this year, and the second stage will be published shortly. Together these reports will help inform policy development and the wider debate on waste management, including the case for using economic instruments.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion, and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187319]

Ruth Kelly: There are five dedicated smoking rooms and one prayer room in 1 Horse Guards Road. Nursing mothers and pregnant women have access to the suite of welfare facilities provided.

Household Saving

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect of the removal of advanced dividend tax credit on levels of household saving. [186542]

Ruth Kelly: I believe the hon. Gentleman is referring to the removal of payable tax credits on dividends. This was one element of a package of measures, including lower corporation tax rates and increased capital allowances, designed to encourage investment and economic growth. Therefore it would be misleading to assess the impact of one measure in isolation.

Furthermore, the Government has introduced a number of measures to encourage saving since 1999, such as reducing the rate of tax on dividends from 20 per cent. to 10 per cent. for starting and basic rate taxpayers; introducing the lower rate of tax for savings of 10 per cent. and the Individual Savings Account. The ISA has been very successful, with around 15 million savers—one in three adults—subscribing around £140 billion into their ISAs since they came into effect in April 1999.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect of reducing the maximum investment limits on Individual Savings Accounts on household saving. [186543]

Ruth Kelly: ISAs form one part of the Governments approach to savings linking with policies such as the new Child Trust Fund, reductions in the tax on Capital Gains for business assets from 40 per cent. to 10 per cent. and radical simplification of pensions with a lifetime limit of £1.5m.

A reduction from £7,000 to £5,000 a year may affect the allocation of savings between savings products for those currently investing more than £5,000 a year in an ISA. The overall effect on such savers behaviour is uncertain. We shall continue to keep the approach to savings policy under review.

Household Waste (Charges)

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the fiscal implications of introducing variable charges for the collection of domestic household waste. [187277]

John Healey: The Strategy Unit report "Waste not, Want not" published in November 2002, recommended that local authorities that wish to take forward household incentive—including charging—schemes to help reduce waste volumes and increase recycling should be allowed to do so.

In response, the Government undertook to carry out further work on household incentives before reaching a decision on whether to extend the powers of local authorities and introduce pilot schemes. This work—in consultation with the Local Government Association

and local authority practitioners—looks in particular at the practicalities of operating any such schemes, the benefits they could deliver and how potential disadvantages might be overcome.

Inheritance Tax Act

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much *(a)* gross and *(b)* net revenue has been raised to date by the repeal under the Finance Act 1998 of section 26 of the Inheritance Tax Act 1984. [187474]

Dawn Primarolo: None. Section 26 was redundant following the removal of the monetary limit which originally applied to relief for charitable bequests under what is now s.23 of the Inheritance Tax Act 1984. A gift or bequest which could previously have been relieved under s.26 can now enjoy relief either under s.23 or under s.25 (gifts for national purposes).

Iraq (Departmental Secondments)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the secondments of staff of the Treasury and its agencies to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq up to the transfer to the Iraqi Government; what their duties were in each case; and how many secondees continue to serve that government. [182105]

Ruth Kelly: Five Treasury officials were seconded to the Coalition Provisional Authority to support the formulation and execution of economic policy in Iraq. The Treasury officials mainly worked on budgetary issues, including preparation of the 2003 and 2004 Iraqi Budgets, execution of the budget, including payment of public sector salaries and pensions, and the new financial management law. They also worked on the Iraqi currency exchange.

At present there are no Treasury secondees serving the Iraqi Government.

Landfill Tax

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the implications of his Spending Review for the *(a)* speed and *(b)* quantum of future increases in the rate of landfill tax. [186985]

John Healey: The Chancellor makes decisions in the Spending Review based on a wide range of policy issues and considerations. The Government are committed to a waste management strategy which makes use of a range of policies, including spending, regulation and taxation. The standard rate of landfill tax is due to increase by £3/tonne next year and by at least £3/tonne in subsequent years on the way to a medium to long-term rate of £35/tonne. Any decisions about the rate of increases in the landfill tax will be made as part of the Budget process, taking account of all relevant policy measures and a range of social, environmental and economic factors.

National Insurance Number

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what uses of the national insurance number other than those connected with tax or benefits are authorised; whether he intends to make the national insurance number a general identifier under the Data Protection Act 1998; whether he seeks the views of the Information Commissioner when approving additional uses of the national insurance number; and if he will make a statement. [185952]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions response of 14 April 2003 to your previous question. Additions to the list of authorised users of the national insurance number for non-tax or benefit purposes since that date will be placed in the Library.

Responsibility for authorising use of the national insurance number is held jointly by Inland Revenue and the Department of Work and Pensions who liaise with the Information Commissioner on data protection issues. We have no plans to register the national insurance number as a general identifier under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Non-North Sea Corporation Tax Revenues

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assumptions about the level of employer contributions to self-administered pension schemes informed his forecasts for non-North Sea corporation tax revenues in *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06, *(c)* 2006–07, *(d)* 2007–08 and *(e)* 2008–09 as set out in Table C9 of the Budget 2004 Red Book. [186784]

Ruth Kelly: The level of pension contributions in the economic forecast underlying the Budget 2004 non-North Sea corporation tax forecasts is circumscribed by the assumption made about the factor income shares of GDP. The assumption used is that in the medium-term, when GDP grows at the underlying trend rate, the factor shares of GDP are broadly constant. This assumption was re-examined by the National Audit Office for Budget 2004, and their conclusion was that it remained a reasonable one.

Oil Exploration Expenditure Supplement

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will raise the oil exploration expenditure supplement; [187513]

(2) what action he plans to take in response to increasing oil prices. [187511]

John Healey: The Government's focus since 3 June has been on OPEC and oil producers and their responsibilities to meet their own targets on sustainable oil prices. With the next meeting of OPEC Ministers now moved from July to September, and in light of the continuing uncertainty in the oil market, the Government announced on 20 July that it had decided to review the planned increase in fuel duty at the Pre-Budget Report.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer will report back on this issue at the time of the Pre-Budget report. Other taxes, including the oil exploration expenditure supplement, will be kept under review by the Chancellor as part of the normal Budget cycle.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes in revenues the Treasury expects as a result of rising oil prices. [187512]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Waveney on 21 June (*Official Report*, 1205W).

Older Workers

Mr. Tony Clarke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people aged over 65 years have been in work in Northampton, South in each year since 1997. [186463]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Tony Clarke, dated 8 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment. (186463)

The attached table gives the available estimates of the number of people aged 65 and over in employment in the Northampton South Parliamentary Constituency for the twelve months ending February in 1997 and each year from 1999 to 2003. However, these estimates are subject to a higher degree of sampling and rounding error than usual, and for this reason the table also includes estimates for the East Midlands region.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Estimated number of people aged 65 and over in employment, East Midlands region and Northampton South constituency, 12 months ending February of 1997 and of each year from 1999 to 2003

Thousand

Year[1]	East Midlands	Northampton, South[2]
1997	29	1
1999	29	1
2000	29	0
2001	33	2
2002	29	1
2003	33	2

[1] Data not available for 1998.
[2] Estimates are based on small sample sizes and are subject to a higher than usual degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey.

PA Spiral Case

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to create a structure to remedy the position in the case of the Names who were victims of fraud in the PA Spiral case (Thomas LJ in Sphere Drake v EIU and SCB); and if he will make a statement. [186574]

Ruth Kelly: It is understood that this particular matter is still before the courts and the Government does not comment on matters that are before the courts. There are existing remedies which victims of fraud can seek to obtain through the courts.

Pensioners (Tax Payments)

Mr. David Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total amount of *(a)* income and *(b)* council tax paid by pensioners was in the latest year for which figures are available; and what the average payment was per pensioner who pays each tax. [187351]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Willets, dated 8 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions asking, for the latest year for which figures are available, for the total amount of *(a)* income tax and *(b)* council tax, paid by pensioners and the average tax per pensioner who paid each tax (187351), and how many pensioners paid each tax (187355).

For estimates relating to income tax please see table 3.12 "Income and tax for individuals aged 65 and above, by region and country, 2001–02" on the Inland Revenue website: www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/table-312-2001-02.pdf. The information in this table relates to individual taxpayers, not households, who are aged 65 and above. This table does not include female taxpaying pensioners aged between 60 and 65. It shows there were about 4.1 million pensioners taxpayers aged 65 or over in the UK in 2001–02, with income tax liability of £8.2 billion. This gives an average tax of about £2,000 per pensioner taxpayer (aged 65 or over).

Estimates for council tax paid by pensioner households have been produced from the Office for National Statistics' analysis "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income" published on the National Statistics website on 6 May 2004 at: www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits

The analysis includes measures of income inequality for households in the United Kingdom as a whole based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey. This is a sample survey covering about 7,000 households in the UK and sample sizes for pensioner households are only sufficient to give very approximate estimates.

Estimates for 2002–03 suggest that that single and couple pensioner households in GB paid about £3.6 billion in council tax net of benefits and discounts. The average council tax paid by the approximately five million pensioner households (single and couples) who paid council tax (i.e. their council tax was greater than zero) was about £700 per year. Council tax is not paid in Northern Ireland. Net council tax is defined as gross council tax less benefits and discounts, where a household reports taking up a council tax benefit entitlement.

These estimates of numbers of pensioners and payments of council tax may not match population data or administrative payments data because of sample size and weighting issues, as well as possible inaccurate reporting by respondents.

Pensioner households have been defined as those where the Household Reference Person is retired or unoccupied and aged 65 or more and male, or 60 years of age or more and female, and economically inactive.

Detailed information on the definition of the Household Reference Person can be found in Appendix D of the document at the following address:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/Family_Spending_2002-03/Family_Spending_2002-03_revised.pdf

Pensions (Tax Relief)

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimates he has made of the impact on public funds in tax relief of the introduction of the £1.4 million limit on pension savings; and if he will make a statement; [186635]

(2) what estimates he has made of the cost to public funds in tax relief of introducing a limit on pension savings of *(a)* £1.3 million, *(b)* £1 million, *(c)* £750,000, *(d)* £500,000 and *(e)* an amount reflecting a pension just above benefit levels; and if he will make a statement. [186636]

Ruth Kelly: Available estimates of the Exchequer cost of the introduction of the new simplified tax regime for pensions are contained in paragraph 48 of "Simplifying the taxation of pensions regulatory impact assessment", a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

The £1.5 million lifetime allowance to be introduced from April 2006 broadly replicates the maximum fund an individual can accrue under the current occupational pension rules. The exchequer impact of introducing a lower allowance would depend upon uncertain changes in the pensions savings of individuals at or approaching the lower lifetime allowance and any consequent changes to other parts of the new regime resulting from a lower allowance. Due to the uncertainty of estimating the size and direction of these behavioural effects no estimates are available.

Population Register

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the savings to public funds arising from *(a)* the implementation of the population register database by the Registrar General, *(b)* the proposed introduction of an identity card by the Home Office and *(c)* the data-sharing proposals of the Department for Constitutional Affairs. [185954]

Ruth Kelly: The potential cost savings from the Citizen Information Project are being developed. No decision has yet been taken as to whether or not the population register should proceed to implementation but we could expect benefits to arise both in the form of efficiency savings and in improved public services.

There have been discussions between the Treasury and the Home Office on the implications of Identity Cards dating back to before the publication of the consultation paper on entitlement cards and identity fraud. However, the introduction of Identity Cards is a long-term undertaking, and discussions will continue. HM Treasury will continue to be involved with ongoing analysis.

The DCA Legal Guidance on Public Sector Data Sharing sets out the legal and regulatory framework governing data sharing. The Government are not able to estimate savings to public funds that may result from the better understanding of this framework which has followed the publication of the Guidance.

With-profits Fund Schemes

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what plans *(a)* he and *(b)* the Financial Services Authority has for further regulation of with-profits fund schemes offered by insurance companies; and if he will make a statement; [186628]

(2) when the consultation by the Financial Services Authority on Treating With-Profits Customers Fairly, CP 207, will conclude; when the results will be published; and if he will make a statement; [186629]

(3) what research has been undertaken into the impact on mutual insurers of the proposals contained in the consultation on Treating With-Profits Customers Fairly; and if he will make a statement. [186630]

Ruth Kelly: Insurance regulation is the responsibility of the Financial Services Authority (FSA).

The FSA published Consultation Paper (CP) 04/14 on 19 August 2004 which provides feedback on CP 207 and makes revised proposals for further consultation. The FSA will continue to consult widely about its proposals, including among the mutual insurance sector. CP 04/14 specifically addresses a number of points made by firms within the mutual insurance sector in response to the first consultation.

The FSA will continue to monitor the impact on firms and consumers of existing and future changes to with-profits regulation.

Work Force Statistics

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate the Government have made of the percentage of people aged 50 to 65 who were *(a)* registered as unemployed and *(b)* economically inactive in (i) St. Helens and (ii) the UK, broken down by region, in each year since 1997. [186940]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Shaun Woodward, dated 8 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment and economic inactivity for people aged 50 to 65. (186940)

The attached table gives estimates for the percentages of people aged 50 to 65 who are *(a)* unemployed and *(b)* economically inactive in the St. Helens Local Authority District and the UK by region for the three months ending in May of each year from 1997 to 2004.

Estimates are taken from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability. Estimates for UK regions and for St. Helens Local Authority District are based on small sample sizes and are subject to a high level of sampling variability. In particular, year- to-year changes are likely to show considerable volatility.

Percentages of people aged 50 to 65 who are unemployed[1] or economically inactive[2]—UK regions, 1997–2004 (three-month periods ending in May)[3]

percentage

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Unemployed[1]								
North East	4	4	4	4	2	3	3	3
North West	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	1
in which St. Helens LAD	3	2	2	4	4	[4]	[4]	[4]
Yorkshire and Humberside	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
East Midlands	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2

Percentages of people aged 50 to 65 who are unemployed[1] or economically inactive[2]—UK regions, 1997–2004 (three-month periods ending in May)[3]

percentage

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
West Midlands	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	2
Eastern	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
London	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
South East	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
South West	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
Wales	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	2
Scotland	4	3	3	4	3	3	2	2
Northern Ireland	4	4	2	3	3	2	3	2
United Kingdom	3.4	2.8	2.8	2.6	1.9	2.2	2.0	1.9
Economically inactive[2]								
North East	50	52	51	49	47	49	47	49
North West	45	47	44	44	43	43	39	40
in which St. Helens LAD	54	50	49	50	46	39	51	49
Yorkshire and Humberside	44	42	44	40	41	40	38	37
East Midlands	38	38	39	36	37	36	35	36
West Midlands	38	38	37	39	39	37	37	37
Eastern	37	33	35	34	32	32	32	31
London	38	40	38	38	37	37	37	36
South East	34	32	31	32	32	31	31	30
South West	35	35	34	36	36	35	35	33
Wales	48	49	48	48	47	47	43	42
Scotland	45	45	44	44	41	42	39	38
Northern Ireland	48	50	48	48	49	46	43	45
United Kingdom	40.4	40.2	39.6	39.3	38.5	37.9	36.6	36.3

[1] Unemployed as a per cent. of total population aged 50 to 65.
[2] Economically inactive as a per cent. of total population aged 50 to 65.
[3] Not seasonally adjusted
[4] LFS sample included no cases on which an estimate could be based.

Important Note:
Estimates for UK regions and for St. Helens Local Authority District are based on small sample sizes and are subject to a high level of sampling variability. They should be treated with caution. In particular, year-to-year changes are likely to show considerable volatility, and should not be used is isolation from the estimates for a sequence of years.

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

DEFENCE

AAC Dishforth

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the security review at AAC Dishforth. [186619]

Mr. Ingram: In March 2004, a security review was undertaken at AAC Dishforth. The final report has been produced and its recommendations are currently being considered, while we await the outcome of the Defence Airfield Review.

Armoured Battlegroup Support Vehicle Programme

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the decision to halt the Armoured Battlegroup Support Vehicle programme. [186639]

Mr. Ingram: There has been no decision to halt the Armoured Battlegroup Support Vehicle (ABSV) programme. The project remains in its concept phase with all options under consideration.

Civil Service Relocation

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what non-uniformed staff are employed by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each of its agencies, broken down by (i) region and (ii) country; what relocations are pending; and what contribution he plans to make to the implementation of the Lyons Review. [186847]

Mr. Caplin: The total number of full-time equivalent MOD civilian staff by region and country as at 1 July 2004, including staff employed by agencies and trading funds, is shown as follows:

	Number
MOD total	108,990
England	71,370
London	6,420
South East	17,110
East	7,660
South West	23,920
West Midlands	6,430
East Midlands	2,520
Yorkshire and The Humber	3,940
North West	2,870
North East	500
Scotland	7,160
Wales	4,170
Northern Ireland	3,450
Elsewhere[1]	22,840

[1] Comprised of MOD civilian staff located outside the UK and unallocated staff.

The number of full-time equivalent MOD civilian staff in each agency and trading fund in England, broken down by Government office region as at July 1 2004, is shown as follows:

	England	London	South East	East	South West	West Midlands	East Midlands	Yorks and Humber	North West	North East
AFPA	130	—	60	—	80	—	—	—	—	—
ATRA	3,780	40	1,390	110	1,050	130	60	980	20	—
BFPO	330	250	40	20	20	10	—	—	—	—
DASA	180	60	10	—	110	—	—	—	—	—
DBA	590	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	590	—
DCSA	2,920	280	440	510	1,610	60	—	10	10	—
DDA	150	—	70	10	20	10	—	20	—	—
DE	2,020	70	470	370	370	530	60	130	10	10
DGIA	790	560	70	160	—	—	—	—	—	—
DISC	150	—	—	150	—	—	—	—	—	—
DMETA	600	90	440	10	10	40	—	10	—	—
DPA	3,570	20	100	70	3,160	40	10	10	150	20
DSDA	3,330	—	1,190	40	440	1,340	10	40	270	—
DTMA	280	—	150	—	—	100	—	—	20	—
DVA	330	—	—	—	—	—	—	330	—	—
DSA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
DYRMS	120	—	120	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MSA	260	—	30	—	220	—	—	—	—	—
MDP	5,450	590	1,760	630	1,400	290	80	530	130	40
NRTA	970	20	790	—	130	10	10	—	10	10
PPA	790	—	—	—	440	—	—	—	350	—
QVS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TGDA	2,020	20	360	30	150	760	450	210	30	10
SCE	20	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—
VA	730	—	20	—	20	—	10	10	670	—
WSA	3,540	—	700	30	2,790	—	—	—	10	—
ABRO	1,680	—	—	100	620	840	—	110	—	—
DARA	860	—	860	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
DSTL	3,010	690	1,100	—	980	220	10	—	—	—
MET	1,620	10	260	40	1,150	30	60	30	40	—
HYDRO	910	—	—	—	910	—	—	—	—	—

Full-time equivalent is a measure of the size of the work force that takes account of the fact that some people work part-time.

Figures have been individually rounded to the nearest 10, so may not sum to the totals shown.

The number of full-time equivalent MOD civilian staff in each agency and trading Fund broken down by country as at 1 July 2004 is shown as follows:

	Total	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	Elsewhere
AFPA	160	130	30	—	—	—
ATRA	4,020	3,780	60	140	10	20
BFPO	350	330	10	—	—	10
DASA	180	180	—	—	—	—
DBA	600	590	—	—	—	10
DCSA	3,200	2,920	100	—	—	170
DDA	180	150	10	—	—	10
DE	2,510	2,020	230	30	20	220
DGIA	800	790	—	—	—	20
DISC	150	150	—	—	—	—
DMETA	610	600	—	—	—	10
DPA	3,820	3,570	100	10	—	150
DSDA	4,330	3,330	720	250	—	30
DTMA	350	280	20	—	—	60
DVA	330	330	—	—	—	—
DSA	60	—	—	—	—	50
DYRMS	120	120	—	—	—	—
MSA	270	260	10	—	—	—
MDP	6,920	5,450	1,290	140	—	40
NRTA	1,010	970	20	10	20	10
PPA	800	790	—	—	—	10
QVS	70	—	70	—	—	—
TGDA	2,250	2,020	50	170	—	10
SCE	980	20	—	—	—	960
VA	830	730	20	10	10	70
WSA	4,800	3,540	900	190		180

	Total	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	Elsewhere
ABRO	1,780	1,680	100	—	—	—
DARA	3,620	860	290	2,440	—	20
DSTL	3,160	3,010	—	—	—	140
MET	1,830	1,620	120	30	20	40
HYDRO	910	910	—	—	—	—

Key to tables:
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency
Army Training and Recruitment Agency
British Forces Post Office
Defence Analytical Services Agency
Defence Bills Agency
Defence Communications Service Agency
Defence Dental Agency
Defence Estates
Defence Geographical and Imagery Intelligence Agency
Defence Intelligence and Security Centre
Defence Medical and Training Agency
Defence Procurement Agency
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency
Defence Transport and Movements Agency
Defence Vetting Agency
Disposal Services Agency
Duke of York's Royal Military School
Medical Supplies Agency
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency
Pay and Personnel Agency
Queen Victoria School
RAF Training Group Defence Agency
Service Children's Education
Veterans Agency
Warship Support Agency
Army Base Repair Organisation
Defence Aviation Repair Agency
Defence Science and Technology Laboratory
Meteorological Office
UK Hydrographic Office

The Ministry of Defence keeps the size and location of its bases under constant review. Building on initial work that has been done to identify the MOD's core sites, the Department is undertaking further work to examine where estate rationalisation may be possible. This work is consistent with the Department's contribution to the Government's Independent Review of Public Sector Rationalisation—the "Lyons Review".

On 21 July we announced a number of specific reviews. These were: a review of the Defence Logistics Organisation's locations; a review of Defence Airfields; and a review of Royal Marines Basing, each of which may result in the relocation of civilian personnel. In addition, a number of relocations relating to the RAF's review of Air Combat Service Units and other minor units were announced.

The MOD submitted a significant package of relocation proposals to the Lyons Review, which would result in around 3,900 service and civilian personnel relocating out of London and the South East by 2010.

The proposals consist of the closure of Woolwich Station in Greenwich, the closure of the Army Technical Foundation College (ATFC) at Arborfield, relocation of the Disposal Services Agency (DSA) to the West Country, collocation of Defence Medical Services Training Centre (DMSTC) facilities and rationalisation of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratories (DSTL).

Defence Spending Review

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the implications of *(a)* the Defence Spending Review and *(b)* the proposals set out in his oral statement on future capabilities for defence on 21 July for (i) the Typhoon project and (ii) the Apache project; and if he will make a statement. [186668]

Mr. Ingram: As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence set out in his statement on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–70, Typhoon is an essential element of our plans to transform the armed forces for the 21st century. The aircraft is already demonstrating excellent performance in service and we intend to place the order for the second tranche as soon as negotiations on price and performance have been successfully completed.

The entry to service of the Attack helicopter represents an essential step in the Army's transition towards an increasingly manoeuvrist approach to warfare, and is therefore fully in line with the proposals in the Defence White Paper published in July, "Delivering Security in a Changing World". The Attack Helicopter will significantly improve our ability to engage land targets with precision and at range.

Infantry

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many infantry were employed by the British Army, broken down by rank, excluding vacancies according to the latest available statistics; and what projections for numbers of infantry were made for the Defence Review. [187008]

Mr. Caplin: The trained Infantry Strengths as at 1 July 2004 are as follows:

Rank	Trained
Officers	
Lt Col	360
Lt Col (Special List)	5
Major	1,020
Captain	1,025
Lt	495
2Lt	50
Officer total	2,955
Other ranks	
WO1	150
WO2	855
SSGT	955
SGT	1,825
CPL	3,615
LCPL	3,765
PTE	11,615
Soldier total	22,780
Infantry trained strength total	25,735

Note:
Totals have been rounded to the nearest five.

The manpower released from the reduction of four infantry battalions equates to approximately 2,500 posts, all of which will be reinvested back in to the Army. While a proportion of these will be reallocated back into the infantry itself to develop more robust and resilient establishments, others will be reinvested in the most heavily committed specialists such as logisticians, engineers, signallers and intelligence. Exact details in terms of the numbers allocated to each individual Arms and Service have yet to be fully worked through and finalised.

Missiles

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the effectiveness of ship borne surface-to-surface missiles. [171863]

Mr. Ingram: The Harpoon anti-ship missile, fitted to Type 22 and Type 23 frigates, provides our current surface-to-surface ship borne missile capability. The Ministry of Defence regularly assesses the effectiveness of such weapons systems, through a combination of routine trials, research and analysis and as a normal part of our review of the equipment programme.

In terms of potential future capabilities, the Department is currently conducting a balance of investment study into a range of possible land attack options. This includes consideration of the utility of ship borne surface-to-surface missiles on the Future Surface Combatant (FSC) and Type 45 Destroyers. The next stage of this study is expected to report this autumn.

Operation Majestic Eagle

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* ships and *(b)* personnel (i) were originally requested to take part and (ii) took part in Operation Majestic Eagle. [186643]

Mr. Ingram: The United States request to take part in Exercise Majestic Eagle did not specify a particular level of involvement. Because Majestic Eagle took place during the terminal stages of the Royal Navy's extensive AURORA 04 programme of exercises with US forces, United Kingdom participation was limited to HMS Invincible, which took part via satellite link while returning from AURORA 04.

Operational Deployments

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the last three operational deployments and the length between each has been for *(a)* 1 Para, *(b)* 2 Para, *(c)* 3 Para and *(d)* 7th Armoured Brigade; and how many personnel have been medically downgraded in each. [187127]

Mr. Ingram: Details of the last three operational deployments of each of the units, and the length between each of those deployments, are shown in the following table.

Unit	*Date*	*Location*	*Interval (months)*
1 PARA	May and August 2000 (2 short deployments)	Sierra Leone	9
	January to June 2001	Northern Ireland	4
	January to June 2003	Iraq	19
2 PARA	January to March 2002	Afghanistan	2
	September 2002 to March 2003	Northern Ireland	6
	December 2003 to April 2004	Iraq	8
3 PARA	January to June 2002	Northern Ireland	18
	January to June 2003	Iraq	7
	May 2004 to date	Northern Ireland	11
7 Armoured Brigade	May to November 2000	Kosovo	31
	May to November 2001	Kosovo	6
	January to June 2003	Iraq	13

The details of those personnel classed as non-FE, as at 1 July 2004, are included as follows. Non-FE status signifies some form of temporary medical downgrading, although it should be noted that while an individual is considered to be medically downgraded, they may still be liable for deployment, depending on the reason for the downgrading, the nature and location of the deployment, and medical advice.

Unit	*Non-FE total*	*Establishment total*	*Percentage of establishment*
1 Para	45	687	7.3
2 Para	20	687	2.9
3 Para	50	687	7.2
7 Armoured Brigade	415	6,575	6.3

Policies (Environmental Impact)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many new policy proposals or significant changes in policy were produced in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; how many of these were screened for their environmental impacts; and how many were the subject of separate environmental appraisals. [185097]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has produced the following new policy proposals and changes to policy in the periods 2002–03 and 2003–04:

The Strategic Defence Review: A New Chapter (2002);

Delivering Security in a Changing World (Defence White Paper, 2003); and

Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities (2004).

These policies have not been screened for their environmental impacts or been subject to separate environmental appraisals.

To address the requirements for policy level environmental appraisal the Department worked with Defra to trial the Integrated Policy Appraisal tool (IPA). The IPA tool has been integrated into

Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and the Department is now taking forward environmental policy appraisal work in this context in order to meet policy appraisal commitments.

The MOD continues to carry out sustainability appraisal and more detailed environmental assessments as a result of the implementation of strategic policy decisions, for example, those arising from the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Strategic Defence Review (SDR), published in July 2000. This work is supported by the Ministry of Defence's, Sustainability Appraisal Handbook (2003), which underpins the Department's commitment to the environmental aspects of sustainable development as expressed in the Secretary of State's Policy Statement, July 2000.

Rosyth Shipyard

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department plans to contribute to the costs of running the Rosyth Shipyard. [186644]

Mr. Ingram: No, there are no plans for the Ministry of Defence to contribute to the costs of running Rosyth Dockyard. As with any company, Babcock Support Services Ltd., the owners of Rosyth Royal Dockyard, must recover their costs through their various income streams, in accordance with their contracts and with accounting conventions.

Wind Farms (West Somerset)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what further consultations there have been on the positioning of wind farms near the helicopter base on the West Somerset coast. [186496]

Mr. Caplin: Consultations are in progress with the developer about the positioning of a wind farm near Hinkley Point Power Station. This has implications for the Klue Range at Kilve Bend.

We are aware that our comments on the planning application need to be with West Somerset district council within 21 days of 17 August 2004.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Terrorist Threat

9. **David Burnside:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the present *(a)* Republican and *(b)* Loyalist terrorist threat in the Province. [187651]

Mr. Pearson: Dissident republicans are a threat, although many of their activities have been thwarted, intercepted or nullified by the security forces. We remain concerned at the level of paramilitary activity and control exercised within communities by both Republican and Loyalist paramilitary organisations. The Independent Monitoring Commission will report again on this area next month.

Security Situation

10. **Mr. Mackay:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the security situation in the Province. [187652]

Mr. Pearson: The security situation is relatively benign. While there was some regrettable violence at the Ardoyne the marching season has been largely peaceful and interface areas have also been fairly quiet.

Dissident Republicans remain a threat and have been targeting members of the District Policing Partnerships and disrupting traffic by hoax devices, but their activities have for the most part been thwarted, intercepted or nullified by good policing operations.

Ministerial Accountability

11. **Mr. Andrew Turner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what mechanisms are in place to ensure the accountability of his Department's Ministers to electors in Northern Ireland. [187653]

Mr. Paul Murphy: We remain focused on our main aim of restoring devolved Government to Northern Ireland, on a stable and inclusive basis, with institutions accountable to local Ministers.

Higher Education

12. **Mr. Hume:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time undergraduate university students normally domiciled in Northern Ireland will be at university in the academic year 2004–05; and how many full-time undergraduate university places are available in Northern Ireland. [187654]

Mr. Gardiner: It is too early to say how many Northern Ireland domiciled students will take up full-time undergraduates places in 2004–05, the clearing process is not yet complete and data on student placements will not be available to the Department until late 2005. There are some 28,000 full-time undergraduate places planned for the university sector in Northern Ireland this year.

Decommissioning

13. **David Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent assessment has been made of the *(a)* value and *(b)* effectiveness of the decommissioning process. [187655]

Mr. Pearson: In 1998 the Loyalist Volunteer Force carried out an act of decommissioning in Northern Ireland. The IRA have carried out three acts of decommissioning (2001, 2002 and 2003). In the latest act of decommissioning by the IRA (2003) the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning reported that the arms comprised light, medium and heavy ordnance and associated munitions. They included automatic weapons, ammunition, explosives and explosive material.

These acts of decommissioning have put arms beyond use which otherwise could have been used in acts of terrorism. This is the start of a process that will ultimately result in all paramilitary weaponry being put beyond use and return Northern Ireland to a normal democratic society.

Advisers/Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much his Department and its agencies and non-departmental public bodies spent on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years. [172435]

Mr. Pearson: The expenditure incurred by the Department, its agencies and non-departmental public bodies on external consultants and advisers in each of the last three years is as follows:

Total Department, agencies and NDPBs

	Total (£)
2001–02	31,274,849
2002–03	35,267,313
2003–04	43,436,915

Antiville Estate, Larne

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he plans to take a decision on the proposal by the Board of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to demolish properties in the Antiville Estate in Larne. [187714]

Mr. Spellar: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive's proposals to demolish properties on the Antiville Estate were received by the Department for Social Development (DSD) on 30 July 2004. These are currently being considered in terms of their technical merit, value for money and their potential to achieve the regeneration objectives. I am aware that the proposals have generated a considerable amount of local concern and, in view of this, no decision will be taken until DSD has received assurances that local concerns have been addressed.

Careers Strategy

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made on the Careers Strategy following the recommendations contained in the Valuing Careers Strategy. [178240]

Mr. Pearson: "Valuing Carers" was published in April 2002 and contained 19 recommendations for providing a range of support services to carers.

An inter-departmental group, led by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, was tasked with taking forward the recommendations contained in "Valuing Carers", and their work has formed the basis of a draft Strategy for Carers. Departmental officials are currently drawing up the final draft of the Strategy, which will then be referred to the Under-Secretary, my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon (Angela Smith), for consideration and approval.

Circuses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what authority local councils in Northern Ireland have to ban animal based circuses from their property. [187456]

Angela Smith: The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 requires places where circuses (and other types of public entertainment) are to be held to have entertainments licences. The licences are granted by district councils and are subject to certain terms, conditions and restrictions that councils may specify. Councils do not have powers under the 1985 Order to refuse entertainments licences in respect of places where circuses are to be held simply because they involve animals. However, like all landowners, councils can decide whether circuses, or other types of public entertainment, may be held on their properties.

Civil Servants

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many recruitment exercises for Grade 5 civil servants have been undertaken in Northern Ireland in the last two years; who carried them out; and what the cost was in each case. [186020]

Mr. Pearson: In 2002–03, 13 competitions were run to fill vacancies at Grade 5 level. 12 competitions were run in 2003–04. All were carried out by the Recruitment Service of the Department of Finance and Personnel.

The total cost (including notional staff costs, advertising and travel and subsistence charges) for each competition is listed in the following tables.

During 2003–04 a generic Grade 5 level competition was begun to fill vacancies across the NICS. This was carried out by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP on behalf of DFP. In accordance with Part 2, paragraph 13 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (Third party's commercial confidences), it would be inappropriate to disclose the cost of this competition.

2002–03

Competition	*Department*	*Total costs (£)*
Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer SC/10/02	DARD	15,809
Director of Built Heritage SC/11/02	DOE	46,227
Chief Executive DVTA SC/12/02	DOE	22,044
Director of Secondary Care SC/14/02	DHSSPS	8,317
Director of NI Bureau, Washington SC/2/03	OFMDFM	16,884
Assistant Chief Inspector SC/3/02	DE	9,053
Chief Executive and Registrar of Titles SC/4/02	DFP	14,471
Public Expenditure Posts SC/4/03	DFP	18,777
Assistant Crown Solicitor SC/5/03	NIO	11,284
Deputy Director of Communications SC/6/02	OFMDFM	10,715
Director of Professional Services SC/7/02	DOE	11,802
Director of Development SC/8/02	DRD	26,254
Director of Customer Services SC/9/02	DRD	27,531

2003–04

Competition	*Department*	*Total costs (£)*
Head of Finance and EU Division SC/1/04	DETI/DARD	10,393
Deputy Director, Construction and Advisory Division SC/10/03	DFP	9,543
Chief Executive, BDS SC/11/03	DFP	13,653
Director of Estates Development SC/13/03	DHSSPS	8,356
Director of Business Development SC/16/03	SSA	8,488
Director E-government SC/12/03	OFMDFM	21,390
Head of Resource Allocation Division SC/17/03	DE	7,938
Senior Economist SC/18/03	DFP/DETI	27,117
Assistant Solicitor SC/8/03	DFP	8,735
Deputy Director—Supplies and Services Division SC/9/03	DFP	7,933
Head of Equal Opportunities and Appointments Division SC/3/04	DFP	23,104
Director of Personnel, SSA SC/5/04	DSD	19,715

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been appointed to a Grade 5 post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service in the past two years. [186021]

Mr. Pearson: 23 appointments were made at Grade 5 level during 2002–03 and 11 appointments made during 2003–04.

Civil Service

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent action the Government have taken to resolve the Northern Ireland Civil Service dispute; and if he will make a statement. [187287]

Mr. Pearson: Intensive negotiations took place in July between officials from the Department of Finance and Personnel and trade union representatives. At these meetings officials emphasised that the 3.67 per cent. pay deal for 2003 had now been paid and was final, but that they were willing to explore all reasonable means of resolving the dispute. The trade union also met with the Secretary of State on 23 July. On 3 August management tabled two offers to the trade union—a 12-month offer worth 3.49 per cent. and a 16-month offer worth 4.65 per cent. Both offers were quickly rejected and further negotiations took place on 4, 11 and 13 August. Following these further negotiations two final offers were made to the trade union on 16 August that took account of the trade unions views—the previous 12 month offer worth 3.49 per cent. and a revised 16-month offer worth 4.65 per cent. The revised offer included an increase in rates of pay of 2 per cent. plus a non-consolidated payment of £150 for all staff. These offers are now being considered by the trade union.

Staff in the Northern Ireland Office are subject to separate pay negotiations involving NIPSA in respect of Northern Ireland Civil Servants and PCS and FDA in respect of Home Civil Servants. All three unions remain in dispute in relation to the 2003 pay award, although only NIPSA has taken industrial action. Exploratory discussions have now taken place between NIO officials and each of the unions regarding pay increases for 2004, and the unions will be invited into formal negotiations in relation to 2004 pay once the NIO's pay remit receives approval from the Treasury.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will delay making appointments in recruitment competition SC/18/03 until the Northern Ireland Civil Service Commissioners have satisfied themselves as to the legality of the exclusion of Irish nationals from that competition. [186369]

Mr. Pearson: No. Competition SC/18/03, which is now closed, resulted in the appointment of one Grade 6.

Consultation

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what costs were incurred during 2002–03 by each Northern Ireland Department, their agencies and non-departmental public bodies on consultation. [180988]

Mr. Pearson: The costs incurred during 2002–03 by each Northern Ireland Department, their agencies and non-departmental public bodies on consultation (i.e. external consultancy) were as follows:

Total departments, agencies and NDPBs—2002/03

	£
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	872,000
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	1,996,149
Department of Education	2,993,526
Department of Employment and Learning	435,103
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	3,866,000
Department of Finance and Personnel	2,487,429
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	1,198,754
Department of the Environment	1,719,891
Department of Regional Development	2,337,000
Department of Social Development	12,619,000
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister	1,000,064
Northern Ireland Office	3,742,397
Total	35,267,313

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what costs were incurred during 2002–03 by each Northern Ireland Department, their agencies and non-departmental public bodies on consultation whose contracts were awarded under single tender. [180989]

Mr. Pearson: The following table shows the costs incurred during 2002–03 by the Northern Ireland Office, Northern Ireland Departments, their agencies and NDPBs on consultancy contracts awarded under single tender action.

£

NI Departments	Department	Agencies	NDPBs	Total
Northern Ireland Office	519,967	178,350	1,859,707	2,558,024
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	62,182	0	20,782	82,964
Department of the Environment	18,564	200,384	0	218,948
Department of Social Development	37,685	0	0	37,685
Department of Regional Development	104,165	67,295	0	171,460
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister	106,694	0	0	106,694
Department of Employment and Learning	0	0	0	0
Department of Education	800,438	0	0	800,438
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	238,812	15,057	13,102	266,971
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	104,434	0	348,723	453,157
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	79,432	744	159,962	240,138
Department of Finance and Personnel	467,340	298,237	0	765,577
Total	2,539,713	760,067	2,402,276	5,702,056

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consultancy companies have been awarded contracts of over £10,000 by each Northern Ireland Department, their agencies and non-departmental public bodies, under single tender arrangements in 2002–03; and what the associated payments made to each of them were. [180990]

Mr. Pearson: The following table shows by Department, the consultants that were awarded contracts valued in excess of £10,000 under single tender action in 2002–03.

As disclosure of individual contract values would breach conditions of contract the table shows the total value of contracts awarded by Departments including their agencies and NDPBs.

£

	Department			
Consultant	DHSSPS	DFP	DCAL	DETI
Deloitte and Touche	—	—	Yes	Yes
Drivers Jonas	—	—	Yes	—
Elite Training	Yes	—	—	—
ES Consultancy	Yes	—	—	—
Farrell Grant Sparks	—	—	Yes	—
Gartner Group	—	—	—	Yes
IT Force	—	—	Yes	—
Kearney Communications	—	—	—	Yes
KPMG	Yes	—	—	—
McCready and Donnelly	Yes	—	—	—
Milward Brown	—	—	—	Yes
MSA Ferndale	Yes	—	—	—
Nicholson Graham and Jones	Yes	—	—	—
NIERC	—	—	—	Yes
PA Consulting	—	Yes	—	—
Partnership UK/OGC	—	Yes	—	—
PricewaterhouseCoopers	—	—	—	Yes
Queens University	Yes	—	—	—
Richard H. Mackenzie	—	—	Yes	—
University of Ulster	Yes	—	—	—
Total value of contracts	244,926	69,888	187,664	345,938

£

	Department			
Consultant	DRD	OFMDFM	DEL	DE
BIC Systems	—	Yes	—	—
MWM Associates	Yes	—	—	—
Navigator Blue	—	Yes	—	—
NICE	—	Yes	—	—
ORC International	Yes	—	—	—
University of Ulster	Yes	—	—	—
Venture International	—	Yes	—	—
Total value of contracts	58,046	159,024	—	—

£

	Department			
Consultant	NIO	DARD	DOE	DSD
Anderson Spratt	Yes	—	—	—
Arcominteractive	Yes	—	—	—
ASE Consulting	—	—	—	Yes
BDO Hayward	Yes	—	—	—
Cap Gemini Ernst and Young	Yes	—	—	—
Capita Business Services	Yes	—	—	—
Deloitte and Touche	Yes	Yes	—	Yes
Environmental Resource Management	—	—	Yes	—
Helm Corporation	Yes	—	—	—
ICS Computing	Yes	—	—	—
Lead Project Management	Yes	—	—	—
OMI Consulting	—	Yes	—	—
PA Consulting	Yes	—	Yes	—
Partnership UK/OGC	Yes	Yes	—	—
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Yes	—	Yes	—
Qi Consulting	—	—	—	Yes
Queens University	Yes	—	—	—
Stairway Transformation	Yes	—	—	—
Sysco	Yes	—	—	—
Total value of contracts	2,535,738	51,168	183,826	178,385

Key:

DHSSPS—Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
DFP—Department of Finance and Personnel
DCAL—Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DETI—Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
DRD—Department of Regional Development
OFMDFM—Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
DEL—Department of Employment and Learning
DE—Department of Education
NIO—Northern Ireland Office
DARD—Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DOE—Department of the Environment
DSD—Department of Social Development

Cosmetic Surgery

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether practitioners performing cosmetic procedures in the Province outside the NHS have to be registered; and how such practitioners are regulated. [187452]

Angela Smith: Doctors must be registered with the General Medical Council to practise medicine in the UK, regardless of the area in which they work. Similarly nurses and allied health professionals must be registered with the statutory regulatory body for their professions, i.e. the Nursing and Midwifery Council and the Health

Professions Council respectively. Those bodies are responsible for the registration and regulation of their professions.

Creative Writing

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what conditions of *(a)* copyright and *(b)* royalty payments are attached to grant aid awarded by the (i) Arts Council of Northern Ireland, (ii) Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, (iii) Ultach Trust and (iv) Foras na Gaeilge for the publication of creative writing in the Irish language in Northern Ireland. [173186]

Angela Smith: The Arts Council of Northern Ireland does not attach conditions relating to *(a)* copyright or *(b)* royalty payments to any award. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's funds in support of the arts in Northern Ireland are disbursed chiefly through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Department has not made any funding directly available for the publication of creative writing in the Irish language.

The Ultach Trust is a registered charitable trust. It is not directly funded by Northern Ireland Departments and it therefore would not be appropriate to disclose details of its expenditure. Foras na Gaeilge does not provide grant aid for the publication of creative writing in the Irish language in Northern Ireland.

Cycle Paths

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public funding has been made available for the provision of cycle paths in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years; and how many miles of cycle paths have been provided in each of the past five years. [185153]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Member in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. Gregory Campbell

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how much public money has been made available for the provision of cycle paths in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and how many miles of cycle paths have been provided in each of the last five years. I have been asked to reply as part of the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

I can advise that in Northern Ireland the expenditure by Roads Service on the provision of cycle paths and the miles of cycle paths provided over this period is as follows:

Year	*Expenditure £000*	*Miles*
1999–00	1,732	20
2000–01	2,402	20
2001–02	1,748	20
2002–03	844	16
2003–04	818	19
2004–05[1]	820[1]	14[1]

[1] Budget and target for the current financial year

It should also be noted that other providers such as Sustrans, the Tourist Board, DARD, District Council, Sports Council for Northern Ireland, and some private developers also contribute very significantly to the mileage of cycle paths in Northern Ireland. As Roads Service does not hold the figures on cycle paths provided by these organisations I have asked my officials to write to them to request that the necessary information is sent directly to you.

Department of Health Assessment Framework

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on when the Department of Health, Social Services, and Public Safety will be implementing the Department of Health Assessment Framework in Northern Ireland. [183588]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health's performance assessment framework applies only to the NHS in England. Northern Ireland has its own system of integrated health and social care—the HPSS (Health and Personal Social Services). Under current arrangements, key service development priorities are set annually for the HPSS. Progress towards their achievement is formally managed and monitored by the Department, and work is now in hand to further develop the approach to HPSS performance assessment and reporting. While basing itself on the integrated nature of services in Northern Ireland, that work has been informed by the various performance assessment models that operate elsewhere in the UK.

Departmental Age Policy

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186088]

Mr. Pearson: The compulsory age of retirement for all staff employed in the Northern Ireland Civil Service was raised to age 65 with effect from 4 October 2002. Staff who reach age 60 after that date have the option of remaining in post beyond age 60 and up to a maximum of 65.

An application for employment from any candidate who has not reached age 65 is considered valid.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187309]

Mr. Pearson: The Northern Ireland Civil Service currently maintains 158 smoking rooms within the general office estate, but this will be discontinued from 1 January 2005. There are no rooms set aside for worship or for nursing mothers and pregnant women.

Digital Hearing Aids

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals are awaiting digital hearing aids in the Province; and what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest current waiting time is. [187398]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Disability Grant Fund

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the abolition of the Disability Grant Fund means test in Northern Ireland has resulted in a change in the length of waiting lists. [185193]

Mr. Spellar: With effect from 16 February 2004 we have exempted parents with disabled children from the means test that applies to Disabled Facilities Grant. While it is too early for a formal assessment of the saving in processing times in these cases, initial indications are that there will be no measurable impact on the waiting list for Disabled Facilities Grant.

Educational Attainment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pupils who achieved each grade in the 11-plus examination were from *(a)* integrated and *(b)* other primary schools in the Province in each of the last five years. [187451]

Mr. Gardiner: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Integrated primary schools

	Number achieving each grade in the transfer procedure						
	A	*B1*	*B2*	*C1*	*C2*	*D*	*Total number sitting*
1999–2000	173	34	37	31	27	88	390
2000–01	170	39	27	28	34	74	372
2001–02	166	38	35	40	34	115	428
2002–03	158	38	38	39	37	94	404
2003–04	196	41	47	37	33	108	462

(b) Other primary schools

	Number achieving each grade in the transfer procedure						
	A	*B1*	*B2*	*C1*	*C2*	*D*	*Total number sitting*
1999–2000	6,447	1,381	1,296	1,424	1,304	5,343	17,195
2000–01	6,238	1,276	1,276	1,426	1,427	5,023	16,666
2001–02	6,329	1,359	1,271	1,363	1,371	4,678	16,371
2002–03	6,195	1,284	1,439	1,285	1,301	4,598	16,102
2003–04	5,968	1,405	1,300	1,219	1,197	4,140	15,229

Fisheries Conservancy Board Vessel

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what training was provided to the operators of the Fisheries Conservancy Board vessel prior to the incidents that resulted in the current damage. [184833]

Angela Smith: Three members of the Fisheries Conservancy Board's staff have received training to the following standards:

Royal Yachting Association/Maritime and Coastguard Agency Powerboat Advanced Certificate with commercial endorsement;

Maritime Radio Operator Certificate of Competence (Short Range Certificate);

Royal Yachting Association First Aid Course; and

Certificate of Proficiency in Personal Survival Techniques on Board Ship.

Gransha Road, Dundonald

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the position is in relation to the payment of compensation for motorists involved in the Gransha Road, Dundonald, road surfacing problems of two years ago; and when payments will be made to those whose vehicles were damaged. [187514]

Mr. Spellar: On 25 July 2002 routine surface dressing work was carried out on behalf of the Department at Gransha Road by its measured term contractor, Tullyraine Quarries Limited.

On 29 July 2002 reports were received about the failure of the surface dressing and of a substantial number of vehicle damage claims caused by this failure.

The failure was investigated by the Department and these investigations led to the Department referring all the Gransha Road vehicle damage claims, approximately 400, to the contractor, Tullyraine Quarries Limited, in accordance with proper legal and audit practice and procedure.

The Department maintains its position that legal responsibility for the claims lie with its contractor, Tullyraine Quarries Limited. The contractor has not to date conceded responsibility and the claims remain outstanding.

One of the motorists, who sustained vehicle damage on 29 July 2002, issued legal proceedings on 22 July 2003 against the Department, Tullyraine Quarries Limited and Lagan Bitumen Limited. Those proceedings in the County Court were however removed to the High Court on 30 January 2004. That ongoing court action is proceeding as a test case.

The Department cannot comment any further as the legal issues are now subjudice.

Health Promotion

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on the *(a)* promotion of health and *(b)* prevention of illness in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [187433]

Angela Smith: Work to promote health and prevent illness is carried out by Health and Social Services Trusts and also by other organisations such as the Health Promotion Agency, voluntary organisations and general practice. Table 1 shows Trust total expenditure for health promotion and prevention of disease, and Table 2 indicates the budget for other services. These figures are not available separately for health promotion and disease prevention and are provided from the earliest available dates.

Table 1: Trust expenditure on health promotion and disease prevention services in Northern Ireland

Year ended March	*£ million*
1996	22.5
1997	24.6
1998	23.7
1999	25.0
2000	25.6
2001	27.7
2002	28.6
2003	33.2

Table 2: Budget for other health promotion and disease prevention services in Northern Ireland

Year ended March	£ million
2000	3.0
2001	7.3
2002	13.3
2003	18.0
2004	21.8

Note
The funding for other services includes funds for the implementation of the Drugs and Alcohol Strategy, an element of which may also be included within Trust expenditure.

HIV/AIDS

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many newly diagnosed cases of HIV there have been in the province since 1 January. [187455]

Angela Smith: Provisional figures indicate there were 20 new HIV cases in Northern Ireland between 1 January and 30 June 2004.

Mental Health

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will make a statement on progress in implementing the Mental Health Strategy Action Plan; [183026]

(2) if he will make a statement on progress towards reducing the proportion of individuals susceptible to psychiatric disorders; [183017]

Angela Smith: The Promoting Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan was issued in January 2003. An Implementation Group has been established to oversee implementation of the Strategy. A range of preventative measures are being taken under the strategy including raising awareness and understanding of mental health issues, promoting coping skills, suicide awareness and outreach work with young people in areas of need. Action towards achieving the target to reduce the proportion of people with a potential psychiatric disorder is ongoing and progress will be measured through Health and Well-being Surveys.

Motorsport

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been made available for the development of motorsports in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years. [178520]

Angela Smith: The total amount of public funding i.e. exchequer and lottery, made available for the development of motorsports in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland is as follows:

Public funds[1]

	£
1999–2000	87,400
2000–01	66,461
2001–02	56,600
2002–03	144,924
2003–04	44,685
Total	400,070

[1] Includes Sports Council exchequer, Sports Council lottery.

Sports Council for Northern Ireland exchequer funding allocated to the 2 and 4 Wheel Motorsport Steering Group

	£
1999–2000	0
2000–01	0
2001–02	0
2002–03	15,000
2003–04	200,000
Total	215,000

In addition to this, both the Northern Ireland Events Company and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board have provided funding in each of the past five years, which has been used to assist with its development. The amounts made available are as follows:

Public funds allocated by the Northern Ireland Events Company

	£
1999–2000	0
2000–01	0
2001–02	75,000
2002–03	104,679
2003–04	374,500
Total	554,179

MRI Scanners

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been made of the implications of using mobile scanning facilities to increase the number of MRI scans conducted in the Province. [187437]

Angela Smith: Mobile scanners have been used by some HSS Trusts as a temporary measure to enhance provision while new MRI scanners, funded by the New Opportunities Fund at a cost of £6.4 million, are installed at the Ulster, Antrim, Craigavon and Belfast City Hospitals. Using mobile scanners has been found to be an effective way to alleviate waiting times for patients alongside the introduction of additional evening scanning sessions at some hospital sites.

MRSA

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether a voluntary reporting system by hospitals in Northern Ireland of MRSA cases is in place. [184777]

Angela Smith: In April 2002 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety made it a mandatory requirement for acute Trusts to report MRSA bacteraemia rates. The data is collected, collated and analysed by the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, Northern Ireland (CDSC) and statistical reports for the first two years of operation are available from its website www.cdscni.org. A copy of this report has been placed in the House Library.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether hospitals in Northern Ireland are required to destroy bed linen of MRSA sufferers after use; and if he will make a statement. [184789]

Angela Smith: The UK-wide MRSA Control Guidelines for hospitals do not require bed linen to be destroyed. It should be bagged according to the hospital laundry policy and machine washed on a hot wash setting.

National Institute for Clinical Excellence

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions have been held with representatives of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence regarding implementing NICE guidelines in Northern Ireland. [187436]

Angela Smith: Guidelines produced by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) are only applicable to England and Wales. In line with a range of initiatives designed to improve the quality of health and social care services in Northern Ireland, I am at present considering how guidelines issued by NICE can best be used in the context of Northern Ireland's health and social services. Departmental officials have undertaken discussions with NICE in that regard.

Parades Commission

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many members of the Parades Commission were on duty on *(a)* 12 and *(b)* 13 July. [186023]

Mr. Pearson: All of the Parades Commissioners were available on 12 and 13 July 2004. In addition senior members of the Secretariat, authorised officers and monitors were deployed at a number of parades across Northern Ireland.

Physiotherapists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many whole-time equivalent physiotherapists are working within the NHS in the Province. [187440]

Angela Smith: Physiotherapists as at 30 June 2004 are as follows:

Physiotherapists as at 30 June 2004 [1]

	Number
Headcount	790
Whole-time equivalent	653.63

[1] Bank staff who cover for staffing shortfalls and fluctuating workloads in order to maintain service delivery are not included in these figures.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of physiotherapists required in the Province over the next five years. [187441]

Angela Smith: A review of the physiotherapy workforce in May 2002 estimated that a 4 per cent. growth in the workforce, equivalent to 27 posts, would be required for service developments that have been agreed or are likely to be approved over the course of five years. In January 2004 an update of the original report indicated that the demand issues remained as identified. The position is being kept under review.

Plastic Baton Rounds

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in establishing an alternative to the plastic baton round for use in quelling civil disturbances in Northern Ireland. [186488]

Mr. Pearson: The report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland recommended that "an immediate and substantial investment should be made in a research programme to find an acceptable, effective and less potentially lethal alternative to the Plastic Baton Round".

In response, a Northern Ireland Office led steering group was set up. The fourth report of the steering group, published on 29 January this year, concluded that there was no commercially available product that met these criteria and that the focus should be on the development of two distinct new projectiles: the Attenuating Energy Projectile (AEP) and the Discriminating Irritant Projectile (DIP). Detailed research has concluded that both of these rounds represent a less potentially lethal alternative.

The Government remains committed to developing an effective, less potentially lethal alternative and, as announced, it is hoped that the AEP will be ready for operational deployment before summer 2005. The Government are also committed to equipping the PSNI with a broader range of public order equipment that might reduce the need to resort to the use of this new projectile.

The ACPO guidance on the use of baton rounds published on 8 December 2003 makes clear that baton rounds should only be used in a public order situation where other policing methods to restore or sustain public order have failed or must be unlikely to succeed, and where the use of the round is judged necessary to reduce a serious risk of loss of life or serious injury. It also states that baton rounds are designed to provide a less lethal option in dealing with threats of serious violence and provide an effective means by which individuals armed with petrol bombs or other weapons can be kept at a distance, contained or dispersed.

Racism

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have moved house under the Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwellings Scheme in Northern Ireland where their move was due to racist intimidation in each year since 1997. [187412]

Mr. Spellar: The information requested is not readily available. However I will write to the hon. Gentleman when the figures have been compiled.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been allocated emergency homeless status by the Housing Executive in Northern Ireland because of racist intimidation in each year since 1997. [187413]

Mr. Spellar: The information requested is not available prior to the 2001–02 year as the Housing Executive only began recording ethnic information from that time. For the last four financial years the information, including Irish Travellers, is as follows:

	Number
2001–02	3
2002–03	14
2003–04	14
2004–05 (To 24 August 2004)	5

Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on staffing levels in the genito-urinary medicine department at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast. [187435]

Angela Smith: In recognition of the future need in genito-urinary medicine specialist registrars have been recruited in each of the last three years.

A report on "Sexually Transmitted Infections and Genito-urinary Medicine Services", produced by a sub-group of the Regional Advisory Committee on Communicable Disease Control, recommended a complement of five consultants against the current complement of 3.2 whole-time equivalent. The number presently in training stands at four, which is considered sufficient to meet that projected need.

School Fruit

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the answer of 20 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 1161W, on school fruit, whether the fresh fruit in schools scheme will be extended. [187438]

Angela Smith: The Department has secured funding to enable this pilot scheme to continue in 2004–05, and for the scheme to be extended within the Health Action Zone areas to enable some new ideas to be tested this year. A final evaluation of the pilot scheme will take place in 2004–05. The outcome of this, together with work being taken forward by Fit Futures, the Taskforce on Obesity in Children and Young People and the development of a new Food and Nutrition Strategy, will help inform future decisions about the scheme.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children in the Province received free fruit at school in 2003–04. [187432]

Angela Smith: A pilot Fresh Fruit in Schools Scheme was launched in Northern Ireland in October 2002. In the academic year September 2003 to June 2004 it provided a free piece of fruit daily to 5,239 primary 1 and 2 children in 87 primary schools within Health Action Zone areas.

Secondary Education

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the level of support in the Province for academic selection in post-primary education. [187454]

Mr. Gardiner: The responses to the consultation on the recommendations of the Burns Report showed a diversity of views on the issue of academic selection. Of the 16 per cent. of the population who responded to the household response forms, 64 per cent. were opposed to the abolition of academic selection, as were 37 per cent. of the schools that responded, the Governing Bodies Association, the Institute of Directors, Ulster Unionist Party and Democratic Unionist Party and the Secondary Heads Association. Those in favour of abolishing academic selection included 36 per cent. of the respondents to the household response forms, 73% of the schools that responded, the five education and library boards, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, the Social Democratic and Labour Party, Sinn Fein, the Progressive Unionist Party, the Women's Coalition, the Workers Party, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the five main teachers' unions. There was conditional support for ending academic selection from the Northern Catholic Bishops, the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment, the Confederation of British Industry, and the Catholic Heads Association.

The Costello Working Group took account of all the consultation responses and the Government have accepted that Group's recommendations that it is educationally unsound to select pupils and commit them to particular pathways at age 11 and also unsound to believe that the more able should follow only academic courses.

Full details of the responses to the consultation are available on the Department of Education website: http://www.deni.gov.uk/pprb/response_to_consultation.htm

Smoking

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of people who have stopped smoking in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [187446]

Angela Smith: Information on the number of people who have stopped smoking is not available for each of the last five years. However, an indication on the number of people who have stopped smoking in Northern Ireland is available from the Continuous Household Survey (CHS), which biennially includes questions about smoking. Estimates of the number of people who have stopped smoking in Northern Ireland are as follows:

	Estimate of number of people (aged 16 +) who stopped smoking
1996–97	16,500
1998–99	22,000
2000–01	24,000
2002–03	25,000

Notes:
1. The figures have been calculated using the percentage of respondents to the survey who stated that they had stopped smoking in the previous year. These percentages have been applied to the mid-year estimate population numbers to produce an estimated figure for the number of people in Northern Ireland who stopped smoking in the previous year.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 500.

Source:
Continuous Household Survey.

Spending Review

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the impact on civil service jobs in Northern Ireland of the Chancellor's statement on the 2004 Spending Review. [186049]

Mr. Pearson: I would refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave the hon. Member for North Down on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 196–97W.

Sports Funding

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much Government funding has been allocated in Northern Ireland in each financial year since 2000 to *(a)* rugby, *(b)* hockey, *(c)* cricket and *(d)* Gaelic games. [186050]

Angela Smith: The following table provides details of Exchequer funding and Peace II funding provided by DCAL, DARD, DETI and DFP to rugby, hockey, cricket and Gaelic games for each financial year from 2000.

£

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
(a) Rugby[1]	152,843	157,551	92,536	127,723
(b) Hockey	27,464	61,225	54,902	43,036
(c) Cricket	20,000	22,000	26,330	59,179
(d) Gaelic games[1,2]	652,085	381,333	557,676	134,793
(e) Numerous sports[3]	—	—	—	58,434

[1] The figures shown for rugby and Gaelic games include funding allocated via the Safe Sports Ground Programme.

[2] Gaelic games includes Gaelic football, hurling and other Gaelic Athletic Association Games.

[3] DFP has also provided Peace II funding to projects including more than one of the listed sports and these are listed separately in the last row under "numerous sports".

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its related agencies in each year since 1997. [183901]

Mr. Pearson: One Northern Ireland Department is unable to provide information prior to 2000–01 as the information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The available figures show travel costs for *(a)* Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office and *(b)* for related agencies for each year since 1997 as:

£

	Department	*Agencies*	*Total*
1997–98[1]	6,993,705	8,737,673	15,731,378
1998–99[1]	7,426,431	8,814,552	16,240,983
1999–2000[1]	7,819,038	8,950,484	16,769,522
2000–01	10,535,869	9,769,393	20,305,262
2001–02	10,148,870	9,584,372	19,733,242
2002–03	10,130,032	10,288,270	20,418,302
2003–04	10,484,387	10,659,851	21,144,238

[1] Excludes Department of Finance and Personnel.

Please note that the accounting system changes from a cash to resource basis in 2000–01.

Young People (Special Needs)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to improve *(a)* respite and *(b)* social activity provision for young people with special needs in (i) Larne, Carrick, Newtownabbey and Ballyclare and (ii) the rest of the Northern Board area. [187449]

Angela Smith: Homefirst Trust has established a team to manage the transition of young people to adult services using a community development approach to day care support services, which also includes social activities. Supported employment services for school leavers have been developed in Ballymoney, Antrim, Ballymena and Cookstown.

Funding has been secured from the Big Lottery to appoint a Project Worker to develop mainstream social activities for children and young people with disabilities in leisure centres in Larne, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey and Ballyclare. An evaluation of this project will inform future planning priorities.

The Board is in the process of developing a family support strategy, which includes children with disabilities and their families. A wide-ranging consultation with parents, children and service providers has been completed. The strategy will identify gaps and shortfalls in services and will inform future planning priorities.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 9 September 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Waste Management

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the latest figures are for the amount of compostable material disposed of each year in England; how much is reclaimed and recycled as compost; and what plans she has to increase this figure. [187547]

Mr. Morley: The Municipal Waste Management Survey of local authorities in England for 2002 03, shows that 14.28m tonnes of biodegradable municipal waste was disposed of to landfill, and 1.2m tonnes composted. In addition 1.1m tonnes of paper and card were recycled. As yet there is no method of measuring the amount recycled through home composting.

From the Environment Agency's National Waste Production Survey of a sample of 40,000 businesses, conducted in 1998, it is estimated that 2.78m tonnes of biodegradable industrial and commercial waste was disposed of to landfill, 0.85m tonnes composted and a further 4.75m tonnes of paper and card recycled.

The Government are taking a number of steps to increase the amount of biowaste composted. For example, we have established the Waste Implementation Programme (WIP), to support local authorities in achieving the UK's Landfill Directive targets to divert biodegradable municipal waste from landfill. The Government have also established the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to create stable and efficient markets for recyclates, including organic material. WRAP is also running a home composting programme and has already organised distribution of over 60,000 composting bins to households in England. In addition Defra, through the Environmental Action Fund (EAF), has provided the Composting Association with £282,000 over three years to raise awareness of composting.

These and other measures have seen the proportion of municipal biowaste composted rise to 32 per cent. of all municipal waste recycling in England in 2002 03.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent steps she has taken to improve the United Kingdom's recycling performance. [186939]

Mr. Morley: Waste is a devolved issue. The Government have taken numerous steps to increase recycling in England. For example, national household waste recycling targets have been set, supported by statutory recycling and composting targets with an increase in funding for local government waste activities for each local authority. Government have also established the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to create stable and efficient markets for recycled materials across the UK.

This specific action on recycling is supported by steps to move municipal waste management up the waste hierarchy. For example, in England, a Landfill Allowances Trading Scheme for local authorities is being developed and the Waste Implementation Programme (WIP) has been established, to support authorities in achieving the UK's Landfill Directive targets to divert biodegradable municipal waste from landfill. In addition, the Government have committed to increasing the UK Landfill Tax rate to £35 per tonne of active waste in the medium term.

As a result of these and other actions the proportion of municipal waste being recycled in England has increased to 15.6 per cent. in 2002 03 and we expect to meet our 2003 04 national household waste recycling target of 17 per cent.

Steps taken to increase recycling of non-municipal waste include amending the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 1997: new UK targets were set last year to raise overall recovery by obligated companies from 59 per cent. in 2003 to 63 per cent. this year and 70 per cent. by 2008, with the percentage to be achieved through recycling rising to 95 per cent. in 2007 08. We will also be announcing shortly a package, funded by Landfill Tax escalator receipts, from business more resource efficient, to help business in England become more resource efficient.

Energy Efficiency Implementation Plan

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the Energy Efficiency Implementation Plan. [185904]

Mr. Morley: "Energy Efficiency: The Government's Plan for Action" was published on 26 April 2004. The Government estimate that the measures in the Plan will save over 12 million tonnes of carbon by 2010, saving consumers over £3 billion annually. Key measures in the energy efficiency plan include:

A new aim to save 4.2 million tonnes of carbon from households by 2010,

Double the level of Energy Efficiency Commitment (EEC) activity from 2005 to 2011, subject to a review in 2007,

New fiscal measures announced in Budget 2004, including a tax allowance to encourage domestic landlords to invest in their properties,

New energy services pilots, through which energy suppliers can offer innovative energy efficiency packages to customers,

Information, advice and support through the work of the Energy Saving and Carbon Trusts,

Incentives to improve efficiency in industry including revised targets and extension of the scope of the Climate Change Agreements, together with the forthcoming EU emissions trading scheme,

Committed leadership by Government including a new commitment by central government to use only the best energy performance buildings. More emphasis on communicating with people about climate change.

Flooding (Insurance)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* homes and *(b)* farm holdings have been unable to obtain insurance policies against flood damage in the last year for which statistics are available; and if she will make a statement. [186685]

Mr. Morley: Firm statistics will not be available from the Association of British Insurers (ABI) until later this year.

Initial indications from the ABI are that insurers are maintaining cover for homeowners in high flood risk areas in all but a handful of cases.

The ABI are not aware of any instances where renewal has been refused on farm holdings. Farm buildings in general do not tend to have flood insurance due to the nature of their construction and lack of foundations.

GM Crops

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what thresholds for GM contamination of non-GM seeds the Government intends to support within the EU. [187620]

Mr. Morley: We are awaiting revised proposals from the EU Commission on labelling thresholds for approved GM seeds in non GM seeds. The UK Government position on the proposals will be based on scientific advice, the practicability of the measures that would need to be applied to ensure that we could enforce the regulations, and recognition that any thresholds set for seeds must be achievable by seed producers.

Flood Defences (Efficiency Savings)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether changes to flood defence provision will be made to achieve efficiency savings as announced in the Spending Review, broken down by financial year. [185892]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency has agreed to deliver efficiencies in its flood defence activities of £15 million for each of the financial years covered by the 2004 Spending Review (2005–06 to 2007–08). These efficiencies will be achieved through better procurement practices, greater use of new technology and a reduction in the process costs of delivering the capital programme. These savings will offset the effects of inflation and increases in construction costs currently estimated at 4 per cent. per annum.

Warm Front

Ms. Drown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will change the Warm Front scheme by *(a)* not time-limiting a second application where it is for heating which had not previously been claimed for and *(b)* allowing old and inefficient boilers to be replaced before they break down. [186062]

Mr. Morley: The Department is currently developing a Fuel Poverty Implementation Plan which will consider options for better targeting and will review the eligibility criteria and effectiveness of current measures offered under Warm Front.

In response to the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee and the National Audit Office we have introduced a pilot to establish how best households with intermittently and ineffective working boilers can be assisted by the scheme. The results of this pilot will be assessed later in the year.

Watervoice (Exeter Office)

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what criteria were used in making the decision to close the Exeter office of Watervoice; and what process was followed. [185771]

Mr. Morley: The original decision to close the Exeter office was based on a recommendation made by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in its report on the organisation and regional structure of the Consumer Council for Water. PwC recommended that the offices in Exeter and Bristol currently serving the south west and Wessex regions should be merged into one office and located either in one of the existing offices or at a new site in Taunton.

However, we have since given very careful consideration to a number of representations received and reviewed the decision to close or relocate regional offices. We concluded that against the background of the representations and the current periodic review of water prices, the benefits for water customers in maintaining the existing regional system of consumer representation outweighs the benefits of rationalisation at this time.

We now intend to leave it to the new CCW to consider PwC's recommendations and to decide, in the light of future circumstances what changes, if any, it wishes to make to its regional structure.

TRANSPORT

Mobile Telephones

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what discussions he has had with *(a)* mobile telephone manufacturers and *(b)* car manufacturers on the safety of mobile phones in cars; [186393]

(2) what research his Department has carried out into technical solutions for blocking the use of hand-held mobile phones in cars. [186394]

Mr. Jamieson: Representatives of mobile phone and bar manufacturers have been involved in discussions with the Department for Transport on a new European Directive that will replace the current Directive 95/54/EC on electromagnetic compatibility. This requires cars to have a minimum level of immunity to interference such that electronic devices, including mobile phones, do not cause malfunctions of the vehicle's electronics.

The Department has not carried out any research into technical solutions for blocking the use of hand-held mobile phones in cars. A driver can use a hand-held phone when he is not driving and a passenger can use a mobile phone at any time and for emergencies.

Aircraft (Medical Equipment)

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on measures to improve the provision of emergency medical equipment on all UK aircraft. [187177]

Mr. McNulty: UK Airlines carry first aid and emergency medical kits in accordance with common requirements established by the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA). The content of these kits is being reviewed following a proposal from the European Civil Aviation Conference for considering several improvements to the kits but granting some flexibility to meet an operator's route specifications. The UK supports these changes and will implement them once they have been adopted by the JAA following public consultation.

Cross-Channel Rail Subsidies

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what subsidies are paid to *(a)* Eurostar and *(b)* the Channel Tunnel Rail Link for the provision of their services; and where such subsidies are spent. [186765]

Mr. Darling: Information requested is as follows:

(a) No subsidies are paid to Eurostar.

(b) Government are providing grant support for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link project which is estimated to total £2.0 billion in present value terms (discounted at 6 per cent. real to January 1997) to support the costs of construction of the link and the provision of capacity for domestic services. This figure does not include possible amounts which may be provided by way of loan support or recovered in respect of land rentals and proceeds from property developments.

Disabled Parking

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Blue Badge parking scheme entitlement for those diagnosed with myasthenia gravis. [187754]

Mr. McNulty: The Blue Badge Scheme is designed primarily to assist people with severe difficulty in walking, whatever the cause of their disability. People who are registered blind also qualify under the Scheme. Drivers with a severe disability affecting both arms may also be eligible. Local authorities, which are responsible for administering the Scheme, will decide on an individual's eligibility on the basis of these criteria. People with myasthenia gravis will be eligible for a badge if they meet the criteria.

Office Furniture

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent in the last year for which figures are available on office furniture. [186404]

Mr. McNulty: The Department spent £1,506,715 on furniture during 2003–04 financial year.

This expenditure included:

Fitting out the Department's new HQ building—Southside in Victoria Street London;

and providing furniture for:

the pilot introduction of Flexible Working;

responses to requests under 'Children Under 6 and DDA legislation;

replacing furniture in other offices which has exceeded it's design life (over 10 years old) and is causing H and S issues.

Post Office

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the likely effects of the closure of sub post offices at Newtown and Northfield End on the *(a)* flow and *(b)* volume of traffic passing through Henley. [187504]

Mr. McNulty: None. The closure of sub post offices is in operational matter for Post Office Ltd. In terms of traffic flow and volume the local highway authority, in this case Oxfordshire County Council, will be required to take account of the impact on accessibility to public services, including post offices, during the preparation of their Local Transport Plan.

Public Transport (Pensioner Access)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he has taken to improve access to public transport for pensioners. [186461]

Mr. McNulty: We have significantly improved the concessionary fares scheme for older and disabled people who are now entitled to at least half-fare travel on local buses. We have also introduced a half-fare for people aged 60 and over on many long-distance scheduled coach services.

Given the close correlation between disability and age, the regulations we have introduced to require new trains, buses and coaches to provide a range of features to improve access are also benefiting many older people. During the last three years over 1,400 new fully accessible rail vehicles have entered service and there will be over 1,000 more within the next year. Around 29 per cent. of buses seating over 22 passengers are already accessible, and in major cities the proportion is much higher.

Rail Services

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what timetables are in place following publication of The Future of Transport for *(a)* the start of construction and *(b)* completion dates of (i) Thameslink 2000, (ii) East London Line Extension and (iii) Crossrail. [187539]

Mr. McNulty: The timing of Thameslink 2000 depends on whether and when the necessary Transport and Works Act and associated powers are secured. Network Rail submitted revised applications in June 2004 which are likely to be considered by a public inquiry next year.

Responsibility for the East London line extension project is transferring to Transport for London and its timing will be a matter for the Mayor.

The Secretary of State announced to Parliament on 20 July 2004 that he intended that appropriate powers for the construction of Crossrail should be sought by means of a hybrid Bill to be introduced in Parliament at the earliest opportunity. Previous experience, with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Bill, suggests that the Bill might take around two years to complete its passage. Construction could only start after this date.

Transport Projects

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many transport-related projects on the *(a)* railways and *(b)* roads are running (i) on schedule and (ii) behind schedule. [186801]

Mr. McNulty: There are nine major programmes of enhancement work currently contracted on the railways, each comprising many individual projects. Of these, eight are on schedule in line with the agreed works programme, and one is behind schedule.

There are 16 major new road schemes currently contracted on the Strategic Road Network. 13 are on schedule to complete in line with the programme planned at Works Commitment stage, three schemes are behind schedule, one by several months and two by no more than six weeks.

There are 27 major road and road maintenance schemes which are currently fully accepted within the local transport programme. Of these, 13 are on schedule to complete in line with the timetable planned at full acceptance stage. 14 schemes are behind schedule, some only marginally.

Transport Funding

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how planned funding in the Government's transport strategy The Future of Transport will be allocated between transport modes. [187538]

Mr. McNulty: Because of the timing of the Olympic bid the Secretary of State announced a funding settlement for the GLA transport grant through to 2009–10 in his statement to the House of Commons on 20 July.

Year	*£million*
2005–06	2,161
2006–07	2,383
2007–08	2,544
2008–09	2,528
2009–10	2,651

It is up to the Mayor to decide how to allocate the GLA Transport Grant between different modes. Other decisions relating to the 2004 Spending Review Settlement will be taken in due course.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Retirement Age

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the *(a)* set retirement age applying to all or most personnel and *(b)* maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered is for each department of the House. [186374]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: General conditions of service are House-wide rather than on a departmental basis. House of Commons staff normally work until the age of 65, which is currently the maximum retirement age. They may, however, retire at any time between 60 and 65 if they wish. Applications for most posts are accepted up to the age of 65 with the exception of casual appointments, where applicants may be appointed over the age of 65. House policy will be reviewed in the light of the age discrimination regulations, which we understand will come into effect in October 2006.

September Sittings

Mr. Key: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission, what estimate the Commission has made of the marginal cost of recalling the House this September, and if he will make a statement. [186359]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The daily costs of sitting days in September are similar to those of sitting days at other times of year. Such costs include staff overtime, telecommunications and postal costs, together with infrastructure costs such as heating.

As a result of having a shorter summer recess than in some previous years, some additional costs may arise from the need to interrupt some elements of the summer works programme. However, as the September sitting was taken into account when the programme was planned, the additional costs are relatively modest, estimated at around £88,000 against a total works programme spend of £19 million.

Serjeant at Arms

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make a statement on the methodology involved in the appointment of a new Sergeant at Arms. [187403]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Serjeant at Arms is a Crown appointment, made on the recommendation of the Speaker. Following the announcement that the current Serjeant at Arms, Sir Michael Cummins, would shortly retire, the Speaker decided that the post should be advertised both internally and externally, in the national press. A recruitment board was set up under the chairmanship of the Clerk of the House. It included an external member, drawn from the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' central list of independent assessors, and the hon. Member for North East Hertfordshire (Mr. Heald) as a representative of the Commission. The board agreed a long list of candidates for preliminary interviews by external recruitment consultants and, subsequently, a short list for final interviews, conducted by the board. As a result

of this process, the Speaker recommended the appointment of Major General Anthony Peter Grant Peterkin, CB, OBE. His appointment was announced to the House on 20 July and he will take over from Sir Michael on 1 January 2005.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Amyl Nitrate

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures she proposes to take against shops illegally selling amyl nitrate in the form of poppers, with particular reference to the products *(a)* Pure Gold, *(b)* Liquid Gold and *(c)* TNT. [178805]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have nothing further to add to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office on 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 573W.

Credit Card Fraud

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the current levels of consumer credit card fraud; and what steps her Department is taking to tackle it. [186354]

Ms Blears: I have been asked to reply

The Government do not collect figures on the cost of credit card fraud but the Association for Payment Clearing Services (APACS) estimates the cost of plastic card fraud on UK-issued cards in 2003 to have been £402.4 million, a decrease of five per cent. over the previous year.

The Home Office provided £1.4 million over two years (towards a total cost of £5.6 million) to fund, jointly with the banking industry, a specialist police unit, the Dedicated Cheque and Plastic Crime Unit (DCPCU). The pilot, which ran from April 2002 to April 2004, was successful in detecting or preventing significant fraud on the banks and card issuers. The Unit is continuing with full financial support from the industry. The Home Office continues to chair the Steering Group.

We are also providing significant extra resources for fraud policing more generally. The Home Office and the Corporation of London have each agreed to contribute £1 million towards the cost of an expanded City of London Police fraud squad. The Home Office has also met capital start up costs of the new unit. This funding will enable the City of London Police to expand its fraud squad significantly and take a lead role in the investigation of fraud in London and the south east, including providing police resources for the majority of Serious Fraud Office cases.

A great deal of fraud can be prevented if organisations have proper fraud prevention measures in place. Prevention initiatives therefore complement fraud investigation and prosecution.

We have encouraged the financial and retail sectors to work towards early implementation of more secure systems to combat fraud, including the introduction of microchips into payment cards to help authentication, and the use of PIN codes in place of signatures.

The Home Office has launched a website to combat internet fraud. The "e-tailing mini site" (part of the Crime Reduction Website) provides information to help both businesses and consumers protect themselves when using the internet.

We have also recently published, jointly with the Association of Payment Clearing Services (APACS), a leaflet for members of the public about safe credit card use. Supplies of the leaflet have been sent to all police forces and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in England and Wales.

Gay Discrimination

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to end insurance discrimination for gay men based solely on sexual orientation. [187135]

Ms Hewitt: The Government are aware of concerns about current imbalances in legislative provision for the different groups protected by discrimination legislation, which include gay men, and one of the first tasks of the proposed Commission for Equality and Human Rights will be to review the legislative framework to ensure that it meets the needs of a modern Britain.

The Government are committed to improving equality and human rights for all in our society. This underpins our vision of a modern, fairer and more prosperous Britain. The creation of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights will help create a more equal and cohesive society.

Equality Bodies

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what views she has received from publicly funded equality bodies on *(a)* the Government's proposal for a single equality body and *(b)* the proposals in the document Fairness for All. [187154]

Ms Hewitt: The Government are currently assessing the response of the three public funded equality bodies and all the responses they have received in detail and will publicly respond in due course. Government will be assisted in this task by their independent advisory Task Force, which discussed the consultation responses on 7 September.

The consultation following the release of Fairness for All officially closed on 6 August. Over 450 responses were received from a wide variety of stakeholders, interested groups and individuals, including those from the publicly funded equality bodies—the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Shares (Tax Rules)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on her assessment of the effect of new tax rules on shares held by academics set out in the Finance Act 2003 on the number of university spin-off companies being set up. [186332]

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact of schedule 22 of the Finance Act 2003 on university spin-out companies. [186452]

Ms Hewitt: The Government recognise the contribution that research-based entrepreneurial activity makes to this country and are committed to creating a clear fiscal environment that enables universities, public sector bodies and their researchers to grow companies based on their research.

Inland Revenue, DTI and Treasury officials have been engaged in constructive dialogue with university and public sector spin-out sector representatives to provide certainty around the tax treatment of university public sector employees who acquire such shares. This dialogue between officials and sector representatives has led to a joint Memorandum of Understanding regarding the tax treatment of one type of spin-out company shareholding structure and some companies are understood to have taken advantage of this model. Officials will continue negotiations with interested parties to ensure that an appropriate solution to the sector's difficulties is identified and ensure that there is no long-term adverse impact on spin-out activity.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Community Forum

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* total budget, *(b)* departmental funding and *(c)* total cost to his Department of the Community Forum (i) is for the financial year 2004–05 and (ii) is estimated for financial years 2005–06 to 2007–08. [187563]

Phil Hope: The total departmental budget for the Community Forum is £186,000.000 per year. This incorporates an annual budget of £150,000.00 and £36,000.00 for administrative support and management.

This amount has been allocated for 2004–05 and will be made available for 2005–06 to 2007–08.

Actual expenditure for financial year 2003–04 was £155,489.00. The estimated expenditure for 2004–05 will be £183,000.00.

Fly-posting

Harry Cohen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what effect his Department's good practice guide to fly-posting has had on the residents of Leyton and Wanstead. [187744]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Good Practice Guide, "The Control of Fly-Posting", offers guidance to local planning authorities on how best to deal with the problem of fly-posting. No assessment has been made on the effect the guide has had on the residents of Leyton and Wanstead. This is a matter for Redbridge and Waltham Forest borough councils.

Suffolk Fire Authority

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding was made available for the Suffolk Fire Authority *(a)* in 2004–05 and *(b)* in each of the last nine years. [187204]

Mr. Raynsford: The Fire Service in Suffolk is the responsibility of Suffolk county council. Net current expenditure on the Fire Service, as reported by the authority, for the last 10 years is tabled as follows:

	Amount (£000)
1995–96	12,683
1996–97	13,667
1997–98	13,593
1998–99	14,634
1999–2000	15,022
2000–01	15,900
2001–02	16,533
2002–03	17,627
2003–04	17,829
2004–05	18,690

The data are taken from the RS (outturn) forms for all years except 2004–05 when the data are taken from the RA (budget) form. These forms are completed each year by individual local authorities.

TREASURY

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the letter to him dated 2 August from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. H. Broadley. [187981]

John Healey: I did so on 3 September.

Green Landlord Scheme

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress he has made towards the introduction of a green landlords scheme as announced in the Budget. [187384]

John Healey: The Chancellor announced in his last Budget the possible introduction of a "green landlord scheme" which would aim to incentivise landlords to invest to improve energy efficiency. The Government are considering the options available.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Employees

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many civil servants were employed by her Department and its related agencies in each year since 1997. [187276]

Mr. Caborn: The table shows the number of staff in post on 1 April of each year since 1997.

	DCMS	Royal Parks	Historic Royal Palaces Agency[1]	Total
1997	352	246	220	818
1998	365	231	n/a	596
1999	359	233	n/a	592
2000	407	220	n/a	627
2001	403	230	n/a	633
2002[2]	469	230	n/a	699
2003	488	230	n/a	718
2004	490	231	n/a	721

[1] Historic Royal Palaces ceased to be a DCMS Agency when it became a Royal Charter Body on 1 April 1998.

[2] Staff in post rose significantly in between 1 April 2001 and 1 April 2002 reflecting machinery of government changes after the last election, which saw a transfer of staff from Cabinet Office and Home Office.

Olympic Games

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many Government officials will attend the Athens Olympic Games. [183552]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 12 July 2004]:* The Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport and myself attended the Olympic Games and both our Private Secretaries accompanied us on our visit. One press officer from DCMS was also present in Athens during the Olympics.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many Members of the Government will attend the Athens Olympic Games. [183553]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 12 July 2004]:* The Olympic Games in Athens was officially attended by four Members of Government—the Prime Minister, the First Minister for Scotland, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and myself.

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what class of hotel Ministers and officials will stay in while attending the Athens Olympic Games. [183554]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 12 July 2004]:* Ministers and officials stayed at the following accommodation in Athens:

The British embassy;

A four and three star hotel;

The campus of the British School of Archaeology.

All arrangements were made with the BOA, benefiting from their negotiated tariffs.

Tote

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the Government are prepared to sell the Tote to a body other than the Racing Trust. [188287]

Mr. Caborn: It remains the Government's policy to sell the Tote to the Racing Trust. Only if it proves impossible to effect such a sale on fair terms will the Government pursue other options.

DEFENCE

Detainees (Transfer to United States)

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the locations are of the detainees captured by British forces in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan and handed to the US. [183783]

Mr. Ingram: All persons apprehended by United Kingdom Forces in Iraq and transferred to United States forces, and who are still in custody, remain in Iraq.

The UK has not handed over to the US any persons apprehended in Afghanistan.

Human Rights Act

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what instructions he has issued to the Royal Military Police on the application to them of the Human Rights Act 1998 *(a)* in the United Kingdom and *(b)* abroad. [176324]

Mr. Ingram: Training provided to the Royal Military Police on the Human Rights Act relates directly to the exercise of their powers of arrest, search and seizure etc., as members of the service police. These powers, applicable only in relation to persons who are subject to the Service Disciplinary Acts, are exercisable wherever the RMP serve, whether at home or abroad.

During 2000, all RMP units received training on the implications of the Human Rights Act 1998, and changes in RMP arrest and custody procedures. Individuals joining the RMP since October 2000 have covered the same subject during their basic training, which includes relevant European Court of Justice (Strasbourg) Case Law.

Typhoon/Eurofighter

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Typhoon/Eurofighter will enter into service at RAF Leeming. [186621]

Mr. Ingram: The first two Typhoon bases will be RAF Coningsby and RAF Leuchars, the stations from which the Quick Reaction Alert (Interceptor) aircraft currently operate. No decision has been taken on a third Typhoon base.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information his Department collects on the number of section 30 authorisations and dispersal orders made under the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. [187221]

Ms Blears: The powers became operational in January 2004. We are undertaking a data capture exercise on use of the powers under section 30 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. The data will be available in the autumn.

Autistic People (Arrests)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned regarding numbers of *(a)* arrests, *(b)* charges and *(c)* convictions of persons who are autistic or suffer from Asperger's Syndrome; and what guidelines he has issued to police forces regarding the questioning of autistic suspects. [186816]

Ms Blears: No research of this kind has been commissioned by my Department and the data collected on arrests, prosecutions and convictions do not distinguish persons with particular disabilities.

No specific guidance has been issued by the Home Office relating to persons with autism or Asperger's Syndrome. However, there are currently strands of work focused on improving police practice in relation to mentally ill individuals. These are outlined in the reply to the hon. Member's question on provisions in place to increase awareness in the Criminal Justice System of the behaviour patterns of people with communication related difficulties.

Community Support Officers

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the community support officer scheme in Great Britain is expected to cost for the next five years; and what the expenditure was over the past five years. [186762]

Ms Blears: The new Neighbourhood Policing Fund has made £50 million available for recruitment of additional Community Support Officers (CSOs) in this financial year in England and Wales. This fund will allow forces to recruit an additional 20,000 CSOs by March 2008 and details of the funding which will be made available to achieve this will be published in time for the 2006–07 planning round. Government expenditure on CSOs since they were first introduced in September 2002 amounts to £49.5 million up to the end of July 2004.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the community support officer scheme in London is expected to cost the Government over the next five years; and what the expenditure was on the scheme in the last five years. [186764]

Ms Blears: The new Neighbourhood Policing Fund has made £50 million available for recruitment of additional Community Support Officers (CSOs) in this financial year and all chief officers in England and Wales have been invited to bid for a share of this. This fund will allow forces to recruit 20,000 more CSOs by March 2008 and details of the funding which will be made available to achieve this will be published in time for the 2006–07 planning round.

Government funding for CSOs in the Metropolitan police district amounts to approximately £23.5 million since CSOs were first introduced in September 2002.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much training is required for community support officers; and what the training involves. [186769]

Ms Blears: The length and scope of training for Community Support Officers (CSOs) is decided by individual chief officers. In most forces training lasts from four to six weeks and may include the use of powers, diversity, information gathering, first aid and tackling antisocial behaviour.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much it costs on average to train a new community support officer. [186906]

Ms Blears: There is no standard cost of training new Community Support Officers (CSOs) as this varies between forces. The £50 million made available this year to fund new CSOs under the Neighbourhood Policing Fund includes £2,500 per CSO as a contribution to set up costs including training.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what remuneration is given to community support officers. [186908]

Ms Blears: Remuneration of community support officers (CSOs) is a matter for individual forces to decide. The average amount paid to CSOs in 2003–04, including basic salary and allowances, was £19,591.

Databases

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 7 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 750W, on databases, if he will list the bulk information exchanges which have taken place in the last two years. [187337]

Caroline Flint: The Police Information Technology Information Organisation has not made any bulk exchanges with foreign Governments or agencies in the last two years. However, a list of lost/found vehicles from the Police National Computer is sent to Interpol in Lyon, France via the National Criminal Intelligence Service on a daily basis excluding weekends.

Departmental Costs

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what costs his Department has incurred on advertising and communication including contracts with public relations and advertising companies in each financial year since 1996–97. [180380]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 28 June 2004]*: The amount spent by the Home Office on communications including contracts was:

1996–97

£5.23 million on advertising and £8.328 million on total communications. Communication spend represents 0.13 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £6,416 million.

Campaigns included car crime, recruitment of special constables, fire safety and electoral registration.

1997–98

£1.4 million on advertising and £3.372 million on total communications. Communication spend represents 0.05 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £6,747 million.

Campaigns included recruitment of special constables, fire safety, absent voting and electoral registration.

1998–99

£1.8 million on advertising and £4.194 million on total communications. Communication spend represents 0.00005 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £7,608,178 million.

Campaigns included smoke alarm, recruitment of special constables, crime partnerships and electoral registration.

1999–2000

£5.65 million on advertising and £10.08 million on total communications. Communication spend represents 0.000012 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £7,996,184 million.

Campaigns included chip pan safety, fire safety, recruitment of special constables, European Parliament elections and electoral registration.

2000–01

£28.36 million on advertising and £35.637 million on total communications. Communication spend represents 0.00039 per cent. of total Home Office public expenditure of £9,068,695 million.

Campaigns included fire safety, vehicle crime and recruitment of police officers.

2001–02

£14.4 million on advertising and £25.1 million on total communications. Communication spend represents 0.00023 per cent. of total Home office public expenditure of £10,820,813 million.

Campaigns included fire safety (smoke alarms), vehicle crime, internet child protection, drugs, recruitment of police officers and special constables and postal voting.

2002–03

£9.9 million on advertising and £18.3 million on total communications. Communication spend represents 0.00013 per cent. of total Home Office public spending of £13,493,081 million.

Campaigns included vehicle crimes, internet child protection, drugs, firearms amnesty and recruitment of police officers.

2003–04

£12.487 million on advertising and £22.083 million on total communications. Communication spend represents 0.00017 per cent. of total Home Office public spending of £12,605,526 million.

Campaigns included vehicle crimes, internet child protection, drugs, recruitment of police officers and domestic violence.

Note:

The total public expenditure figures for 1996–97 and 1997–98 were compiled under a different accounting system to later years—and are therefore not directly comparable.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many road vehicles are operated by the Department and its agencies; how many personal injury accidents involving road vehicles operated by the Department have occurred within each of the last five years; and what the Department's policy is for managing work-related road safety. [185922]

Paul Goggins: There are currently 1,370 road vehicles operated by the Department and its agencies. The fleet listing by Department is as follows:

	Number
Prison Service	910
Forensic Science	84
Police	47
Immigration	287
Main HO	27
NASS	15

Information on personal injury claims lodged by staff in the Home Office and its agencies is not collated centrally, but is held by individual Departments/ agencies. However, the number of third-party personal injury claims against the Department within each of the last five years is as follows:

	Number
1999	7
2000	6
2001	5
2002	7
2003	4

To date in 2004 one third-party personal injury claim has been lodged against the Department.

Following changes in legislation in December 2003, the Department issued policy guidance on the use of hand held and hands free mobile telephones. The Home Office is reviewing the instructions and advice held in the Transport Manual to cover all aspects of the management of work-related road safety.

Until that work has been completed, general guidance derived from benchmark codes issued by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, the Highway Code and the fleet industry continues to be provided on request.

Distraction Burglary

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of distraction burglary against adults over the age of 60 were reported in each year since 1997. [186615]

Ms Blears: With effect from 1 April 2003, distraction burglary became a sub-category of "burglary dwelling" under the Home Office counting rules. Prior to that, data on the number of distraction burglaries recorded by the police were not routinely collected. However, data were collected from ad hoc surveys undertaken in 1998–99 and 2001 to 2003, which were reported in the

reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for the Vale of Clwyd (Chris Ruane) on 23 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1415W.

We plan to publish the figures for 2003–04 in October this year. Data broken down by the age of victim are not available.

Drug-related Crime

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the costs of drug-related crime in each year since 1997. [186555]

Caroline Flint: Estimates of the costs of drug-related crime are not available annually. However, a recent study published by the Home Office provides estimates of the total economic and social costs of Class A drug use and puts these in the range of £10.1 billion to £17.4 billion for the year 2000. These costs include the costs of drug-related crime, which are estimated to fall in the range £8.8 billion to £15.8 billion. The costs of drug-related crime include victim costs and those accruing to courts, prisons and other parts of the criminal justice system.

Firearms

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the numbers of illegal *(a)* guns and *(b)* gun certificates that were used in legal ownership in each of the last 10 years. [185909]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: Details of the legal status of firearms used in recorded crimes, and the illegal use of firearm certificates, are not available.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* rifles and *(b)* shotguns that have never been legally held have been used in recorded crimes since January 2000; [186123]

(2) how many *(a)* rifles and *(b)* shotguns that were once legally held but which have been (i) stolen and (ii) mislaid have been used in recorded crime since January 2000; [186124]

(3) how many legally held *(a)* rifles and *(b)* shotguns have been used in recorded crimes since January 2000. [186125]

Caroline Flint: Details of the legal status of firearms used in recorded crimes are not available.

Football Banning Orders

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many banning orders were issued as a result of Euro 2004; [183785]

(2) how many England supporters were *(a)* arrested, *(b)* arrested and charged and *(c)* arrested, charged and issued with banning orders with regard to Euro 2004; [183786]

(3) what the total cost was of the UK police operations for Euro 2004; and what costs have been covered by the Portuguese authorities. [183787]

Caroline Flint: As of 2 August 2004, the courts have imposed football banning orders on 38 individuals as a result of Euro 2004. Of these, 35 orders have been imposed as a result of individuals being intercepted by the police en-route to Portugal on the basis of evidence of previous involvement in violence or disorder, while three orders have been imposed on the basis of violence and disorder during the tournament. In addition, 48 individuals are currently subject to unresolved banning order proceedings as a result of being intercepted en-route to the tournament and eight individuals are subject to proceedings prompted by conviction of offences of violence and disorder in Portugal. The police may commence further proceedings in the light of evidence received from the Portuguese authorities. Updated information will be included in a detailed report on Euro 2004 to be submitted to Parliament in September.

Race Hate Crime

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many reported incidents of race hate crimes there have been against *(a)* people with learning difficulties, *(b)* people with disabilities, *(c)* gays, lesbians and bisexuals and *(d)* transsexuals there have been in (i) St. Helens and (ii) England and Wales, broken down by region, in each year since 1997; and what percentage *(A)* were brought to court and *(B)* resulted in a successful prosecution in each case. [186909]

Ms Blears: This information is not collected centrally.

Police

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent by the Metropolitan police on rental vehicles in each month since September 2003. [187063]

Ms Blears: I understand from the Commissioner of the Metropolitan police that expenditure has been as follows:

	£000
September 2003	668
October 2003	965
November 2003	798
December 2003	603
January 2004	890
February 2004	998
March 2004	1,143
April 2004	877
May 2004	697
June 2004	1,026
July 2004	1,108

The monthly figures include both local (for borough operational command units) and corporate hire (covering centrally hired vehicles for special events).

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what additional funding he will make available to Devon and Cornwall police to *(a)* enforce the Government's Alcohol Strategy and *(b)* continue funding police community support officers. [183749]

Ms Blears: On 7 July 2004 the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers (APCO) announced that police in England and Wales would be working with their partners in a fresh drive to tackle alcohol-related crime and disorder. The enforcement campaign takes forward one of the recommendations contained in the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England that was published on 15 March 2004. Plymouth and Cornwall and Isle of Scilly (Newquay) police Basic Command Units (BCUs) from the Devon and Cornwall police force are taking part in the campaign. BCUs can apply to the Police Standards Unit in the Home Office for funding to assist them in undertaking enforcement activity during the campaign. Provisionally £2,500 has been allocated to Devon and Cornwall police force to fund enforcement activity in Newquay.

As part of the Spending Review 2004 the Government made a commitment to recruit 20,000 Community Support Officers (CSOs) by 2008 and forces will be eligible for funding to help them meet this target. As yet it is too early to say how the additional funding for CSOs will be allocated. However, a new Neighbourhood Policing Fund will be provided to develop local policing teams across England and Wales.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was in 2003–04 of policing in *(a)* Havering and *(b)* London. [186910]

Ms Blears: The Metropolitan Police Service's (MRS) net budget requirement in 2003–04 was £2,207.8 million and the net budget for the City of London was £67.2 million. Distribution of resources within the MPS is a matter for the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and the Metropolitan Police Authority.

Resources are allocated directly to borough operational command units using the Service's resource allocation formula. In addition, borough units are able to call upon all-London Units (such as dog sections, Territorial Support Group, Traffic and Air Support Units) when operational priorities dictate.

The Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis informs me that the budget for the Havering Borough Operational Command Unit in 2003–04 was £17.3 million. This reflects direct operational costs. The cost of specialist units, non-operational support units and all-London units providing service to Havering was additional and could only be calculated at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were employed by Suffolk police in each year since 1 April 1997. [187189]

Ms Blears: On 31 May 2004 Suffolk constabulary had 1,293 police officers, 113 more than in March 1997. The table shows strength for each year since March 1997.

Suffolk constabulary—strength: March 1997 to May 2004

As at 31 March	*Police numbers*[1]
1997	1,180
1998	1,186
1999	1,190
2000	1,145
2001	1,133
2002	1,203
2003	1,253
2004 (31 May)	1,293

[1] Source for 1997 to March 2003 is the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS). May 2004 was collected separately outside of the normal data collection arrangements and has not been subject to the same validation as RDS data. Data collected by RDS for 31 March 2004 will be published shortly.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what central Government funding was available for CCTV in each of the last seven years for the Suffolk Police constabulary area. [187193]

Ms Blears: Since 2000 the Home Office has provided £960,936 to Suffolk for Close Circuit Television (CCTV) schemes, through the Crime reduction Programme's CCTV initiative.

This breaks down as:

CCTV Round 1 (2000–01—2002–03): £395,024

CCTV Round 2 (2001–02—2002–03): £605,912

Security Industry Authority

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how his Department measures the performance of the Security Industry Authority; [187344]

(2) what has been the budget of the Security Industry Authority in each year since 2001; [187345]

(3) when the Security Industry Authority proposes to implement the regulation of wheel clampers. [187350]

Ms Blears: The Security Industry Authority (SIA) was established as a non-departmental public body on April 2003. Prior to this date the implementation unit formed part of the Home Office.

The SIA budget for 2003–04 was £15.5 million. The expenditure incurred totalled £12.9 million.

Full information is available in the SIA Annual Report and Accounts which is available in the House.

The SIA expenditure budget for 2004–05 is £26 million.

The Department has worked closely with the SIA throughout its development and a member of the sponsor department attends Board meetings. Annually the Minister agrees targets for the SIA, which are appropriate to the development stage reached. The targets for 2003–04 are included in their recently published Annual Report and Accounts together with a record of their significant achievements. The report and accounts are available from HMSO or can be viewed on the SIA website.

The overall SIA Aims are set out in their agreed managerial and financial framework:

Improving the performance, standards and opportunities of people working in the private security industry by introducing and achieving compliance within a licensing system.

Encouraging business in the industry to improve their standards by creating a framework for developing, promoting and spreading best practice.

Creating a centre of knowledge and expertise, which enables and encourages effective industry development and investment.

Strengthening the extended police family by encouraging and supporting further engagement of the private security industry.

Witness Protection

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the average number of police officers deployed on witness protection schemes was in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by police force; [184959]

(2) what police resources have been allocated to witness protection schemes in each of the last five years, broken down by police force. [184960]

Caroline Flint: This information is not currently available. The Home Office, in conjunction with the Scottish Executive, the Northern Ireland Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers, has appointed an independent consultant to carry out an assessment of witness protection arrangements nationally. The assessment is covering all cases where witness protection is afforded by UK law enforcement agencies including the police. It will provide us with valuable information about the numbers and circumstances in which witness protection is provided and the amount of police time allocated to it.

The assessment commenced on 2 January; it was announced in the White Paper "One Step Ahead—a 21st century strategy to defeat organised crime", which I published on 29 March. The assessment is due to be completed over the summer, and a final report will be available in the autumn.

However, even after completion of this assessment, we are not intending to make available publicly any of this information below national level. Such information broken down by individual police forces is obviously operationally sensitive and could compromise the integrity of witness protection programmes and the officers who work on them.

PRIME MINISTER

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his office is responsible. [187321]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes, my office is part of the Cabinet Office. My office has one smoking room. Rooms for worship, nursing mothers and pregnant women are shared with the Cabinet Office.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Criminal Justice Board

21. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Solicitor-General what recent discussions she has had with the Home Secretary on the work of the Criminal Justice Board. [187722]

The Solicitor-General: I have discussions with the Home Secretary on the work of the Criminal Justice Board at the Criminal Justice Board and also at the routine meetings of all criminal justice Ministers.

Hate Crimes

22. **Mr. Dismore:** To ask the Solicitor-General what her policy is towards the prosecution of *(a)* anti-Semitic and *(b)* Islamophobic hate crimes. [187723]

The Solicitor-General: The policy of prosecution of anti-Semitic and Islamophobic crime is set out in the CPS' policy document of July 2003.

In all cases there are two tests: whether there is sufficient evidence for the court to convict; and whether a prosecution is in the public interest. It will usually be in the public interest to prosecute cases of racist, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic crime.

Animal Rights Extremism

23. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the role of the Crown Prosecution Service in tackling animal rights extremism. [187724]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service takes very seriously the prosecution of animal rights extremists who commit criminal offences.

There is now a co-ordinator for this work in each CPS area.

The Attorney-General is a member of the inter-ministerial group tackling animal rights extremism and chairs the forum of the agencies who are engaged in dealing with this problem.

Case Progress (Information)

24. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Solicitor-General what steps she is taking to keep victims informed of the progress of their cases. [187725]

The Solicitor-General: The Government are working with the police, prosecutors and courts, as well as voluntary and community organisations to take steps to ensure that victims will be confident to report offences and give evidence in court where necessary. A central part of that effort is ensuring victims are kept informed at all stages of the case.

Pre-charge Investigations

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the progress of the pilot schemes to involve the Crown Prosecution Service in the pre-charge investigation process; and whether time savings have been identified from such pilot schemes. [175512]

The Solicitor-General: Following the charging pilots in 2002–3, and the legislative changes in the Criminal Justice Act 2003, the Crown Prosecution Service, in partnership with the police, are implementing the charging arrangements.

Shadow Charging arrangements have been implemented in all police force areas in England and Wales, and crown prosecutors now provide charging advice at 248 of the 373 operational units during normal office hours.

A Commencement Order (under the Criminal Justice Act 2003) was issued on the 29 January 2004, which allows the Director of Public Prosecutions to apply Statutory Charging arrangements. The statutory scheme was first applied at Longsight in Greater Manchester. The scheme has since been rolled out across West Yorkshire, Kent, South Yorkshire, Cleveland, Lancashire, Northumbria, Avon & Somerset, Nottinghamshire, Humberside and Greater Manchester.

It is expected that the benefits will be a reduction in the rate of discontinuances to 69 per cent. guilty plea rate to increase by 30 per cent. and the conviction rate to increase by 15 per cent.

Early consultation between police officers and crown prosecutors will assist in getting the charge right first time, and reducing remedial work often required to bring cases up to appropriate quality standards. Weeding out weak prosecutions at an early stage will save further effort for both the police and the Crown Prosecution Service. In addition, an increase in guilty pleas will result in fewer trials, with benefits for not only the police and the Crown Prosecution Service, but also the courts. These improvements will result in an estimated 3.2 per cent. efficiency gain on contested cases going through the criminal justice system.

HEALTH

A and E (Chorley and South Ribble)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hours a day of consultants' time on average was spent in the accident and emergency department at Chorley and South Ribble Hospital in the last year for which figures are available. [187506]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not collected centrally.

As at 31 March 2004, there were seven accident and emergency consultants within Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust.

Source:

Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Age-related Disease

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what public funding has been made available over the last three years for research into age-related disease; and what funding plans he has for the future. [186830]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC funds basic and clinical studies on health ageing and on the causes, prevention and treatment of a wide range of conditions that affect the elderly in particular. Details of MRC expenditure in this area are shown in the table.

	Amount (£ million)
2001–02	18.7
2002–03	27.9
2003–04	Not yet available

The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national sealth service. Spend by the Department's national research programmes on projects specifically related to the health of older people is shown in the table.

	Amount (£ million)
2001–02	1.7
2002–03	1.9
2003–04	1.9

In addition, the NHS reported spending £36.7 million in 2001–02 and £34 million in 2002–03 on research relating to older people from research and development support funding allocations. Information for 2003–04 is not yet available.

Each of these areas of research activity is ongoing.

Alzheimer's

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the expenditure was on drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease patients in Reading, East for the latest year for which figures are available; [187015]

(2) how many patients are being treated for Alzheimer's disease in Reading, East; and how many of these are receiving drug treatment. [187016]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of patients treated for Alzheimer's disease by individual primary care trusts (PCTs) is not collected centrally. Data on the number of prescription items dispensed in the community, and the net ingredient cost is collected by the Prescription Pricing Authority. The total number of prescription items dispensed for dementia drugs, and the net ingredient cost of these drugs, in the area covered by Reading PCT in 2003–04 is shown in the table.

Total number of prescription items and net ingredient cost for "Drugs for Dementia" (BNF 4.11, treatment of Alzheimer's Disease) dispensed in the community for Reading PCT in 2003–04

	Number of prescription items	*Net ingredient cost (£)*
Reading PCT	96	8,278
England total	392,652	34,217,012

Notes:

1. Prescription cost analysis (PCA) data covers all prescriptions items that are dispensed in the community in England. PCA data does not include items dispensed in hospitals or private prescriptions.
2. Drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease are classified in the British National Formulary section 4.11 (Drugs for Dementia) and include the drugs Donepezil, Rivastigmine, Galantamine and Memantine.

3. Information on the number of patients receiving prescriptions for these drugs is not available, but numbers of prescription items of all prescriptions dispensed in the community in Reading PCT (this is not necessarily the same as where the drugs were prescribed) and the net ingredient cost (NIC) is provided.
4. Prescriptions are written on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.
5. The NIC is the basic cost of a drug. This cost does not take account of discounts, dispensing costs, fees or prescription charge income.
Source:
PCA data from the Prescription Pricing Authority.

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the total expenditure on drugs available on the NHS for Alzheimer's disease was in Dartford in the latest year for which figures are available; [187025]

(2) how many Alzheimer's disease patients are being treated by primary care trusts in Dartford; [187026]

(3) how much was spent by the NHS on drug treatments for advanced Alzheimer's disease patients in Dartford in the latest year for which figures are available; [187027]

(4) what assessment his Department has made of the availability of drugs for patients with moderately severe to severe Alzheimer's disease in Dartford. [187030]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of Alzheimer's disease patients being treated by individual primary care trusts (PCTs) is not collected centrally. Data on the number of prescription items dispensed in the community and the net ingredient cost are collected by the Prescription Pricing Authority. The total number of prescription items dispensed for dementia drugs and the net ingredient costs of these drugs, in the area covered by Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT in 2003–04 is shown in the table.

Total number of prescription items and net ingredient cost for "Drugs for Dementia" (BNF 4.11, treatment of Alzheimer's disease dispensed in the community for Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT in 2003–04

	Number of prescription items (Thousand)	*Net ingredient cost (£000)*
Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT	1.2	105.5
England total	392.7	34,217.0

Notes:
1. Prescription cost analysis (PCA) data covers all prescription items that are dispensed in the community in England. PCA data does not include items dispensed in hospitals or private prescriptions.
2. Drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease are classified in the British National Formulary section 4.11 (Drugs for Dementia) and include the drugs Donepezil, Rivastigmine, Galantamine and Memantine.
3. Information on the number of patients receiving prescriptions for these drugs is not available, but numbers of prescription items of all prescriptions dispensed in the community in Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT (this is not necessarily the same as where the drugs were prescribed) and the net ingredient cost (NIC) is provided.
4. Prescriptions are written on a prescription form. Each single item written on the form is counted as a prescription item.
5. The NIC is the basic cost of a drug. This cost does not take account of discounts, dispensing costs, fees or prescription charge income.
Source:
PCA data from the Prescription Pricing Authority.

It is not possible to provide a breakdown for expenditure on drug treatments for advanced Alzheimer's patients for Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT.

The Department has not made an assessment of the availability of drugs for patients with moderately severe to severe Alzheimer's disease in Dartford. It is for PCTs, in conjunction with strategic health authorities to ensure that services meet local needs.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what access (*a*) primary care trusts and (*b*) NHS trusts who failed to secure local multi-disciplinary team status for chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis services within their zone have to these services; and if he will make a statement; [186743]

(2) what plans he has to extend specialist services and local multi-disciplinary teams for people with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis to other areas; and if he will make a statement. [186746]

Dr. Ladyman: A central budget of £8.5 million for chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalopathy (CFS/ME) services runs from 2004 to 2006 and is intended to pump prime service development and start developing clinical services where none previously exist.

In addition to providing this extra funding, we have also asked the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to develop guidelines for the diagnosis and management of CFS/ME.

We have invested heavily in improving national health service services. Up to 2003–04, expenditure on the NHS has increased by an average of 6.2 per cent. in real terms each year since this Government came to power. NHS expenditure is set to further increase by an average of 7.2 per cent. in real terms over the five year period 2003–04 to 2007–08. Over three years, this will take the total spent on the NHS in England from £69 billion in 2004–05 to £92 billion in 2007–08.

It is the responsibility of primary care trusts to decide how to use this extra funding to meet the needs of their populations, including those with CFS/ME.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much money the Government has invested in the study of myalgic encephalomyelitis since 1997; [186833]

(2) how much money the Government plan to invest in the study of myalgic encephalomyelitis over the next five years. [186835]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Actual and forecast expenditure on chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis since 1997

	£ million
Completed research projects	0.3
Current research	4.3

£4.2 million of the current research total has been allocated to two five year Medical Research Council trials announced in 2003.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. Details of individual projects, including some concerned with myalgic encephalomyelitis, can be found on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Cotton Nappies

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to make a financial contribution towards the start-up costs of *(a)* the provision of free cotton nappies for in-house use and *(b)* an awareness campaign to promote use of cotton nappies in the Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust; and if he will make a statement. [187480]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for individual units and trusts to decide on the practicalities of promoting the use of cotton nappies in their own maternity units. In line with our policy to devolve decision making to those at the front line of national health service provision I do not see a role in these decisions for a central Government Department. I understand that Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust does not provide any nappies at present unless it is an emergency situation.

Cystic Fibrosis

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce testing of all newborn babies for cystic fibrosis. [186977]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Ministers have agreed to the implementation of a new national programme for newborn cystic fibrosis screening. About a fifth of babies born in England are currently offered screening for cystic fibrosis. At the request of the United Kingdom national screening committee, an implementation plan to support the national health service is being developed by the UK newborn screening programme centre, a collaboration between Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, the Institute of Child Health and the Institute of Education.

Device Evaluation Service

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what are the long-term plans for the device evaluation service; and which agency will be responsible for its day to day management. [187119]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The device evaluation service is actively involved in both the Health Industries Task Force (HITF) and the review of the Department's arm's length bodies. A formal announcement about the service will be made together with HITF recommendations later this year.

Diabetes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the proven side effects are of long-term consumption of analogue human insulin. [187054]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Clinical trials submitted at the time of licensing have examined the safety and efficacy of the human insulin analogues (insulin glargine, insulin aspart and insulin lispro) in diabetic patients treated for up to 12 months. Generally, the side effects observed with the human insulin analogues were similar to those seen with existing human insulins, with the most commonly observed side effects being hypoglycaemia, visual disturbance and injection reactions.

The longer term safety of the use of human insulin analogues in routine clinical practice is closely monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. Any possible new safety issue to emerge is evaluated and, if necessary, product information for prescribers and patients is updated.

Full guidance on prescribing and use of human insulin analogues, including possible side effects is provided in the summary of product characteristics (the product information for prescribers) and the patient information leaflet. Key prescribing information is also included in the British National Formulary, which is made available by the Department to doctors and pharmacists.

Free Health Tests (Pensioners)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost of providing pensioners with a free annual *(a)* eye test, *(b)* dental check and *(c)* hearing test. [186455]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We restored entitlement to free sight tests for people aged 60 and over in 1999 and hearing tests have always been available free of charge for patients referred to a national health service audiology department. People on low incomes may be exempt from dental charges or may only have to pay a reduced charge. We estimate that patient income of some £23 million per year would be lost if dental examinations were made free to all people aged 60 and over.

Free Prescription Scheme

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the percentage of people who will claim under the free prescription NHS low income scheme; and if he will make a statement. [187490]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No such estimate has been made. In 2003–04, the Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA) received 731,000 claims for help from people in England, Scotland and Wales. Claims can cover more than one person and successful claims may confer entitlement for more than one year. Based on recent trends, the PPA expects the number of claims in the current financial year to be lower than last year.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans there are for arrangements to promote public awareness of the changes in free prescriptions from 6 April. [187542]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The leaflet, "Help with Health Costs HC11 Quick Guide", which has been placed in the Library, notes that the threshold for full help with health costs has been increased. In addition a poster, prepared in conjunction with Citizens Advice, is currently being printed and Department of Work and Pensions staff have been told of the change via a joint income support/jobseekers allowance bulletin.

GP Surgeries

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has for additional general practitioner surgeries in (*a*) the constituency of Bury St. Edmunds and (*b*) Suffolk. [187199]

Dr. Ladyman: We have no current plans for additional general practitioner surgeries in the constituency of Bury St. Edmunds or Suffolk and there are currently no applications in the fourth wave for national health service local investment finance trust schemes in either Bury St. Edmunds or Suffolk.

It is now for primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services, based on the specialised knowledge they have of the local community.

Hepatitis B

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation sub-group on hepatitis B is next planning to meet; and when it plans to make a decision on hepatitis B immunisation policy; [187169]

(2) when the Government plan to implement the World Health Organisation recommendation that all countries should adopt a hepatitis B universal mass vaccination programme. [187170]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A working group of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) is currently reviewing the United Kingdom's hepatitis B immunisation programme. The group is planning to meet later this year and will report to JCVI early next year.

Home Births

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate he has made of the effect on (*a*) numbers of beds available and (*b*) other resources of women having home births; [187556]

(2) what assessment he has made of the relative costs of an uncomplicated natural delivery at home and an uncomplicated natural delivery in hospital; and what assessment has been made in respect of individual hospitals. [187557]

Dr. Ladyman: The proportion of deliveries that takes place at home has been around 2 per cent. since 1995, having risen from less than 1 per cent. in the late 1980s. This is so small that it will have little effect on the availability of hospital maternity beds. The resource implications of women having home births will vary and are a matter for local national health service bodies.

We have not made any assessment of the costs of deliveries in respect of any individual hospital. The average overall cost of a hospital and home birth normal delivery without complications or co-morbidities is shown in the table.

Type of delivery	*Number*[1]	*Average cost (£)*
Non-elective in-patient (hospital births)	314,683	817
Day case (hospital births)	1,071	386
Community midwifery services (home births)	6,855	541

[1] Data source: reference costs 2003 data (relating to financial year 2002-03), as published in appendix SRC1 of the "Payment by Results Core Tools 2004" document (Department of Health).

Hospital Infections

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost of the cleanyourhands campaign is for 2004-05. [186511]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The estimated cost of producing and distributing the campaign materials is about £370,000. Alcohol hand gels will be an extra cost. An economic assessment of the campaign suggests that if the success of the campaign pilot is replicated, £140 million will be saved.

Organ Removal

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the new measures and procedures that have been introduced to stop the illegal removal of organs from deceased adults and children. [187082]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are taking the following measures to stop the illegal removal of organs from deceased adults and children.

The Retained Organs Commission (ROC) was set up in April 2001 to oversee the return of organs and tissues to families, and where requested, to provide advocacy to families and to advise trusts. The ROC issued its final report in March 2004 and this can be found at http://www.nhs.uk/retainedorgans.

The Government's Human Tissue Bill, which had its second reading in the House of Lords in July 2004, provides the regulation of removal, storage and use of human organs and tissue. The Bill also makes provision for the creation of a new body, the Human Tissue Authority (HTA), which will prepare statutory guidance on all matters within its remit, as set out in the Bill.

Pending completion of the Bill's passage through Parliament and the establishment of the HTA, the Department published two documents in April 2003: "The Use of human organs and Tissue, An Interim Statement" and "Families and post mortems, A Code of Practice". These provide guidance on the use of human organs and tissue and recommended practice for ensuring consent is obtained for hospital post-mortems and for the retention and use of organs following a hospital or coroner's post-mortem. These publications can be found on the Department's website.

The Department has also provided Section 64 grant funding to the National Bereavement Partnership to set up a helpline to support families and the general public affected by issues around post mortems and the possible retention of organs or tissues. This helpline will be able to provide essential information and advise those affected how they might take an inquiry forward with their local national health service trust.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received from the parents of deceased children whose organs were retained without permission concerning the sensitivity of questions they have had to answer in pursuit of compensation. [187080]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not received representations from the parents of children whose organs were retained without permission concerning the sensitivity of questions they have had to answer in pursuit of compensation.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the length of time that it has taken to compensate the relatives of those whose organs were retained without permission. [187081]

Ms Rosie Winterton: An offer of compensation was made in November 2002 to all relatives claiming in relation to organ retention. The offer was rejected and the case proceeded to court. Mr. Justice Gage decided on three test cases in a group litigation on 26 March 2004. A mediation date of 27 September has been set for further discussions with the NHS Litigation Authority and the claimants lawyers with a view to settling the claim.

Intensive Care (Babies)

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in how many National Health Service trusts there has been a reduction of intensive care Special Care Baby Unit beds over the two years to August. [187559]

Dr. Ladyman: Data on the number of intensive care special care baby unit beds are not available.

Life Expectancy

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in reducing inequalities in life expectancy in each *(a)* local authority and *(b)* primary care trust area. [180276]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We are committed to achieving our public service agreement target on health inequalities:

"By 2010 reduce inequalities in health outcome by 10 per cent. as measured by infant mortality and life expectancy at birth".

The life expectancy aspect of the target is underpinned by a more detailed target:

"Starting with local authorities, by 2010 to reduce the gap in life expectancy by at least 10 per cent. between the fifth of areas with the worst health and deprivation indicators and the population as a whole".

Information on the progress made in reducing inequalities in life expectancy within each local authority and primary care trust is therefore not collected centrally.

We are also looking to reduce substantially the health inequalities gap from heart disease, stroke and related diseases and cancer by at least 40 per cent. and six per cent. respectively between the fifth of areas with the worst health and deprivation indicators and the population as a whole. As part of this effort, we have set a target for reducing smoking prevalence among routine manual groups to 26 per cent. or less by 2010.

NHS Dentistry

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists left the NHS in each year from 2000–01. [186477]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the total number of dentists leaving the general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) is shown in the table. The main reasons for the dentists leaving were retirement and short-term career breaks.

General dental service and personal dental service: number of leavers at 30 September each year, England and Wales

	Exits
2000	1,228
2001	1,257
2002	1,374
2003	1,256

Source:
Dental Practice Board.

The numbers of GDS and PDS dentists have increased from 16,722 at December 1997 to 19,278 at December 2003; an increase of over 2,500.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest average waiting time to have an infected wisdom tooth removed on the NHS is; and what targets he has set to improve waiting times for the removal of wisdom teeth. [187136]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In 2003, the mean waiting time was 91 days for extractions at national health service hospitals. In year 2000, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence advised that the surgical removal of impacted wisdom teeth should be limited to patients with evidence of pathology. Implementation of this advice and the expansion of the dental workforce announced by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Health, on 16 July should reduce the pressures on hospital dental departments.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on NHS dentistry in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [187293]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The general dental service (GDS) is currently managed on a national basis as a non-discretionary service. Expenditure is not pre-determined by allocations but is driven largely by patient demand and the activity of dentists. At present, neither primary care trusts nor dentists are allocated any specific GDS budgets or quotas. Actual spend since 1997 to date has been:

	Expenditure (£ million)
1997–98	959
1998–99	1,022
1999–2000	1,058
2000–01	1,139
2001–02	1,202
2002–03	1,263

Expenditure figures represent the Government's net spend on GDS after taking account of the contribution to costs from dental charges paid by patients. Figures from 1997–98 to 1999–2000 are cash based. Figure.. for

2001–02 onwards are resource based. Figures from 1998–99 include expenditure on new personal dental service pilot schemes.

Expenditure figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proposals his Department has to ensure that when a person requires dental treatment they are clearly informed *(a)* whether a dental practice provides NHS treatment and *(b)* what the cost of non-NHS treatment they require will be; and if he will make a statement. [187606]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since publication of the Office of Fair Trading's report, "The private dentistry market in the UK" (March 2003), we have been working with the General Dental Council (GDC) to strengthen the regulation of private dentistry. The GDC has published "Standards of Dental Practice", which requires that dentists give full information on proposed treatment and costs to patients to enable them to make well-informed decisions on the type of treatment they are to receive. We will also be amending the Dentists Act 1984 to give the GDC new powers to ensure the fitness to practise of dentists and to establish a scheme to investigate and resolve complaints about private dental treatment. The amendments will come into effect early in 2005.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to improve orthodontic departments at NHS hospitals. [187137]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are undertaking the most fundamental reform of national health service dentistry since the inception of the NHS. The Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 provides the commissioning of general dental services is to be delegated to primary care trusts from October 2005. This will ensure that the developing dental specialities in primary care, including orthodontics, are given the right opportunities to contribute more to NHS patient care. Provision of more specialist dental care in a high street setting will mean that practitioners no longer need to refer patients who could be treated in a primary care setting to hospital. In this way, staff at hospital dental departments will be able to concentrate on more complex treatments.

Out of Hours GP Cover

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the NHS Litigation Authority will be liable in cases of clinical negligence where the negligent treatment was provided by a private or foreign healthcare provider under contract for the NHS. [187382]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The NHS Litigation Authority administers the clinical negligence scheme for trusts (CNST) in England. The CNST provides indemnity against claims for clinical negligence for member organisations, which include national health service trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs).

Indemnity for cases arising from clinical negligence is as follows:

Before July 2004, indemnity for clinical negligence for independent sector treatment centres (ISTCs) was covered by commercial insurance arrangements. Subsequently, on a progressive basis, indemnity is now provided through the CNST cover provided to PCTs. The arrangements between ISTCs and PCTs are covered in their contracts.

For patients referred to foreign healthcare providers, indemnity for clinical negligence is usually covered by the CNST arrangements of the referring PCT or NHS Trust.

For other private organisations the liability depends upon the terms and conditions of the contract between the PCT, NHS Trust and the private body concerned.

Variant CJD

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research his Department has commissioned on the treatment of variant CJD. [186670]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department is currently funding a £3.5 million research programme designed to identify and evaluate potential treatment for Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. Potential therapies arising from that research will be assessed using a clinical trial protocol the Medical Research Council has developed in conjunction with the Department.

Waiting Lists

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times for residents of Great Yarmouth in the last seven years. [186703]

Dr. Ladyman: The changes to national health service waiting times for the residents of Great Yarmouth over the past seven years, the latest data available, are shown in the following table.

Count of elective in-year admissions (waiting list and booked cases) with mean and median time waited, 1996–97 to 2002–03 primary care trust (PCT) code (PCT of residence) = 5GT, (Great Yarmouth)—NHS hospitals, England

	In-year admissions	*Days Mean time waited*	*Median time waited*
1996–97	10,171	70	28
1997–98	9,933	78	28
1998–99	10,280	79	33
1999–2000	9,792	68	31
2000–01	9,563	71	33
2001–02	7,501	78	33
2002–03	8,211	93	36

Note:

1. An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1April at the start of the datayear. Periods of care ongoing at the end of the datayear (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
3. Time waited statistics from hospital episode statistics (HES) are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.

Source:

HES, Department of Health.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Magistrates Court Cells (Aberystwyth)

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the minimum health and safety requirements are for magistrates court cells. [187076]

Mr. Leslie: Health and safety requirements of cell areas are not measured in a way that an overall minimum standard could be determined.

Each aspect of a cell area (e.g. the custody suite, interview rooms and vehicle access) is individually assessed and rated. From this an overall risk assessment is compiled and the consequent recommendations are made.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the basis was for the decision to stop using Aberystwyth Magistrates Court cells for the holding of offenders; and if he will make a statement. [187077]

Mr. Leslie: Aberystwyth Magistrates Court is still used for custodial cases, but on a limited basis (for cases for trial or sentence only).

Following the Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS) audit on 2 June 2004, an agreement was reached to keep the cells open. This was on the basis that occupation of the custody accommodation can be controlled in respect of numbers and length of time held and that potential risk can be assessed in each individual case.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate has been made of the cost of bringing the cells in Aberystwyth Magistrates Court up to the health and safety standard required to allow them to be used to hold offenders. [187078]

Mr. Leslie: Aberystwyth Magistrates Court is still used for custodial cases, but on a limited basis (for cases for trial or sentence only).

The local authority has responsibility for Aberystwyth Magistrates Court until it is transferred to my Department on 1 April 2005. An assessment of the cell area has been made by the Magistrates Court Committee, which concluded that the cell area could not be adapted to the extent that it would meet all the standards. This is due to structural issues, which prevent the required level of work. Consequently, no estimate has been prepared.

My Department is currently considering proposals to provide alternative facilities in the Aberystwyth area.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

University Examinations

12. **Mr. Luff:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment he has made of the integrity of the results of university examinations. [187706]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department has made no such assessment. As autonomous, independent bodies, universities are responsible for ensuring the integrity of their assessment processes and outcomes. Institutions are assisted in this by guidance from the Quality Assurance Agency, and by independent external examiners who verify the standards of assessments and of the results achieved by students. The Quality Assurance Agency audits the management of quality in universities, and from this year onwards, the judgments of External Examiners will be published.

School Security

13. **Mr. Wiggin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, if he will make a statement on security in schools. [187707]

Margaret Hodge: Schools should be both secure and open for community use. Balancing these needs can be difficult, so we issued guidance with the Home Office to advise schools and local authorities on how to deal with intruders and prevent intrusion in the first place. The Government also provided funds—£10 million in 2002–03—and evaluation of that programme shows schools are improving their security and getting the balance right.

Education Maintenance Allowances

14. **Mrs. Betty Williams:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, what assessment he has made of the take-up of education maintenance allowances. [187708]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At the start of September, around 150,000 young people in England had already applied for an EMA. This already represents around 50 per cent. of young people eligible for the scheme and we expect more applications over the coming weeks. The EMA scheme has proved its effectiveness in the pilots we have run, and it will allow young people from poorer households to succeed in a wide variety of vocational and academic courses.

School Sport

16. **Mr. Love:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to increase participation in sport in schools. [187712]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government are investing over £1 billion in England to transform school sport. This is delivering an ambitious Public Service Agreement target to increase the percentage of 5–16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport to 75 per cent. by 2006 and to 85 per cent. by 2008.

Children's Commissioner

17. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what mechanisms will be put in place for the Children's Commissioner to liaise with the Children's Commissioners in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. [187713]

Margaret Hodge: I hope that the four United Kingdom Commissioners will draw up their own co-operation arrangements so as best to serve the children

for which they are responsible. We are currently examining across Government how the Children Bill could best enable or assist them to do this. To this end, I have arranged to meet colleagues from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales next week.

Bullying

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to tackle bullying in schools. [187710]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We take all bullying seriously and attach great importance to tackling it.

In November 2003, I launched the "Make The Difference" campaign at the first of a programme of conferences for headteachers. The campaign includes a public information film, "Tell Someone", to encourage children who are being bullied to tell someone and the Anti-Bullying Charter for Schools. We have also funded the Anti-Bullying Alliance to maintain the momentum of the campaign.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance will:

work with teachers, schools and local education authorities to promote anti-bullying best practice across all schools, including the use of peer support schemes;

develop innovative, practical approaches to tackling bullying, including the modern menace of bullying by text messaging, email and Internet chat;

provide support for parents in severe cases of bullying, including referrals across the Alliance's regional and national network, where all other avenues to resolve the bullying have been exhausted;

develop and oversee anti-bullying resources and information for schools and parents, including an anti-bullying website containing practical support and advice; and

run an annual national anti-bullying week of events and activities to teach young people that all forms of bullying are wrong and promote active ways in which to show no tolerance to it.

Capital Funding

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the Answer given on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 771W, on Building Schools for the Future, what specific action his Department has taken to encourage local authorities and local learning and skills councils to consult each other in formulating their proposals and plans for priority capital funding. [187037]

Mr. Miliband: The Department encourages local authorities and local Learning and Skills Councils to consult each other in formulating their plans for capital investment. Specific action includes: guidance to local Learning and Skills Councils and further education providers requires them to discuss their plans with the relevant local authority; guidance to local authorities on asset management planning requires consultation with the relevant local Learning and Skills Council; guidance on the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme requires proposals for BSF projects to include the local Learning and Skills Councils, among others, as active partners; guidance for local Learning and Skills Councils on taking forward Strategic Area Reviews of post-16 provision requires that local authorities must be represented on their stakeholder groups and actively involved in carrying out the reviews. In addition, the Department and the Learning and Skills Council are looking at ways to forge closer links between the Council and the new Partnerships for Schools (PfS) body, set up to assist the delivery of the new Building Schools for the Future programme.

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the Answer given on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 771W, on Building Schools for the Future, what specific action his Department has taken in conjunction with the Learning and Skills Council to join up capital investment for schools, sixth-form colleges and further education. [187038]

Mr. Miliband: Where proposals brought forward under the Building Schools for the Future programme include a local vision for the delivery of 14–19 education in association with a further education institution requiring capital investment, the Learning and Skills Council will take this factor into account in determining its priorities for capital support. This is subject to overall pressures and funding constraints. In addition, the Department and the Learning and Skills Council are in discussion concerning a proposed new joint 16–19 capital budget for schools and further education establishments.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much his Department spent in the last year for which figures are available on *(a)* refurbishment and *(b)* office furniture. [186684]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: During 2003–04 my Department has spent £2,106,720 on refurbishment and £2,122,428 on office furniture.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of satellite and cable subscriptions in his Department's buildings was in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will list the premium channels that his Department subscribes to. [186677]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: During 2003–04 the cost to my Department for satellite subscriptions was approximately £5,700. Apart from receiving the Parliamentary Broadcast Package via the House of Commons, which is for use by Ministers and their Private Offices, my Department does not subscribe to any premium channels.

Further Education Colleges

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of provision in further education colleges, measured by *(a)* hours taught and *(b)* funding allocated, was graded 4 or 5 in Ofsted inspections during (i) 2003 and (ii) 2004 to date. [187074]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: These matters are for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to my hon. Friend and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

School Meals

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance he has issued on the role of school governors in ensuring the provision of healthy school meals. [187709]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: On 6 September the Secretary of State launched the Healthy Living Blueprint for schools. The blueprint, and supporting website (www.teachernet.gov.uk/healthyliving), bring together all the elements that contribute to a whole school approach to food and nutrition: the curriculum; food/meals available; pupil views; partnership working; the role of heads, governors and other staff. In addition to the blueprint the Food Standards Agency is working closely with the National Governors' Council to encourage school governors to promote a high quality approach to food and nutrition in their schools.

School Sixth Forms

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding was provided by each local Learning and Skills Council to school sixth forms in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and how many students each of these school sixth forms has on its roll. [187073]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department allocates funds for the provision of education in school sixth forms to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Information about these allocations at local level is not collected by the Department. This is an operational matter and the responsibility of the LSC. Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend with this information, including the pupil number data and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Specialist School Status

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the eligibility criteria for specialist school status. [187703]

Mr. Charles Clarke: All maintained secondary schools in England are eligible to apply for specialist schools status. We lifted the funding cap in 2002 and expect all secondary schools to become specialist as and when they are ready. Specialist schools now account for 62 per cent. of maintained secondary schools. The eligibility criteria for specialist schools has been placed in the library.

Vocational Education

Ann Winterton: What recent meetings he has had with employers to discuss vocational education. [187711]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I hold regular meetings with the CBI, the TUC and educationists about skills and vocational education. We have established a new Skills Alliance which Charles Clarke chairs jointly with Patricia Hewitt. This Skills Alliance brings Ministers from four Departments of State, the CBI, the TUC and Small Business Council together on a twice yearly basis. I also meet regularly with representatives of the 19 employer led Sector Skills Councils. I visit individual employers to discuss their workforce development plans and needs.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Employment Zones

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to extend the number of Employment Zones. [186424]

Jane Kennedy: There are no current plans to extend the number of Employment Zones.

Housing and Council Tax Benefit

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many households containing a person aged 60 years or over were in receipt of council tax benefit in each of the last 12 months. [187164]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. At May 2002 the number of council tax benefit recipients aged 60 years or over in Great Britain was 2,363,000.

Notes:

1. The figure is based on a 1 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. The figure is rounded to the nearest thousand.
3. Council tax benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.
4. The figure refers to cases where the claimant and/or partner is aged 60 or over.
5. The figure refers to benefit units, which might be a single person, couple or family.

Source:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Annual 1 per cent. sample, taken in May 2002.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of local authorities have produced a written take-up strategy of a sufficient standard to satisfy his Department's performance standard on take-up of housing and council tax benefits; and which local authorities have failed to meet this standard. [187163]

Mr. Pond: The Performance Standards for housing benefit and council tax benefit set out the standards of performance the Department expects local authorities to achieve over a period of time. Self-assessment is voluntary so local authorities are not required to report performance against them to the Department, although we encourage them to do so. Of the 64 local authorities who have so far supplied information about their performance, 49 (77 per cent.) have a written take-up strategy which meets the standard. Insufficient data are available to provide a comprehensive list of all the local authorities who do not meet this standard.

Long-term Unemployed (Over-50s)

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate the Government have made of the cost to the Exchequer of men and women over the age of 50 who are long-term unemployed in each year since 1997. [186937]

Jane Kennedy: Figures on the direct benefit costs for long term unemployed people aged over 50 are in the following table. Official estimates are not available for wider aspects of cost such as tax payments forgone.

Benefit expenditure on men and women over the age of 50 who are long term unemployed[1]

	£ million
1997–98	405
1998–99	378
1999–00	333
2000–01	316
2001–02	239
2002–03	235
2003–04[2]	232

Notes:
[1] Figures include expenditure on Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based), and on Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit paid with JSA(IB). Figures are expressed in nominal terms and are rounded to the nearest million.
[2] Estimated outturn.

Source:
Figures are based on four quarterly averages from DWP IAD Information Centre. "Long term unemployed" has been taken to mean greater than or equal to 52 weeks.

Pensioners

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in receipt of pension credit also receive *(a)* housing benefit, *(b)* council tax benefit and *(c)* other means-tested benefits. [186780]

Mr. Pond: The most recent housing benefit/council tax benefit data analysed by age and reference to other benefits is at May 2002, which predates the introduction of pension credit.

With the introduction of pension credit, around 2 million pensioner households will now qualify for more help, or qualify for help for the first time, with their council tax and/or rent.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the rate is at which a pensioner with average housing costs and council tax costs would have *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* council tax benefit withdrawn if they were in receipt of pension credit and had a total gross weekly income of (i) £80, (ii) £100, (iii) £120, (iv) £140, (v) £160, (vi) £180, (vii) £200 and (viii) other incomes as are available. [187343]

Mr. Pond: The answer is in the table.

Rates of withdrawal of housing and council tax benefits for pension credit recipients with varying incomes

		Percentage	
Gross weekly income	*Net weekly income*	*Housing benefit withdrawal rate*	*Council tax benefit withdrawal rate*
£80.00	£80.00	0	0
£100.00	£98.14	0	0
£120.00	£113.94	39	12
£140.00	£128.55	39	12
£160.00	£141.95	39	12
£180.00	£155.35	65	20
£200.00	£168.75	65	20
£220.00	£182.15	65	n/a
£240.00	£195.55	n/a	n/a

Notes:
1. An "average pensioner" has been interpreted as being single, aged 65 or over with no dependents, no severe disabilities and no additional income or costs (such as annuities, trust fund payments, mortgage interest payments, etc.).
2. In order to make the above calculation, it has been assumed that rent and council tax levels for the average pensioner are £44 and £12 respectively. These are the average amounts used in the DWP Tax Benefit Model Tables.
3. Withdrawal rates do not include the impact of tax i.e. tax withdrawal is not included in total withdrawal rate figures.
4. N/a indicates there is no title to this benefit at, or above, this level of income.

Departmental Staff

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidance is available for assisting employees suffering from *(a)* stress and *(b)* depression from the human resources department of his Department. [187165]

Maria Eagle: Comprehensive advice surrounding managing attendance in the DWP is contained in the Department and You—the Corporate HR guidance. This is accessible via the Department's intranet and contains practical guidance for the Departments human resources (HR) practitioners and line managers to follow.

In cases of stress or depression affecting employees, HR is able to offer a range of guidance to help individuals. This includes referral to our occupational health service and/or to our employee assistance service. Both providers offer a professional service and would discuss, separately, with individuals affected by stress or depression ways in which both conditions might be addressed and overcome. The Department has recently launched a Well-being at work policy to offer assistance to people affected by stress.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Culture

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking to promote British culture. [186952]

Mr. Mullin: The British Council is our principal agent for promoting British culture overseas. It aims to promote the UK's creative ideas and achievements through a range of programmes in the fields of arts, science and education.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office also funds the BBC World Service and the Chevening Scholarship Programme, both of which play a part in promoting British cultures and values.

Burma

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether *(a)* the British ambassador to Burma and *(b)* other British embassy staff in Burma have attended events in Burma hosted by Orient Express or its regional representatives. [187229]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have no record of the British ambassador to Burma, nor other British embassy staff in Burma, attending any events hosted by Orient Express or its regional representatives in 2003 or 2004.

Consular Services (Employment)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what key jobs in consular services *(a)* are vacant and *(b)* have been unfilled for more than three months in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement on the reasons for difficulties in filling key jobs. [187397]

Mr. Mullin: There are no key consular jobs unfilled in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) Consular Directorate at the present time. To provide information on possible vacant consular jobs overseas could be provided only at disproportionate costs. However, the FCO's Human Resources Directorate endeavours to ensure that UK-based consular officer replacements arrive to coincide with UK-based departures from posts overseas. When this is not possible it is Consular and Human Resources Directorates' policy to ensure that temporary cover is provided during the interim period. We also endeavour to provide temporary cover for key locally engaged consular slots.

During a consular emergency overseas Rapid Deployment Teams are sent out to assist the post(s) concerned. The most recent deployment was to Salzburg following a serious coach crash in August.

Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the latest position in respect of the adapted Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty; which countries have signed and ratified it; when he expects it to come into force; and if he will make a statement. [187131]

Mr. MacShane: The Adapted Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE) was signed by the following 30 States Party at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul on 19 November 1999; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the United States. Of those States Party only Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine have ratified the Adapted CFE Treaty. The Russian Duma voted to ratify the Adapted CFE Treaty on 25 June 2004, but to date documents of ratification have not been submitted by the Russian Federation to the Treaty Depository (the Netherlands).

The Adapted CFE Treaty cannot come into force until all 30 signatories have ratified it. We, along with NATO allies, are fully committed to the entry into force of the Adapted CFE Treaty. But we will not ratify until the Russian Federation has met the commitments it made, when the Treaty was signed, concerning Russian armed forces in Georgia and Moldova. Once those commitments have been met we would hope for a speedy ratification and subsequent entry into force of the Adapted CFE Treaty.

Cuba

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Cuban authorities concerning their treatment of *(a)* Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet and *(b)* Jorge Luis Garcia Pérez (Antúnez). [185768]

Mr. Rammell: We regularly raise human rights cases—including these two—with the Cuban authorities in London and in Havana. We have been monitoring their situation and health, and embassy staff maintain close contacts with local human rights groups involved in their cases and with friends and family of the individuals. Dr. Biscet visited the British embassy in November 2002 shortly before his arrest, and our embassy staff last met his wife, Elsa Morejon, on 14 July. We are aware of considerable public interest in the fate of both prisoners.

UK policy on Cuba is governed by the EU Common Position, which has human rights enshrined as its key principle and which was reaffirmed on 14 June. The EU regularly issues statements condemning the imprisonment of human rights activists and other political prisoners. Mostly recently, on 15 July 2004, we again called on the Cuban Government to release all political prisoners.

British Indian Ocean Territory

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how the government of the British Indian Ocean territory is funded; and if he will make a statement. [187614]

Mr. Rammell: The government of the British Indian Ocean territory is funded mainly by the sale of fishing licences, although there is also a small amount of revenue from the sale of stamps, fines and related charges, and administrative fees.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* monetary payments and *(b)* monetary discounts were received by the UK Government from the US Administration or affiliated bodies in return for the agreement governing the joint use of Diego Garcia by the two countries in (i) 1966 and (ii) 1976; and if he will make a statement. [187611]

Mr. Rammell: The United States Government agreed in 1966 to contribute half of the total cost, up to a limit of £5 million, of setting up the British Indian Ocean Territory by waiving to that extent research and development surcharges for the United Kingdom purchase of the Polaris missile system. No payments or discounts were made in respect of the establishment of the United States Defence Facility in Diego Garcia in 1976.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place a copy of the US Administration's Natural Resources Management Plan for Diego Garcia in the Library. [187612]

Mr. Rammell: The US Natural Resources Management Plan for Diego Garcia, currently under revision by the US authorities, is not a public document.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans have been made to allow tourists travelling with the Wexas travel company to visit the waters of the Chagos Archipelago; and if he will make a statement. [187609]

Mr. Rammell: A visit to some of the outer islands of the British Indian Ocean Territory has been arranged under the auspices of Wexas International primarily in order to monitor the natural environment of the islands.

Drug-related Arrests (Overseas)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British citizens have been detained overseas for drug-related offences in each of the last five years. [187592]

Mr. Mullin: According to consular records the number of British citizens detained overseas for drug-related offences in the following years was:

	British citizens detained
1999–2000	1,156
2000–01	1,054
2001–02	1,268

We then ceased to collect this information in this way, and now collect data each year on the total number of those in prison for drugs offences. The totals are:

On 31 March	*Total number imprisoned*
2003	1,290
2004	1,312

These figures therefore do not refer only to new detentions.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British citizens were detained overseas for drug related offences in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by country. [187593]

Mr. Mullin: As at 31 March 2004, there were 1,312 British Nationals detained overseas for drug related offences, who had requested consular assistance. The following table breaks down this figure by country in alphabetical order:

Country	*Drugs*
Antigua and Barbuda	10
Argentina	4
Australia	60
Austria	4
Bahamas	2
Barbados	21
Belgium	16
Brazil	31
Canada	3
Chile	1
China	8
Colombia	7
Costa Rica	4
Cyprus	3
Denmark	5
Dominican Republic	3
Ecuador	8
Egypt	3
Finland	1
France	122
Gambia	2
Germany	29
Ghana	4
Greece	4
Grenada	9
Guyana	[illegible]
India	[illegible]
Indonesia	6
Ireland	8
Israel	1
Italy	16
Jamaica	138
Japan	40
Kuwait	2
Madagascar	1
Malaysia	2
Malta	4
Mauritius	2
Mexico	5
Morocco	3
Nepal	1
Netherlands	35
New Zealand	8
Nicaragua	1
Norway	20
Oman	1
Pakistan	6
Panama	7
Peru	23
Philippines	14
Portugal	8
St. Lucia	7
St. Vincent	2
Saudi Arabia	1
Singapore	1
South Africa	9
Spain	138
Surinam	3
Swaziland	1
Sweden	13
Switzerland	3
Taiwan	25
Thailand	27
Trinidad And Tobago	32
Turkey	4
United Arab Emirates	11
USA	259
Venezuela	20
Grand Total	1,312

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the *(a)* age group and *(b)* sex was of each British person detained overseas for drug-related offences in the last year for which figures are available. [187594]

Mr. Mullin: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not currently keep figures according to the age and sex of British Nationals detained for drug-related offences overseas. But the total number of British Nationals detained overseas for drug related offences who have requested consular assistance was, as at 31 March 2004, 1312.

Equatorial Guinea

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has *(a)* received and *(b)* made concerning the (i) economic and (ii) political situation in Equatorial Guinea since 2002; and if he will make a statement. [18727

Mr. Mullin: We receive occasional requests for information on the political and economic climate in Equatorial Guinea from UK companies interested in investing there and from members of the public. We have a regular dialogue with the Government of Equatorial Guinea on economic, governance and human rights issues. We also discuss the situation there with our EU partners and the US.

Iraq

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what voting system will be used for the parliamentary elections in Iraq. [187617]

Mr. Rammell: The upcoming election for an Iraqi Transitional National Assembly will be based on a Single Constituency Proportional Representation Closed List system. The whole of Iraq will be a constituency and voters will not necessarily need to register in their home town or area. The choice of system for subsequent elections will be for the Iraqis to decide.

Israel

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning the deaths of children at the entrance to the Balata refugee camp in July. [187463]

Mr. Rammell: Israeli Defence Force action which results in the death or injury of children is deeply disturbing. We have frequently called on the Israeli Government to stop such action, and continue to raise our concerns at the highest level. We have not made specific representations concerning the deaths at Balata refugee camp in July.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he proposes to take in response to the ruling of the International Court of Justice on the separation barrier erected by Israel. [187498]

Mr. Rammell: On 20 July the UK, along with our EU partners, voted in favour of UN General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, acknowledging the ICJ Opinion and calling on Israel to re-route the barrier away from occupied land.

While we recognise Israel's legitimate security concerns, it must act in accordance with international law. We continue to press the Israeli Government to re-route the barrier away from occupied land, in line with international law.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning the attack on a UN convoy delivering aid to Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip on 15 July. [187515]

Mr. Rammell: As I said in my reply to the hon. Member on 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 551W, although we have not made specific representations regarding the 15 July incident, we have urged the Government of Israel to ensure aid agencies are able to provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian population.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government concerning killings of and injuries to Palestinians in the Gaza town of Beit Hanoun. [187516]

Mr. Rammell: We are extremely concerned at the casualties and at the humanitarian impact of the Israeli Defence Force actions in Beit Hanoun.

Officials in Tel Aviv have visited the areas affected and raised with the IDF both the action taken in July and the continuing closure of Beit Hanoun.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government regarding the treatment of Palestinian prisoners by the Israeli authorities. [187562]

Mr. Rammell: On 1 September officials in Tel Aviv raised with the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) a number of our concerns about the demands that inspired the Palestinian prisoners' hunger strike. These included: that Israel should meet its obligations towards prisoners; that prisoners, including during the hunger strike, should be treated with dignity; and a failure to separate juvenile and adult prisoners, as provided for in The Convention on The Rights of The Child.

On 2 September the IPS informed our Tel Aviv Embassy that the hunger strike had ended.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he made to the Government of the USA in July and August about the USA's interpretation of the Road Map in respect of the expansion of settlements in the west bank announced by Israel; and if he will make a statement. [187576]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed a number of the middle east peace process issues with Condoleeza Rice, the US National Security Adviser, on 16 August, including Israel's announcements of expansion of settlements. Officials have also discussed the issue in Washington.

Our view remains that Israel should freeze all settlement activity, including the natural growth of existing settlements, and dismantle all outposts built since 2001, in accordance with phase one of the roadmap.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he made to the Government of Israel during July and August in respect of Israel's announcement that it is to proceed with the further expansion of settlements in the West Bank. [187577]

Mr. Rammell: On 2 August my noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean issued a strong statement of concern following reports that Israel had approved further construction in the Ma'ale Adumim settlement calling on Israel to freeze all settlement activity, including natural growth, and to dismantle all outposts built since 2001, in line with its Roadmap commitments. A copy of the statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office wet site: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases.

On 18 August our Ambassador in Tel Aviv raised the issue with the Acting Israeli Minister for Construction, Tzipi Livni.

We continue to press the Israeli Government to reconsider their decision to issue tenders for new homes in a number of West Bank settlements, including Ma'ale Adumim.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with each of the Quartet partners during July and August about Israel's announcement that it intends to expand settlements in the west bank; and if he will make a statement on the options for action by the Quartet in response. [187575]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has discussed Israel's recent announcements on settlement expansion with both the US and EU partners.

The Quartet (UN, US, EU, Russia) continues to play a vital role in leading the international community's involvement in the Middle East peace process. Through the EU, the UK will seek to ensure the Quartet's next meeting, scheduled to take place in New York on 23 September, continues to provide leadership in the effort to stimulate positive steps from both sides.

Moldova

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent efforts he has made to assist Russia to withdraw its troops and ammunition from the Republic of Moldova. [187739]

Mr. MacShane: We continue to encourage the Russian Federation to withdraw forces and ammunition from Moldova in line with the commitments Russia made at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in November 1999. We, along with NATO allies, will not ratify the Adapted Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty until the Russian Federation has met their commitments concerning Moldova, and other commitments concerning Georgia made at the same OSCE Summit.

UK military personnel are on a standby roster as part of the OSCE Monitoring Mission, to verify the removal of Russian ammunition from Moldova. But only one trainload of ammunition has been removed in 2004 and an estimated 35–40 trainloads of Russian ammunition remains in Moldova. We hope that Russia will accelerate the withdrawal process and will continue to offer our support to verify the removal of ammunition from Moldova.

Pakistan

Mr. Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on *(a)* the UK's diplomatic relations with Pakistan and *(b)* the state of democracy in Pakistan. [186749]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK enjoys a close and warm relationship with Pakistan which is strengthened by our historical links, and by our having more than 800,000 British Citizens of Pakistani origin. Pakistan is a key ally in the global war against terrorism and the UK continues to work closely with the Government of Pakistan to counter this threat.

We engage with Pakistan at all levels on a wide variety of subjects including defence, drugs, judicial cooperation, migration, and economic and development issues. The UK and Pakistan have formalised some of these engagements through the Joint Judicial Cooperation Working Group and the Defence Cooperation Forum. During the current three year period (2003/04—2005/06) we expect to give over £200 million in aid to Pakistan. There have been several high level visits to and from the UK.

We warmly welcome the ongoing progress in Pakistan's transition to democracy. The decision by the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group in May this year to readmit Pakistan to the Councils of the Commonwealth was taken in recognition of the progress made in restoring democratic principles. The recent election of Shaukat Aziz to the National Assembly and his subsequent confirmation as Prime Minister is a further positive development. We look forward to working closely with the new Prime Minister of Pakistan and his government.

Qualified Majority Voting

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether provisions concerning structured co-operation within the Common Foreign and Security Policy are to be decided by qualified majority voting under the European constitution. [187035]

Mr. MacShane: The voting procedures for Structured Cooperation are laid out in article III-213 of the constitutional treaty. Qualified Majority Voting in Structured Cooperation is only for procedural issues—how member states join and leave the group. The text makes clear that unanimity of participating states will be required for all other decisions.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether intellectual property or foreign direct investment moves from unanimity under article 133 TEC to qualified majority voting under article III-217(1) and III-217(2) of the European Constitution. [187036]

Mr. MacShane: Article 133 TEC established the Common Commercial Policy (CCP), allowing the Community to make trade agreements on behalf of the member states, covering trade in goods, services, and the commercial aspects of intellectual policy. Apart from a limited range of exceptions, decisions under it are taken by QMV.

Its successor in the European constitution, III-217, allows the EU also to make agreements covering foreign direct investment, and narrows slightly the scope of the exceptions from QMV covering intellectual property and trade in services.

The Government are content with this. They made clear in the White Paper published in September 2003 (Cm 5934) that they favoured moves to reduce barriers in international trade, provided that this did not lead to an increase in the internal powers of the Union, and

that, as now, voting arrangements for such agreements mirrored those required for the adoption of equivalent rules internally. Both principles are set out in the treaty. The latter principle is set out at III-217(4). III-217(6) makes clear that the CCP does not affect the division of competences between the Union and the member states, and cannot in itself lead to legislative or regulatory harmonisation among the member states.

Sudan

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment his Department has made of Amnesty International's report of 19 July entitled "Darfur: Rape as a Weapon of War: sexual violence and its consequences"; and if he will make a statement; [187270]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the charge of culpability levelled against the Government of Sudan by Amnesty International's report of 19 July entitled, "Darfur: Rape as a Weapon of War: sexual violence and its consequences"; and if he will make a statement. [187271]

Mr. Mullin: We read with grave concern reports by Amnesty International of rape being used as an apparently deliberate tactic in the Darfur region. Medecins Sans Frontieres, the UN High Commission for Refugees and the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs have also reported cases of rape. These reports underline the urgent need to improve the security situation in the region, in order to prevent these abuses from continuing.

We have also made clear that those responsible for such atrocities must be brought to justice. UN human rights monitors, whose deployment we helped finance, are now in Darfur investigating allegations of human rights abuses, including rape. We have made clear to the Government of Sudan that they must do all they can to facilitate the work of these monitors. The Government of Sudan have established three committees on rape allegations. We will follow their investigations closely During his recent visit, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary also secured the agreement of the Sudanese Government to grant Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch visas to visit Darfur.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received regarding the Sudanese Air Force's activities in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [187272]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised this issue with the Government of Sudan during his visit to Khartoum in August. He also raised it with African Union monitors in Darfur who said that they had no evidence of air strikes by the Government of Sudan air force since June. We will continue to monitor the situation and to press all sides to respect the ceasefire.

Taiwan

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to support Taiwan as *(a)* a member and *(b)* an observer of the (i) World Health Organisation and *(c)* World Health Assembly; and if he will make a statement. [187600]

Mr. Rammell: There are difficulties over Taiwanese involvement in a UN forum where statehood is a prerequisite for full membership. We would consider with our EU partners any proposals for Taiwanese involvement in the World Health Organisation which took account of these difficulties.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to promote within the EU Taiwan's case for deeper involvement in the *(a)* World Health Organisation and *(b)* World Health Assembly. [187601]

Mr. Rammell: Ireland, speaking on behalf of all EU Member States at this year's World Health Association, expressed the EU's hope that the WHO Secretariat, and others organising technical meetings and working groups under WHO auspices, would show flexibility in finding mechanisms to allow Taiwanese medical and public health officials to participate in these activities. The Government fully endorse this view and will continue to look at ideas for finding that flexibility.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the efforts of Taiwan to play a constructive and appropriate role in *(a)* international health affairs and *(b)* international humanitarian issues; and if he will make a statement. [187602]

Mr. Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to him today (UIN 187601).

The Government welcomes Taiwanese assistance in international humanitarian issues through appropriate channels and in keeping with Taiwan's status.

Teodoro Obiang Nguema

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his counterparts in *(a)* Spain, *(b)* the United States of America and *(c)* Equatorial Guinea, concerning allegations of corruption and money laundering levelled against Teodoro Obiang Nguema and his family; and if he will make a statement. [187274]

Mr. Mullin: We are aware of the allegations against President Obiang and his family. We take all such allegations seriously and have raised our concerns on governance with the Equatorial Guinean authorities. We discuss developments in Equatorial Guinea with a range of international partners.

Transnistria

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his recent efforts to find a peaceful solution to the problem of the region of Transnistria with reference to his actions within *(a)* the EU, *(b)* NATO and *(c)* the OSCE. [187740]

Mr. MacShane: We remain concerned about the situation in Transnistria, and together with EU partners continue to call on the two parties in particular the Transnistrians, to negotiate constructively and in good

faith. After Transnistrian moves to force the closure of Latin script schools in the region, which has raised tensions significantly, the EU imposed a travel ban on 26 August against ten individuals within the Transnistrian administration responsible for the measures. Along with our EU partners, we are supporting Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe mediation in the settlement talks, and continue to look for ways to bolster this support. We also regularly raise Transnistria with the other mediators, Russia and Ukraine, both bilaterally and through the EU. I raised our concerns with the Ukraine Defence Minister on 6 September.

We want Russia to fulfil commitments made when signing the Adapted Conventional Forces in Europe (ACFE) Treaty at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999, including full withdrawal of arms and ammunition from Transnistria, or their destruction in situ, and the withdrawal of Russian forces. Together with NATO allies we have stated that we will not ratify the ACFE Treaty until the Russian Federation has met their commitments concerning Moldova and Georgia.

Vietnam

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment his Department has made of the treatment of the Montagnards in Vietnam; and if he will make a statement; [187260]

(2) what representations he has made to the Government of Vietnam concerning the treatment of the Montagnards in Vietnam; and if he will make a statement. [187261]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We remain concerned about the situation of the Montagnards in the Central Highlands region of Vietnam.

We raise human rights concerns regularly with the Vietnamese Government, both bilaterally and with our EU partners. These include the problems faced by the Montagnards in the Central Highlands, particularly with regard to land and religious freedom. I raised these issues during my visit to Vietnam in March and with the President of Vietnam during his official visit to the UK in May. On the same day, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised our concerns about human rights in Vietnam with the Vietnamese Foreign Minister.

With our other EU partners, we participate in a regular human rights dialogue with Vietnam. The most recent meeting, attended by our ambassador in Hanoi, took place on 22 June. We raised the situation of the Montagnards at this meeting and expressed our deep concern at unrest in the Central Highlands over Easter 2004.

We will continue to raise our concerns and press the Vietnamese Government to adhere to their obligations at every suitable opportunity.

West Papua

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to urge the United Nations to instigate a review of the UN's conduct in relation to the Act of Free Choice in West Papua in 1968–1969; and if he will make a statement. [186379]

Mr. Rammell: The Report of the Special Representative who oversaw the implementation of the UN backed 1969 Act of Free Choice resulting in West Papua becoming a province of Indonesia was accepted by a majority vote of the UN in November 1969.

The British Government, together with other members of the international community, have continued to stress to the Indonesian Government at the highest level the need to implement fully the 2001 Special Autonomy law for Papua. This law allows for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Committee to look at the incorporation of Papua into Indonesia in the 1960s.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will make a statement on the progress of reconstruction in Afghanistan. [186441]

(2) what recent representations he has received regarding the progress of reconstruction in Afghanistan, and if he will make a statement. [186442]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Secretary of State and I continue to regularly receive representations on Afghanistan, from Members of Parliament, the public and non-governmental organisations. They have reflected the priorities that people attach to the reconstruction process.

Considerable progress has been made since the fall of the Taliban in November 2001. Over 3 million refugees have been helped to return to Afghanistan. 4.5 million children are in school this year and over 30 per cent. are girls. A vaccination campaign has led to the near eradication of polio and the immunisation of 9 million children against measles saving over 35,000 lives. Progress has also been made in economic recovery with the International Monetary Fund estimating economy growing by 30 per cent. last year.

At the international conference in Berlin, donors pledged $8.2 billion over three years to help rebuild Afghanistan. Finance Minister Ghani said donors met Afghanistan's target for this year, pledging $4.5 billion, and covered more than two thirds of its expectations over the next three years. On October 9, the first-ever direct presidential elections in the post-Taliban country will be held. Voter registration has now closed with over 10.5 million Afghans registered (42 per cent. are women). This is hugely encouraging result, which we hope will lead to the successful conclusion of the Bonn Process.

Water and Sanitation

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of the aid budget will be spent on water and sanitation in 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [187528]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development's (DFID) support for water and sanitation is predominantly channelled through our country programmes and support to multi-lateral institutions. Expenditure allocations reflect developing country governments' own priorities, and our assistance is co-ordinated with that of other donors. DFID works to assist countries to use their budgets for greatest impact on reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For these reasons, DFID has not made a forward commitment specifically for the water sector.

However, DFID significantly supports the water sector providing the UK's bilateral expenditure of approximately £90 million (the last period for which precise data are available is 2001–02 when bilateral water expenditure was £87 million), which represents approximately 6 per cent. of the bilateral aid budget. This includes programmes in which water and sanitation and hygiene promotion are the main aims, and those where water and sanitation are components associated with wider objectives such as better health or education or improved urban management. DFID's contribution to multilateral expenditure on water and sanitation is estimated to be in excess of £40 million per year. As a result, the UK was the fourth largest contributor of financial aid to the water sector in 2000 and 2001, and fifth in 2002. DFID is in the process of updating projections of bilateral and multilateral water-related expenditure through to 2007–08, taking into account the autumn 2004 resource a location round.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 13 September 2004

TRANSPORT

A3

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the date of completion of the A3 safety measures at Thursley. [188241]

Mr. Jamieson: The A3 Junction Improvement is expected to be completed and open to traffic at the end of December 2004, six months ahead of the original target date of June 2005.

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to receive the Inspector's report following the public inquiry on the A3 Hindhead tunnel proposal. [188242]

Mr. Jamieson: It is too soon to say when the Inspector's report might be received, as this is dependent on when the inquiry actually finishes and the complexity of the evidence the Inspector needs to consider before concluding his report.

Ambulances

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many ambulances have been involved in road traffic accidents in the last two years in England; and if he will make a statement. [188375]

Mr. Jamieson: The number of ambulances involved in road traffic accidents in England in the last two years available is shown below. Information for 2003 is not yet available.

Number of ambulances[1] involved in road accidents: England: 2001–2002

Year	*Number Vehicles*
2001	307
2002	295

[1] Vehicles with body type "ambulance". Body type is only known for 70–80 per cent. of the vehicle records in the Road Accidents Database.

Bicycles (Railways)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the advice offered to rail companies on the facility for cyclists to take their bicycles on the train. [188417]

Mr. McNulty: The franchise agreements by which passenger rail services are procured require franchised train operators to:

"so far as reasonably practicable and subject to the availability of appropriate space on its rolling stock, ensure that facilities for the transport of bicycles on trains are made available, at reasonable charges (if any), to passengers using or intending to use the Passenger Service."

The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) encourages all train operating companies to tailor their provisions for the carriage of cycles on trains to the demand on particular routes while recognising that cycle provision cannot be considered in isolation but must have regard to the needs of all other rail users. The SRA has recently carried out a consultation of cycle policy and will be publishing a detailed cycle policy in due course. Copies of their Cycle Policy Consultation Document are available in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many train companies place restrictions on cyclists taking bicycles on trains. [188418]

Mr. McNulty: Of the 25 franchised train operators, three carry bicycles on all services without requiring prior reservation, six carry bicycles on all their services but do require prior reservation, one does not require prior reservation but restricts bicycles to off-peak times only and the remaining 15 require both prior reservation and restrict bicycles to off-peak times only. All franchised train operators have a maximum number of cycles which can be carried on any particular train.

c2c LTS

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what recent research he has conducted on the number of passengers on the c2c LTS route who do not get a seat; and if he will make a statement; [188435]

(2) what representations he has had on the recent Rail Passenger's Committee Eastern England research findings on the number of passengers who do not get a seat on the c2c LTS route. [188437]

Mr. McNulty: The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) collects annual Passengers in Excess of Capacity (PiXC) census data every autumn for all London Commuter Train Operating Companies. Last year's figures for c2c indicate an overall PiXC figure of 1 per cent. (morning plus evening combined) against the threshold of 4.5 per cent.. This was the lowest of the 10 London Commuter TOCs, for which the total was 2.7 per cent.

I have received no representations on the Rail Passenger's Committee Eastern England research.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy to ensure that a refund is given to passengers with season tickets when standing reaches a predetermined level; and if he will make a statement. [188436]

Mr. McNulty: The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) is reviewing its crowding policy. The SRA plans to consider whether there is a case for Train Operating Companies to face additional incentives to manage overcrowding.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with c2c on the redeployment of four 4-Coach Class 357 trains; and if he will make a statement. [188438]

Mr. McNulty: None. The redeployment of rolling stock was agreed by the Strategic Rail Authority to cover a potential shortfall in rolling stock which was identified elsewhere on the network as a result of the West Coast Route Modernisation programme. The

redeployment is not permanent and it is envisaged that the rolling stock will return to c2c once new trains have entered service on the West Coast Main Line.

Car Noise

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on maximum noise levels from straight-through car exhausts on customised cars. [187389]

Mr. Jamieson: Only new cars are subject to maximum noise limits. However, Regulation 54 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 does set minimum requirements for the maintenance of exhaust systems and silencers for cars, and other vehicles, in use. This requires that they be fitted with a silencer, that the silencer is maintained in good and efficient working order and has not been altered so as to increase noise. The Regulations also make it an offence to use a car in such a manner as to cause excessive noise that could have been avoided by the exercise of reasonable care on the part of the driver. It is likely that a straight-through exhaust, whether used on a customised car or any other vehicle, would be in breach of this requirement. Enforcement, however, is a matter for the police.

Crossrail

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on consultation by the Crossrail development programme to date. [186733]

Mr. McNulty: Cross London Rail Links Ltd (CLRL), a joint venture company currently owned by Transport for London and the Strategic Rail Authority, was set up to develop and promote the Crossrail project.

Total expenditure to date on consultation by CLRL is £3,466,500. £2,170,500 was spent on the first round of consultation (September 2003 to January 2004) that I asked CLRL to undertake to explain to the public in more detail their proposed scheme, and to canvass views on their route proposals. The remaining £1,296,000 is the cost to date of the second round of consultation, on CLRL's preferred route, which began in August 2004, following my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State's Statement to the House on 20 July announcing the decision to introduce a hybrid Bill for Crossrail at the earliest opportunity. The costs include salary costs of CLRL staff.

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been allocated in his departmental budget for the Crossrail project for *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06 and *(c)* 2006–07. [188083]

Mr. McNulty: In May 2001, Cross London Rail Links (CLRL) was provided with ring-fenced funding of £154 million for the purposes of developing Crossrail. CLRL has spent £62.5 million to the end of financial year 2003–04, with a further £42.5 million budgeted for the current year. This would leave £49 million of the original £154 million available for developing the scheme after March 2005.

Cycleways

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what powers *(a)* he has and *(b)* are vested in local authorities to prevent motorised vehicles from blocking cycleways including those on the highway; and what plans he has to ensure that cycleways are not blocked by motorised vehicles. [188379]

Mr. McNulty: Parking enforcement is a matter for the police or, where local authorities have acquired decriminalised parking enforcement powers, those authorities.

It is an offence under section 21 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to park a motor vehicle wholly or partly on a track provided for use by pedal cyclists. Parking in a cycle lane marked on a carriageway for the use of cyclists may be prohibited by means of a traffic regulation order made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The restriction would be indicated by yellow lines and may operate 24 hours a day or for a more limited period. It is an offence under sections 5 or 8 of the 1984 Act to contravene such an order.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether provision of cycleways was part of the safer city project in Gloucester. [188380]

Mr. Jamieson: Gloucester Safer City Project addressed safety issues on the roads in Gloucester and implemented measures to improve safety for cyclists along approximately 15 km of the carriageway. Off road cycleways were not part of the project. However, cycle lanes were provide in Elmbridge Road, Finlay Road, Cheltenham Road, Stroud Road and Bristol Road. In addition, on the Stroud Road the cycle lane was taken on to the footway for part of its route and in Metz Way the off-road cycle route was improved.

EU Emissions Trading System

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* research he has commissioned and *(b)* steps he has initiated to facilitate the incorporation of aviation in the EU Emissions Trading System. [188754]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested is as follows:

(a) There is a growing body of research on emissions trading, some of it funded or part funded by the Department for Transport. Recent examples include projects by (i) ICF Consulting for the ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (ii) OXERA for BAA plc and (iii) The Institute of Applied Ecology for the German Environment Agency. The European Commission is also in the process of letting a major research contract to consider the incorporation of aviation into the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

(b) The Department is having discussions with stakeholders and other EU States to gather support for the UK's initiative and seek views on potential answers to some of the difficult design issues.

M40

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the accident rate per number of vehicles on the M40 between

junctions 3 and 6 in the last year for which figures are available; and what the average accident rate for motorways was in the same period. [188051]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency publishes accident rates per million vehicle kilometres travelled. On this basis, the accident rates in 2003 for the section of the M40 between junctions 3 and 6 are as follows:

Junctions	*Accident rate*
3 to 4	0.187
4 to 5	0.033
5 to 6	0.087

The national accident rate for a three-lane motorway is 0.089.

Motorcycling

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fatalities there were of *(a)* motor cycle riders and *(b)* pillion passengers in each of the last five years for which figures are available, broken down by police authority area. [188396]

Mr. Jamieson: Numbers of fatalities of two wheeled motor vehicle riders and pillion passengers by police authority area for 1999 to 2003 are given in the following table.

TWMV riders and passenger fatalities by police authority area: GB 1999–2003

Fatalities *Police force*	*Casualty type*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Metropolitan police	Riders	54	53	70	62	61
	Passengers	1	3	0	4	2
Cumbria	Riders	5	9	7	8	7
	Passengers	0	0	1	0	0
Lancashire	Riders	15	15	8	13	18
	Passengers	0	0	0	1	0
Merseyside	Riders	4	14	7	12	6
	Passengers	0	2	1	3	0
Greater Manchester	Riders	10	9	6	8	15
	Passengers	0	2	0	0	0
Cheshire	Riders	14	13	14	11	17
	Passengers	2	1	1	1	0
Northumbria	Riders	6	7	8	10	11
	Passengers	0	0	2	0	1
Durham	Riders	2	4	4	4	8
	Passengers	0	0	0	1	1
North Yorkshire	Riders	12	17	12	22	26
	Passengers	0	0	1	1	2
West Yorkshire	Riders	15	19	18	14	17
	Passengers	1	0	1	1	2
South Yorkshire	Riders	7	15	7	12	10
	Passengers	0	1	0	0	2
Humberside	Riders	13	6	7	5	7
	Passengers	0	0	0	0	3
Cleveland	Riders	2	4	1	1	2
	Passengers	0	0	0	0	1
West Midlands	Riders	16	8	9	11	21
	Passengers	0	1	0	0	1
Staffordshire	Riders	7	12	7	13	15
	Passengers	0	0	0	1	1
West Mercia	Riders	22	22	16	6	15
	Passengers	0	1	1	1	0
Warwickshire	Riders	6	10	5	6	11
	Passengers	1	1	0	0	1
Derbyshire	Riders	15	15	11	15	16
	Passengers	1	0	1	2	0
Nottinghamshire	Riders	12	8	22	13	14
	Passengers	0	1	3	0	0
Lincolnshire	Riders	17	12	13	11	14
	Passengers	0	2	0	1	0

TWMV riders and passenger fatalities by police authority area: GB 1999–2003

Fatalities *Police force*	*Casualty type*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Leicestershire	Riders	17	7	12	16	9
	Passengers	2	1	3	0	1
Northamptonshire	Riders	12	9	7	7	13
	Passengers	2	1	0	0	0
Cambridgeshire	Riders	5	11	7	8	9
	Passengers	1	0	0	0	0
Norfolk	Riders	10	17	9	10	14
	Passengers	0	3	0	1	0
Suffolk	Riders	9	7	5	5	10
	Passengers	0	0	1	0	0
Bedfordshire	Riders	5	7	10	7	4
	Passengers	1	0	0	0	0
Hertfordshire	Riders	7	8	10	10	10
	Passengers	1	0	0	0	0
Essex	Riders	16	16	30	20	24
	Passengers	0	1	0	0	1
Thames Valley	Riders	23	28	25	33	36
	Passengers	2	0	2	0	0
Hampshire	Riders	17	17	13	19	30
	Passengers	1	2	1	2	1
Surrey	Riders	16	12	11	16	11
	Passengers	1	0	1	1	0
Kent	Riders	19	26	12	24	19
	Passengers	0	1	2	3	0
Sussex	Riders	9	12	17	21	18
	Passengers	1	3	0	1	3
City of London	Riders	1	1	2	1	0
	Passengers	0	0	0	0	0
Devon and Cornwall	Riders	14	20	15	21	17
	Passengers	0	0	0	1	1
Avon and Somerset	Riders	13	13	19	15	11
	Passengers	0	0	0	1	0
Gloucestershire	Riders	4	7	6	7	8
	Passengers	0	1	0	0	1
Wiltshire	Riders	9	9	7	6	9
	Passengers	0	0	2	0	0
Dorset	Riders	9	10	4	6	13
	Passengers	0	0	1	0	0
North Wales	Riders	10	9	10	7	17
	Passengers	1	2	0	0	1
Gwent	Riders	2	4	4	1	1
	Passengers	1	0	0	0	0
South Wales	Riders	10	7	4	9	6
	Passengers	1	0	2	1	0
Dyfed-Powys	Riders	5	6	15	8	17
	Passengers	0	0	1	1	0
Northern	Riders	1	11	6	2	9
	Passengers	1	0	0	0	0
Grampian	Riders	6	6	13	11	6
	Passengers	0	0	0	0	0
Tayside	Riders	2	2	3	4	3
	Passengers	0	0	0	0	1
Fife	Riders	1	2	3	5	5
	Passengers	0	1	0	0	0
Lothian and Borders	Riders	4	5	4	6	8
	Passengers	0	1	0	0	0
Central	Riders	2	2	1	6	3
	Passengers	0	0	0	0	0
Strathclyde	Riders	12	10	15	10	12
	Passengers	0	0	1	0	1
Dumfries and Galloway	Riders	1	0	3	2	2
	Passengers	0	0	0	0	0
Great Britain	Riders	525	573	554	580	665
	Passengers	22	32	29	29	28

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the main motor cyclist associations on accident prevention. [188397]

Mr. Jamieson: The Advisory Group on Motorcycling, which I Chaired, discussed motorcycling safety in considerable depth, among other issues. The Group included the British Motorcyclists Federation, the Motorcycle Action Group, the Motorcycle Industry

Association, the Motorcycle Retailers Association, the Motorcycle Rider Training Association and the Despatch Association.

The "Advisory Group on Motorcycling: Final Report to Government" was published in August and is available in the House Library. It makes 16 suggestions and 38 recommendations to Government. A number of these concern improving safety and helping to prevent accidents. We are considering them carefully in the context of preparing a national strategy for motorcycling, which we hope to have developed before the end of the year.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with interested parties on banning the carriage of child pillion passengers on motorcycles. [188398]

Mr. Jamieson: I have had no such discussions. Regulations are already in place to ensure that passengers of any age or size can be carried safely, when they are complied with. These include a requirement for passengers to wear a securely fastened safety helmet and to sit astride a properly fixed seat, with their feet reaching suitable supports or rests. Only motorcyclists who have passed a motorcycle test may carry passengers.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the final report of the Advisory Group on Motorcycling; and if he will make a statement in response to its recommendations. [188448]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government welcomes this Report. It concludes the work of the Advisory Group on Motorcycling set up by my Department, which was established to consider the role of motorcycling within an integrated transport policy, including important issues such as safety and environmental impact.

The Report contains 38 recommendations and 16 suggestions covering a range of issues. These are designed to make motorcycling safer and to improve the motorcycling experience. The Government are considering them carefully in the context of preparing a national strategy for motorcycling, which we hope to have developed before the end of the year.

Quad Bikes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has carried out an investigation into the number of quad bike accidents reported affecting British residents while on holiday abroad; and if he will list the resorts which have had the worst accident record in 2004. [188399]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is not available.

Road Kill

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* dogs, *(b)* cats, *(c)* badgers, *(d)* deer, *(e)* foxes, *(f)* hedgehogs, *(g)* rabbits and *(h)* squirrels killed as a result of road traffic accidents in the last year for which figures are available; and how many of each were recorded. [188381]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is not available.

Road Safety

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of the *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on roads were attributable to speed in the last year for which figures are available. [186763]

Mr. Darling: Routine statistics do not record the primary cause of a road accident. However, under a pilot scheme, 15 police forces in Great Britain have provided information on contributory factors to accidents since 1999. In 2003 this information was available for about a third of all reported injury accidents in Great Britain. Among these, 30 per cent. of fatalities and 20 per cent. of serious casualties were in accidents where 'excessive speed' was a factor.

If the results from the pilot scheme were representative of the whole country, it would mean that over 1,000 deaths and about 6,600 serious injuries in Great Britain in 2003 were sustained in accidents where 'excessive speed' was a contributory factor.

The contributory factor data are based on the opinions of police officers. In the case of accidents reported by a member of the public at a police station, these factors have to be determined from their description of the accident.

The true extent of the influence of speed as a contributory factor in road traffic accidents may be greater than suggested by the single factor 'excessive speed', as some other factors—such as 'following too close'—may also be associated with inappropriate speed. My Department is undertaking further analysis of the pilot contributory factor data and will publish an article later in the year.

Starting in January 2005 this pilot scheme will be replaced by a new set of questions on contributory factors, which will henceforward form an integral part of the road accident reporting system and will be collected by all police forces for accidents reported at scene by a police officer.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when his review of speed limits will be published; when he commissioned his review of speed limits; and how long he originally expected that his review of speed limits would take. [188459]

Mr. Jamieson: The Road Safety Strategy, published in March 2000 gave a commitment to revise and update our guidance to local authorities on the setting of local speed limits, currently in the form of Circular Roads 1/93. We will shortly issue a consultation draft of a revised Circular for comment, and we expect to finalise and publish the Circular early in 2005. In January this year we published a Traffic Advisory Leaflet on village speed limits, recommending that the speed limit should usually be 30 miles per hour.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of accidents which were due to motorists failing to comply with recommended stopping distances in each of the last five years. [188559]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is not available.

Transport Bodies (Costs)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* cost of recruitment was and *(b)* total cumulative salary bill has been for (i) the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency and (ii) the Chairman of the Commission for Integrated Transport and (iii) the Chairman of the Strategic Rail Authority. [186399]

Mr. McNulty: The total cost of recruitment including advertising costs for the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency in 2003 was £53,977. Details of the remuneration paid to the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency can be found in the Agency's Annual Reports.

For the Chairman of the UK Commission for Integrated Transport, the recruitment costs specifically attributable to this post are not held separately. The most recent Chair appointment was in March 2002. The remuneration for the post is £30,000 pa with the Chair expected to work five days per month.

Full details of the payments made to the Chairman of the Strategic Rail Authority can be found in the Authority's Annual Reports. The recruitment costs specifically attributable to this post are not held separately.

US Visas

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations the Government have made to United States authorities regarding the decision to abolish the crew list visa scheme. [188432]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government made representations to the US authorities on two occasions, in co-operation with a number of other governments, in response to the proposals to abolish the crew list visa scheme.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Children in Poverty

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate the Government have made of the number of children living in poverty who lived outside the 20 per cent. most deprived wards in each year since 1997. [187369]

Mr. Pond: The Government's figures for children in low income households are available in "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2002–03". This information is not available below regional level. The report is available in the Library.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Government *(a)* expect to meet and *(b)* have met their target for reducing the number of children living in poverty in the first quarter of 2004; and if he will make a statement. [186805]

Mr. Pond: The Government have a PSA target to reduce the number of children in low-income households by at least a quarter by 2004, as a contribution towards the broader target of halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020.

Between the baseline year of 1998–99 and 2002–03, the number of children in low income households has fallen by 500,000 before housing costs and 600,000 after housing costs. We will report on the target in spring 2006 when the data for 2004–05 become available.

The latest available data (2002–03) do not reflect the introduction of new tax credits in April 2003 or the increase in the child element of the child tax credit in April 2004. We are broadly on course to meet the PSA target.

Pensions

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the average weekly pension in Great Yarmouth in each year since 1997 if pensions had been linked to earnings. [186701]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. However, such information as is available is in the table.

£

As at April each year	*Average State Pension in Great Yarmouth*	*Average State Pension in Great Yarmouth with basic State Pension uprated by earnings*
1999	68.90	70.55
2000	69.95	73.65
2001	75.60	77.35
2002	78.65	81.15
2003	81.30	84.70

Notes:

1. The change in the overall rate of basic State Pension for any given year is estimated by comparing the actual maximum rate of basic State Pension for that year with the rate if earnings uprating had been in place. The average recorded basic State Pension in Great Yarmouth for each individual year is then increased proportionately to reflect the difference.
2. It is assumed that basic State Pension was uprated by earnings from 1998 onwards. It is assumed that additional State Pension would still be uprated in line with prices. The average additional State Pension in Great Yarmouth each year is then added to the adjusted average basic amount to provide the total average State Pension.
3. Figures for actual State Pension amounts are taken from 5 per cent. sample of September's DWP administrative data for the year shown and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
4. Figures for individual parliamentary constituencies are not available prior to 1999.
5. The figures shown in the table are weekly amounts rounded to the nearest 5p.

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the additional costs in *(a)* 2015, *(b)* 2025, *(c)* 2035 and *(d)* 2045 of having a state second pension accrual rate that would guarantee all workers with 40 years of full-time employment sufficient pension to make them ineligible at (i) age 75 and (ii) retirement for the guarantee part of the pension credit if the basic state

pension were to be uprated in line with (A) prices, (B) earnings and (C) the average of earnings and prices [186851]

Malcolm Wicks: It is estimated that for a single person retiring in 2045, in order for the combined value of basic State Pension (BSP) and State Second Pension (S2P) to exceed the level of the Guarantee Credit, the additional spending on state pension required is as follows.

(A) Under price uprating of the basic State Pension

£ billion

		2015	2025	2035	2045
(i) At age 75	S2P	0.8	3.5	9.2	19.6
(ii) At retirement	S2P	0.3	1.5	3.9	8.2
	BSP	—	—	—	—

(B) Under earnings uprating of the basic State Pension

£ billion

		2015	2025	2035	2045
(i) At age 75	S2P	—	—	—	—
(ii) At retirement	S2P	—	—	—	—
	BSP	9.6	23.7	45.8	69.3

Note:
No change to S2P accrual or spending would be required under part B.

(C) Under average of earnings and price uprating of the basic State Pension

£ billion

		2015	2025	2035	2045
(i) At age 75	S2P	0.4	1.5	3.9	8.3
(ii) At retirement	S2P	—	—	—	—
	BSP	4.1	9.3	17.1	24.4

Notes:
1. No change to S2P accrual or spending would be required under part C ii.
2. Figures are costs for GB and Overseas in 2004–05 price terms, using the GDP deflator index, rounded to the nearest £100 million.
3. Costs are for additional spending on Basic and State Second Pension and do not include any increased income tax revenue or savings in income related benefits. Costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002 based population projections. Accrual rates were calculated by the Department.
4. Except where stated, current policy on calculation and uprating of benefits is assumed to continue and long-term assumptions are in line with those for budget 2004. The guarantee credit is therefore increased in line with average earnings.
5. Increasing basic State Pension by more than prices as in parts B and C of this question will result in additional spending on basic State Pension.
6. Costs also exclude any changes that might occur to contracting out rebates.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the assumptions are for the number and percentage of eligible pensioners taking up pension credit that underlie his pensioner benefit expenditure projections for *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2013–14, *(c)* 2023–24, *(d)* 2033–34, *(e)* 2043–44 and *(f)* 2053–54. [187352]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government do not currently produce long-term projections of the pension credit caseload. In the interests of fiscal propriety they do issue long-term expenditure projections. Tabled are the caseloads underlying the projected expenditure.

Numbers of pensioner households claiming pension credit underlying the long-term projections of pensioner benefit expenditure are as follows:

	Number
2010	3,300,000
2020	3,900,000
2030	5,000,000
2040	5,900,000
2050	6,100,000

These figures represent take-up of around 75 per cent., corresponding to the achievement of the PSA target of 3,000,000 pension credit households by 2006.

Estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100,000 cases, are subject to a wide margin of error and should be used only as broad indications of the likely caseload.

The methodology behind the long-term projections was described in more detail in "The Pension Credit: Long-term Projections", published by the Department in January 2002. A projected growth rate in pension credit spending is derived by applying income growth assumptions and demography projections to the sample pensioner population in the Department's Policy Simulation Model. This growth rate is applied to the medium-term forecast of pension credit expenditure.

"The Pension Credit: Long-term Projections" (ref : DWP-PCP-2) is available in the Library and can be found on the internet at: www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2002/pencred/pencred.pdf

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research his Department has commissioned regarding the number of times reported criminal activity relating to antisocial behaviour has resulted in suspects being *(a)* charged and *(b)* convicted. [186820]

Ms Blears: The Home Office has commissioned a survey of young people which will give a measure of the percentage of antisocial young people who have had contact with the criminal justice system and the Youth Justice Board are commissioning research to look at the use of antisocial behaviour orders. Results are not yet available from either of these studies.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidence he has received regarding estimated asylum applications from *(a)* Darfur, *(b)* South Sudan and *(c)* other parts of Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [186723]

Mr. Browne: Applications for asylum in the UK are collated and published by nationality, and are made in the UK rather than from abroad. The available data do

not include breakdowns by region within countries of origin, which would not necessarily be reliable even if it were possible to record such information. The latest published figures show a 13 per cent. rise in asylum applications from 265 in Q1 2004 to 300 in Q2 2004 from Sudanese nationals compared with an 11 per cent. fall for total applications (all nationalities) over the same period.

Information on asylum applications is published in quarterly web pages and in the annual statistical bulletin "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom". Copies of these publications and others relating to general immigration to the UK are available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers have been removed from the United Kingdom in each year since 1997. [186553]

Mr. Browne: The available information is in the table.

Removals and voluntary[1] departures of asylum applicants, 1997 to 2003[2,3]

	Principal applicants	*Dependants*	*Total*
1997	7,165	n/a	n/a
1998	6,990	n/a	n/a
1999	7,665	n/a	n/a
2000	8,980	n/a	n/a
2001	9,285	[4]1,495	10,780
2002	10,740	3,170	13,910
2003[5]	13,005	4,890	17,895

n/a = not available

[1] Includes persons departing "voluntarily" after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, and removals on safe third country grounds.

[2] Figures rounded to the nearest five and may not sum to total due to rounding.

[3] Data on dependants of asylum seekers removed have only been collected since April 2001.

[4] Excludes January-March 2001.

[5] Provisional figures

Information on asylum seekers who were removed from the UK in the first half of 2004 can be found on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many National Asylum Support Service-supported cases in the City of Newcastle have ended with the withdrawal of benefits on grounds of refusal of the case; and how many *(a)* women and *(b)* children have been affected by such withdrawals. [186844]

Mr. Browne: A total of 45,120 cases had support ceased in 2003 compared with 45,185 in 2002 and 14,195 in 2001. A breakdown of this information by reason for cessation, by area of the UK, by age or by gender is unavailable and could be produced only at a disproportionate cost. The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) only supports children if they are dependants of a principal applicant; NASS does not support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASCs).

Failed asylum seekers with dependent children currently receive NASS support until such time as they leave the UK or fail to comply with a removal direction. When section 9 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004 is implemented NASS support will cease if the Secretary of State certifies that, in his opinion, such a person has failed without reasonable excuse to take reasonable steps to leave the UK voluntarily or place himself in a position in which he is able to leave the UK voluntarily.

As at the end of June 2004 the number of asylum seekers (including dependants) supported in Newcastle in NASS accommodation was 1,575 and 50 were in receipt of subsistence-only support. Figures are rounded to the nearest five and cases which have had their support terminated are excluded from this figure.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS is published quarterly, and information on the number of cases with support ceased is published annually in the annual Home Office Statistical bulletin, Asylum Statistics United Kingdom, available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Charities

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to issue a definition of public benefit in relation to the activities of charities; and if he will make a statement. [187493]

Fiona Mactaggart: The draft Charities Bill was published on 27 May 2004. It takes forward a number of the recommendations of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, which made its report 'Private Action; Public Benefit' in September 2002. Copies of both documents are available in the Library.

At the heart of the draft Charities Bill is a new statutory definition of charity, based on a list of charitable purposes, and the principle of charities providing public benefit. This will make clear exactly what a charity is.

The Strategy Unit thoroughly reviewed the pros and cons of putting a definition of public benefit onto the face of the Bill. It concluded, and the Government agrees, that the future development of charity will be better served by keeping the current, flexible, non-statutory definition of public benefit.

The draft Bill is the subject of pre-legislative scrutiny by a Joint Committee of both Houses, which is expected to publish its recommendations by 30 September 2004. The Government will publish their response to the Committee's recommendations.

Children Trafficking

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the trafficking of children within the UK; and what steps he is taking to counter this. [185120]

Mr. Browne: The Government are strongly committed to combating child trafficking. We recognise that it is a complex problem and are determined to address every aspect of it, whether in countries of origin, en route to the UK, or on arrival. We have put in place a number of measures to do so, and constantly keep them under review.

We are working with source countries to tackle the problem at its root. The UK is one of the strongest supporters of the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. We have given £70,000 to Anti-Slavery International for raising awareness of the abuses suffered by the victims of trafficking and remedial action in West Africa. We have also given £3 million for the International Labour Organisation's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) programme in the Greater Mekong region. This involves a number of inter-linked interventions to raise awareness and prevent trafficking, and to withdraw women and children from labour exploitation and reintegrate them back into their own or new communities.

We are also taking action to ensure an effective enforcement response. Since 2000, all operational activity targeted against organised immigration crime, including people trafficking, has been co-ordinated through the multi-agency task force Reflex. Led by the National Crime Squad (NCS), Reflex brings together all the key agencies (including the Immigration Service, the National Criminal Intelligence Service and key police forces), as well as the appropriate Government Departments. Reflex aims to build up the intelligence picture, co-ordinate operations and provide a focal point for the operational response to human trafficking and smuggling.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003, which came into force in May this year, sets out wide-ranging offences covering trafficking for sexual exploitation with a maximum sentence of 14 years imprisonment. A new offence covering trafficking for non-sexual purposes, such as forced labour, is included in the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004.

The Government are committed to providing appropriate support to victims of trafficking. Child victims of trafficking are likely to be in need of welfare services. Under the Children Act 1989 local authorities have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in need, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those needs or arranging for their provision by other agencies. Assistance and support should therefore be provided by local statutory services in response to identified needs, whether directly or though specialist agencies.

We are also working to raise awareness of child trafficking among key professionals and agencies. The Immigration Service has started specialist child interviewing training for around 600 operational members of staff nationwide, which will help identify child victims of trafficking as they arrive in the UK. The Government have also published a best practice toolkit as a guide for professionals who are likely to come into contact with victims of trafficking. This includes specific sections on children and young people.

The Home Office and the Department for Education and Skills are jointly considering the results from the Reflex funded multi-agency operation, Paladin Child. This involved the Metropolitan Police, the Immigration Service, social workers from Hillingdon Social Services and secondees from NSPCC. The operation risk assessed children arriving at Heathrow airport without their parents or legal guardians and social services followed up those considered to be at risk. The operation did not uncover any evidence of child trafficking. However, the report did make a number of recommendations related to child protection.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the hon. Member for Walsall, North will receive a reply to his letter of 10 August on behalf of a constituent, reference PO9259/4. [188009]

Mr. Browne: I replied to my hon. Friend on 8 September 2004.

Data Protection

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with whom consultation has been held on *(a)* the range of data items which are to be stored in the database of registered facts and *(b)* the potential for subsequent use and disclosure of personal data from the database of registered facts; and if he will make a statement. [185960]

Mr. Browne: The Government published a draft Identity Cards Bill on 26 April 2004 setting out the legislative framework for a national identity cards scheme. A 12-week consultation was held in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Code of Practice on Consultation.

Over 3,000 copies of the consultation paper have been distributed including to all Members of Parliament, all the representative organisations that had commented on the earlier consultation and acquisition libraries across the UK. The consultation also appeared on the identity cards website (www.identitycards.gov.uk) and invited comments from individuals and organisations.

We are now carefully analysing all the responses received. The Government will take account of these comments on the draft Bill before it introduces substantive legislation as soon as parliamentary time allows.

The House of Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs is undertaking a formal scrutiny of the draft Bill and will be publishing a report.

Gosport War Memorial Hospital

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he expects inquiries into medical and nursing practices at Gosport War Memorial Hospital to be concluded; [186616]

(2) how many man hours have been expended by staff at Gosport War Memorial Hospital in responding to inquiries about medical and nursing practices at the hospital. [186617]

Paul Goggins: I can confirm that the investigation by Hampshire Police is ongoing. To date over 90 cases have been examined by a panel of experts and some of these have in turn been identified as requiring more detailed scrutiny. The investigation of the first four of these cases should be concluded by September 2004, but it is likely that the inquiry will stretch into 2005. Every effort has been made to ensure that the families and other interested parties are aware of the timescales involved.

Information is not available centrally on the amount of time which hospital staff have used in responding to police inquiries.

Hate Crime

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what further proposals the Government have to extend the powers of the criminal justice system to prevent hate crimes. [186872]

Fiona Mactaggart: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced in his speech to the Institute for Public Policy Research Institute on 7 July that as soon as the legislative opportunity arose the Government proposed extending the existing incitement to racial hatred laws, contained in the Public Order Act 1986, by creating a new offence of incitement to religious hatred.

Identity Cards

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the technological potential to combine identity cards with passports containing electronic data. [187388]

Mr. Browne: As part of the work to set the requirements for identity cards, the level of compatibility with technical standards proposed for electronic passports is being examined. However, no decision has been made on whether to combine technical standards for identity cards with any other documents.

The UK Passport Service is already committed to introducing a biometric passport containing electronic data in 2005.

Immigration

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to monitor the level of illegal immigration into the United Kingdom. [186554]

Mr. Browne: By definition, illegal immigrants fall outside of official statistics and are therefore difficult to measure. Official estimates of the numbers of illegal entrants to the UK or estimates of the size of the illegally resident population in the UK do not exist. The Government have commissioned research into the methods used in other countries to estimate the size of the illegal population in order to define methods appropriate for the UK.

We are committed to maintaining robust pre and on entry controls to prevent illegal immigration into the United Kingdom and there are many strands of work currently being undertaken to ensure the integrity of UK Border Controls. These include:

The increasing involvement of organised crime in illegal immigration led to the creation in 2000 of Reflex, the multi-agency forum which brings together key law enforcement players including the Immigration Service, as well as relevant government Departments and the Security Services, under the chair of the National Crime Squad.

As part of a longer-term strategy, the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) manages an expanding network of Immigration Liaison Officers (currently 12) in key overseas posts who work closely with local law enforcement agencies to combat illegal migratory flows.

A network of Airline Liaison Officers working closely with airline staff at key locations worldwide, who offer advice to carriers on the admissibility of passengers seeking to travel to the UK.

Working closely with UK Visas to put in place visa fraud officers at a number of our missions overseas to enhance further the quality of visa issues.

Introduction of a range of initiatives designed to reduce the numbers of those who arrive without adequate documentation or concealed in vehicles. Such measures include the roll out of New Detection Technology to search vehicles for would be clandestine entrants prior to embarkation for the UK, and the introduction of juxtaposed controls at strategic locations overseas to pre-assess eligibility for entry.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the joint work of immigration officers and British Transport Police in London in identifying illegal immigrants; and how many individuals have been *(a)* questioned and *(b)* arrested as part of the operation. [187059]

Mr. Browne: Over the past 15 months the UK Immigration Service (UKIS) has participated in a variety of joint multi-agency street crime operations in London, initiated by both the Metropolitan and British Transport Police (BTP). Focusing on crime hotspots, the Immigration Service has been invited to attend where an immigration offence is expected. The deployment of immigration officers in public places is a legitimate activity within the spectrum of our mandate of enforcing immigration laws.

While immigration officers do not have the same powers as the police to stop and search individuals in public places, they may legitimately question people to determine their immigration status where there is reasonable suspicion that a person is an immigration offender.

Records of *(a)* the number of people questioned or *(b)* the number of people arrested as part of the police-led crime reduction operations are not kept centrally. However, locally collated provisional information indicates that between May 2003 to July 2004 the UKIS participated in approximately 235 such operations which resulted in the arrest of around 1,000 immigration offenders, including 717 failed asylum seekers.

While officers routinely record the details of persons questioned in their individual notebooks, these data are not collated centrally.

The Government have made it clear that they are taking a robust and determined approach to tackling illegal immigration, and removing from the UK those who no longer have a legal right to be here.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set out the immigration figures for each of the past 14 months. [184255]

Mr. Browne: Latest available figures on international migration are given in the table.

Total international migration[1]: United Kingdom, 2001 to 2002

Thousand

Year and quarter[2]	*All migration Inflow*	*Outflow*	*Balance*
2001	480	308	172
Of which:			
March	100	60	40
June	113	65	48
September	178	103	75
December	89	81	8
2002	513	359	153
Of which:			
March	105	75	30
June	117	81	36
September	197	124	73
December	95	80	14

[1] Figures are estimates derived from the International Passenger Survey and other sources—these are Home Office data on asylum seekers and their dependants and estimates of migration between the UK and the Irish Republic from the Irish Central Statistical Office.

[2] Quarters are labelled by their final month, e.g. March denotes the quarter January to March.

Source:

National Statistics (www.statistics.gov.uk).

Monthly data is not available.

Italian Identity Cards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment the Government plans to conduct of the new Italian identity card scheme. [183909]

Mr. Browne: Identity card schemes have existed in most EU countries for many years.

Home Office officials have had detailed discussions with colleagues involved in the operation of identity card schemes in Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands and Germany and lessons learned have informed the development of policy where appropriate.

Comprehensive information has been supplied by each of the EU member states on the operation of their card schemes. The results of this work comprise Annex 3 of "Entitlement Cards and Identity Fraud: A Consultation" (CM 5557) published in July 2002.

Home Office officials have met Italian counterparts on two occasions to discuss their experience on the design and implementation of identity cards schemes and we will continue to work closely with colleagues in EU member states.

Non-EU Students

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to make it easier for non-EU students to work in the UK after they have graduated provided they have graduated from a UK university, with particular reference to residency criteria. [186817]

Mr. Browne: The Science and Engineering Graduate Scheme (SEGS), to be introduced on 29 October 2004, will allow non-EU graduates from UK universities who have graduated in specific science and engineering courses to apply to remain in the UK to seek work.

Participants on SEGS will be required to show that they have achieved a degree at 2:2 or above in such courses and that they can maintain and accommodate themselves without recourse to public funds. Participants will be granted leave for one year and will be able to live and work in any region of the UK. Participants on the scheme will be allowed to switch, at any time during the year, to other managed migration categories provided they meet the criteria.

In summer 2005, a further pilot scheme (Fresh Talent: Scotland) should be introduced to allow third country national graduates from Scottish universities to apply to stay in Scotland and look for work for up to two years.

November 9th Society

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the activities of the November 9th Society. [186293]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government condemn any individual or group which promotes racism. The Home Office is currently developing a cross-Government community cohesion and race equality strategy, due to be launched later this year, which will among other matters address how we can most effectively respond to the threat from political extremism. It is for the police and Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether to prosecute any alleged offences.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take action to close the website of the November 9th Society; and if he will make a statement. [186294]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government condemn those who use the internet to distribute racist material of this kind. The law on incitement to racial hatred applies to material on the internet which comes within our jurisdiction. It is for the police to investigate complaints and decide whether there is evidence that website operators have committed offences

The Internet Watch Foundation serves as a central point of contact for those who wish to report examples of inflammatory material on the internet.

The Government are currently working on an e-crime strategy which will include consideration of racist material on the internet.

Overseas Students

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost is to overseas students from *(a)* new entrant countries in the EU and *(b)* non-EU countries of registering to work in the UK during their studies. [183795]

Mr. Browne: Students from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia who take up employment in the UK and who are subject to the Worker Registration Scheme are required to pay a one-off fee of £50 to register with the Home Office. After 12 months in continuous legal employment in the UK they can work here without registration.

Students from non-EU countries can legally work part-time alongside their studies, without reporting the details to the Home Office, provided they continue to satisfy the requirements of their stay as students.

Passports

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when biometric passports will be available to British passport holders to allow entry into the US under the visa waiver scheme; and if he will make a statement. [186367]

Mr. Browne: US Congress have recently approved legislation which extends the target date by which participating members of the US visa waiver scheme should be producing biometric passports to October 2005. British citizens will be able to travel to the States under current arrangements until that date provided they hold machine readable passports.

It is planned to commence the introduction of biometric enabled British Passports in late 2005.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason he has not acted upon the recommendation by the Chief Surveillance Commissioner that certain NHS bodies should be excluded from Schedule 1 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000; and if he will make a statement. [185958]

Caroline Flint: The conduct of directed surveillance by NHS bodies has been reviewed by the Counter Fraud and Security Management Service (CFSMS), the Special Health Authority responsible for operational matters relating to the prevention, detection and investigation of fraud and corruption and the management of security in the NHS. The review has concluded that the CFSMS should authorise and undertake directed surveillance on behalf of NHS bodies. Consequently the Government will be laying an Order to amend the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, in line with the recommendation of the Chief Surveillance Commissioner.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many motorists were *(a)* fined and *(b)* banned from driving as a result of the evidence of speed cameras in each of the last five years; how much money was raised from fines in each year; and if he will make a statement. [187001]

Caroline Flint: Available information for England and Wales on the number of fixed penalties and court fines ordered to be paid and on the number of persons disqualified from driving for the offence of 'speeding detected by camera' in 1998 to 2002 is shown in tables A and B respectively. Data for 2003 will not be available until the autumn.

Information on the revenue raised from speeding fines is not available centrally.

Table A: Fines and fixed penalty data for speeding offences detected by camera[1, 2], England and Wales, 1998–2002

	Court proceedings[3]			Fixed penalties	
	Number of fines	Total amount of fine (£)	Average fine (£)	Number of tickets[4]	Estimated revenue (£)[5]
1998	25,500	2,928,000	115	338,800	13,552,000
1999	32,300	3,434,000	106	423,000	16,920,000
2000	31,800	3,400,000	107	599,200	25,965,000
2001	40,500	4,510,000	111	877,500	52,650,000
2002	46,300	4,778,000	103	1,135,000	68,122,000

[1] Automatic cameras until 1998, all camera types from 1999.
[2] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.
[3] Includes cases where fixed penalty notices were originally issued but not paid and subsequently referred to court.
[4] Paid i.e. no further action.
[5] Estimate based on £40 fixed penalty charge to October 2000. From November 2000 the penalty was raised to £60.

Table B: Number of persons disqualified[1] from driving at all courts for speeding offences detected by camera[2, 3], England and Wales, 1998–2002

	Number
1998	1,300
1999	1,300
2000	1,400
2001	2,000
2002	1,800

[1] Excludes persons disqualified under s.35 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 (penalty points system).
[2] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.
[3] Automatic cameras until 1998, all camera types from 1999.

Terrorism Offences

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many deportations have taken place under the Terrorism Act 2000 in each year for which records are available. [187597]

Mr. Browne: The Terrorism Act 2000 does not contain any provisions relating to deportation and there is no power under that Act to effect deportation.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abandoned Vehicles

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abandoned cars were removed by *(a)* police and *(b)* local authorities in each local authority area in

England in each of the past 10 years, broken down by region in descending order according to the biggest percentage drop in local authority area. [186099]

Mr. Morley: Estimates for numbers of abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed are compiled from the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey for 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03 and the Defra Abandoned Vehicle Survey for 2002–03. Estimates for vehicles removed by the police are not available. It is not practicable to sort the estimates due to the non-responses in certain years.

Figures for England broken down by region have been placed in the Library of the House.

Animal Rights Organisations (Criminal Behaviour)

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures the Government are taking to prevent criminal behaviour by animal rights organisations against lobster fishermen. [187429]

Mr. Bradshaw: Responsibility for dealing with these matters lies with the police authorities to whom all incidences of criminal behaviour or threatened criminal behaviour should be reported.

Environment Public Bodies

Joyce Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the budget of *(a)* the Environment Agency, *(b)* the Countryside Agency and *(c)* English Nature in the North East region of England was in each of the last three years. [186431]

Alun Michael: The budget for the Environment Agency's North East Region, which comprises the North East Region of England and most of the Yorkshire and Humber Region, was £83.8 million in 2001–02, £95.9 million in 2002–03 and £95.2 million in 2003–04. The Countryside Agency operates on a national rather than a regional basis, and figures for regional expenditure are not readily available. English Nature's budget for the North East Region of England was £1.8 million in 2001–02, £2.2 million in 2002–03 and £2.6 million in 2003–04.

EU Bycatch Regulation

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of fishing effort in UK fisheries identified by the EU Bycatch Regulation is conducted by vessels under 12 metres in length. [184896]

Mr. Bradshaw: The new Council Regulation to address cetacean bycatch requires the use of 'pingers' on vessels of 12 metres and over in ICES divisions VIId, e, f, g, h and j when using bottom-set gillnets or entangling nets. In ICES Area IV and division IIIa, the pinger requirement applies to vessels of 12 metres and over using bottom-set gillnets or entangling nets where the combination of net lengths used does not exceed 400 metres or where the mesh size used is greater than or equal to 220mm. The data is not available to identify the number of vessels falling in or out of the latter categories; it is only possible to identify the total number of vessels using bottom-set gillnets and entangling nets in the areas concerned.

Bearing in mind these caveats and using 2003 fishing data, the proportion of UK fishing effort (days at sea) conducted by vessels under 12 metres and exempt from the pinger requirements of the EU bycatch regulation would be approximately 80 per cent.

Farm Subsidies

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what decision has been taken by her Department regarding the level of voluntary modulation on agricultural payments. [186558]

Alun Michael: In her written statement to the House on 22 July, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, announced overall modulation rates for England of 5 per cent. and 10 per cent. in 2005 and 2006 respectively. The overall modulation rate comprises two separate elements: compulsory EU-wide modulation, set at 3 per cent. in 2005 and 4 per cent. in 2006; and an additional national element which has been set at 2 per cent. in 2005 and 6 per cent. in 2006.

Percentage

	EU rate	*Additional national rate*	*Overall rate*
2005	3.0	2.0	5.0
2006	4.0	6.0	10

While the compulsory EU modulation rate for 2007 and beyond has been set at 5 per cent., the additional national rate, and hence the overall modulation rate, has yet to be determined.

The proceeds of modulation in 2005 and 2006 will be match funded by the Exchequer and used principally to finance schemes to deliver environmental enhancement and positive management of our countryside.

Fast Food and Litter Partnerships

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the pilot projects dealing with fast food and litter partnerships; and if she will make a statement. [187571]

Alun Michael: In July 2002, Defra asked ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns) to devise a voluntary code of practice for the fast food industry aimed at improving local environmental quality, and the instances of fast food waste that becomes litter in rural and urban areas.

In November 2003, McDonald's and the Local Government Association (LGA) formed a pioneer partnership to assist local authorities in improving the quality of local environments and public spaces. The scheme was devised to support the Voluntary Code of Best Environmental Practice for the Fast Food Industry.

The pilot scheme, covering a mix of rural and urban areas, is currently running in Sheffield, Maidstone, and Taunton and Deane. McDonald's and the LGA

intention is to promote Defra's proposed code within each local authority, targeting all quick service restaurants in the area. The code sets out a framework for joint action between fast food businesses and land managers, and amongst others, encourages "litter patrols", the provision of litter bins and anti-littering signage.

The work on the pilots has helped to inform our further work on the code in preparation for a formal launch later in the year, with analysis of the scheme's success planned in due course.

Fly-tipping

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how her Department's fly-tipping strategy has affected the residents of Leyton and Wanstead. [187745]

Mr. Morley: Defra published a consultation document entitled the Fly-Tipping Strategy in February 2004. It proposed a range of measures that aimed to ensure that enforcement against fly-tipping is as effective as possible. The strategy proposed to move towards dealing with fly-tipping in a more pro-active preventative manner rather than focusing just on expensive clearance.

The measures proposed in the strategy would give local authorities and the Environment Agency more effective powers for dealing with fly-tipping, which should lead to a better response to the blight of illegally dumped waste. Benefits will also extend to local residents by moving towards cleaner, safer, and greener public spaces and reducing the damaging effects of fly-tipping on the environment.

The Fly-Tipping Strategy responses are currently being analysed and have fed in to development of a further set of options in the current Clean Neighbourhoods consultation.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Environment Agency's *(a)* procedure and *(b)* resources will be to ensure that all hazardous waste producers, including those producing small and sporadic quantities of hazardous waste, (i) are aware of and (ii) comply with the requirement to register as a hazardous waste producer. [187173]

Mr. Morley: Our proposals for new regulations for hazardous waste, including the proposed requirement for hazardous waste producers to notify their premises to the Environment Agency, were issued for consultation on 30 July. The consultation will run until 29 October and during this time, the Environment Agency will consider both how to make producers aware of their obligations and how to ensure compliance. The consultation paper seeks views on a general coming into force date for the regulations of July 2005, with the possibility of sites producing hazardous waste being notified from 1 April 2005.

Household Waste

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the environmental implications of introducing variable charges for the collection of domestic household waste. [187278]

Mr. Morley: "Waste not, Want not—A strategy for tackling the waste problem in England" (Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, 27 November 2002) recommended that local authorities which wish to take forward variable charging or household incentive schemes to help reduce waste volumes and increase recycling should be allowed to do so.

In line with their response to the Strategy Unit report, the Government has undertaken further work, in consultation with local authorities, on the practicalities of operating schemes and how potential disadvantages could be overcome. This work also analysed international experience of such schemes, including their impact on reducing waste and increasing recycling. In light of this work, the Government is reviewing their position.

Radio Barcodes (Waste Disposal)

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with retailers about the final waste disposal of radio barcodes contained within consumer goods. [187621]

Mr. Morley: I have not discussed the final waste disposal of radio barcodes contained within consumer goods with retailers.

Recycling

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made towards meeting recycling targets of 25 per cent. of household waste by 2005. [187011]

Mr. Morley: All local authorities in England have been set challenging Statutory Performance Standards for 2003–04 and 2005–06 for the recycling and composting of household waste. Individual local authority targets combine to meet national targets as set out in Waste Strategy 2000 to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04, and 25 per cent. by 2005–06.

In 2002–03, the household recycling and composting rate for England was 14.5 per cent., a 2 per cent. increase over 2001–02. This percentage rise represents a significant improvement compared with previous annual increases, which had tended to be around 1 per cent. (as measured by the Municipal Waste Management Survey).

The most recent evidence, offered by local authorities' unaudited Best Value Performance Indicator data for 2003–04, suggests that the 2003–04 national target of 17 per cent. will be met. The national target for 2005–06 remains a significant challenge but an achievable goal if the current rate of progress is maintained.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to encourage the recycling of plastic; and if she will list those local authorities which operate *(a)* kerbside and *(b)* other plastic recycling schemes. [187830]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 8 September 2004]:* All local authorities in England have been set challenging Statutory Performance Standards for 2003–04 and 2005–06 for the recycling and composting of household waste. The Government do not specify which materials local authorities are required to collect. The Statutory Performance Standards are weight based so initially local authorities are likely to recycle heavier materials. However, as recycling targets become increasingly demanding, local authorities are expected to target lighter materials such as plastics.

To make the recycling of plastic more economically attractive the Government-funded Waste Resources and Action Programme (WRAP) has developed a programme to expand markets for plastic recyclate. As a result of WRAP activity since 2001 in excess of 35,000 additional tonnes of plastic recycling capacity per year is either operational, under construction or otherwise committed.

According to the Municipal Waste Management Survey 2002–03 the following local authorities operated *(a)* a kerbside collection scheme, or *(b)* other plastic recycling schemes.

Local authorities operating a kerbside plastic collection scheme in 2002–03

Adur District Council
Alnwick District Council
Arun District Council
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Babergh District Council
Barking and Dagenham LB
Bath and North East Somerset Council
Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Council
Bexley LB
Blaby District Council
Blyth Valley Borough Council
Bolton MBC
Bradford City MDC MBC
Braintree District Council
Breckland BC
Bristol City Council
Bromley LB
Broxtowe Borough Council
Castle Morpeth Borough Council
Charnwood Borough Council
Chelmsford Borough Council
Chester City Council
Chichester District Council
Colchester Borough Council
Dacorum BC
Dartford Borough Council
Daventry DC
East Hampshire District Council
East Lindsey District Council
East Northamptonshire Council
Eastleigh Borough Council
Elmbridge Borough Council
Exeter City Council
Fenland District Council
Gloucester City Council
Gosport Borough Council
Gravesham Borough Council
Hart District Council
Havant Borough Council
Hillingdon LB
Horsham District Council
Kerrier District Council
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Kingston-upon-Thames LB
Lancaster City Council
Leeds City Council MBC
Leicester City Council
Lewes District Council
Lichfield District Council
Lincoln City Council
London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Manchester City Council
Melton Borough Council
Mid Bedfordshire District Council
Mid Devon District Council
Mid Sussex District Council
Milton Keynes Council
New Forest District Council
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
North Devon District Council
North Dorset District Council
North East Lincolnshire Council
North Kesteven District Council
North West Leicestershire District Council
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Oldham MBC
Pendle Borough Council
Plymouth City Council
Poole BC
Purbeck District Council
Reading BC
Redbridge LB
Rochdale MBC
Rossendale Borough Council
Sevenoaks District Council
South Hams District Council
South Holland District Council
South Kesteven DC
South Norfolk Council
South Northamptonshire District Council
South Oxfordshire District Council
Southend-on-Sea BC
St. Albans City and District Council
Stafford BC
Stroud District Council
Swale Borough Council
Teesdale District Council

Teignbridge DC
Thanet District Council
Three Rivers District Council
Torbay Council
Torridge District Council
Wellingborough BC
Weymouth and Portland Borough Council
Worthing Borough Council
Wychavon District Council

Local authorities operating a non-kerbside plastic recycling scheme

Adur District Council
Alnwick District Council
Arun District Council
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Babergh District Council
Barking and Dagenham LB
Bath and North East Somerset Council
Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Council
Bexley LB
Blaby District Council
Blyth Valley Borough Council
Bolton MBC
Bradford City MDC MBC
Braintree District Council
Breckland BC
Bristol City Council
Bromley LB
Broxtowe Borough Council
Castle Morpeth Borough Council
Charnwood Borough Council
Chelmsford Borough Council
Chester City Council
Chichester District Council
Colchester Borough Council
Dacorum BC
Dartford Borough Council
Daventry DC
East Hampshire District Council
East Lindsey District Council
East Northamptonshire Council
Eastleigh Borough Council
Elmbridge Borough Council
Exeter City Council
Fenland District Council
Gloucester City Council
Gosport Borough Council
Gravesham Borough Council
Hart District Council
Havant Borough Council
Hillingdon LB
Horsham District Council
Kerrier District Council
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Kingston-upon-Thames LB
Lancaster City Council
Leeds City Council MBC
Leicester City Council
Lewes District Council
Lichfield District Council
Lincoln City Council
London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Manchester City Council
Melton Borough Council
Mid Bedfordshire District Council
Mid Devon District Council
Mid Sussex District Council
Milton Keynes Council
New Forest District Council
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
North Devon District Council
North Dorset District Council
North East Lincolnshire Council
North Kesteven District Council
North West Leicestershire District Council
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Oldham MBC
Pendle Borough Council
Plymouth City Council
Poole BC
Purbeck District Council
Reading BC
Redbridge LB
Rochdale MBC
Rossendale Borough Council
Sevenoaks District Council
South Hams District Council
South Holland District Council
South Kesteven DC
South Norfolk Council
South Northamptonshire District Council
South Oxfordshire District Council
Southend-on-Sea BC
St. Albans City and District Council
Stafford BC
Stroud District Council
Swale Borough Council
Teesdale District Council
Teignbridge DC
Thanet District Council
Three Rivers District Council
Torbay Council
Torridge District Council
Wellingborough BC
Weymouth and Portland Borough Council
Worthing Borough Council
Wychavon District Council

Shellfish

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) when she expects to agree a management plan for scallops, crabs and lobsters in the Western Channel; [187425]

(2) what measures she is taking to assess *(a)* historic shellfish landings that will form the basis of a management plan and *(b)* current shellfish landings. [187426]

Mr. Bradshaw: The European Commission indicated in October 2003 that it would bring forward proposals for a management plan for scallops, lobsters and crabs in the Channel. It has not yet done so and we are not aware that such proposals are imminent.

Data on shellfish landings by UK vessels and into UK ports are collected annually and published in the United Kingdom Fisheries Statistics series. They are not collected specifically for the purpose of agreeing management plans.

Environment Agency

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what back-office improvements will be made within the Environment Agency to achieve the efficiency savings announced in the spending review. [185893]

Mr. Morley: The agency is developing an efficiency strategy which builds on its current targets for efficiency savings and addresses operational changes in the organisation. The strategy will reflect the spending review announcement. The key activities that underpin the strategy include:

Review of property and facilities owned and leased by the agency;

Improving procurement: reducing the unit cost of goods and services through aggregation of services;

Transactional services: ensuring that the handling of inquiries and invoicing is handled in the most efficient way;

Productive time: examining new ways of working and reducing the scale of support services;

Implementation of the National Document Imaging Strategy: rationalising photocopiers, printer and fax machines throughout the agency;

Implementation of the Financial and Human Resources management information system (IBIS): an activity based recording system that will provide management information on the use of agency resources across the business.

Waste Incineration

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether there are economic disincentives for waste-to-energy incinerators to burn source separated waste. [187069]

Mr. Morley: There are no direct economic disincentives for waste-to-energy incinerators to burn source separated waste. Incentives to recycle source separated waste exist and these act as indirect disincentives to burn source separated waste. Examples of these incentives include local authority statutory performance standards for recycling and composting and the recycling targets set out in the European directive on packaging and packaging waste.

Government announced in Budget 2002 that the case for an economic instrument for incineration would be considered. As there is a range of issues associated with developing an effective waste management and disposal mix, the Government commissioned a study to identify the environmental and health impacts of all waste management and disposal options (http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/health-effects/health-report.pdf). A second, related study seeking to identify the economic values of the impacts and pollutants identified in the first study is currently under way.

The case for using economic instruments for incineration will be considered in light of this work and in consultation with other stakeholders.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AIDS Vaccine Research

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what resources he plans to commit to AIDS vaccine research in the next 10 years; [187466]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with the pharmaceutical industry regarding funding and facilities for the production of AIDS vaccine once developed. [187467]

Hilary Benn: In line with the recently published DFID Research Funding Strategy, we are committed to the global effort to find a vaccine for AIDS. DFID has committed £14 million in support of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) up to the end of this year and I recently met Dr. Seth Berkeley, who is president and chief executive the of IAVI, to discuss its work. The UK is also committed to work with our G8 colleagues. DFID supports the aims of the Global HIV and AIDS Vaccine Enterprise and are developing areas for UK engagement with the enterprise including potential financial support during the UKS G8 Presidency. Over the coming months DFID will be considering the resource framework for the three years commencing April 2005, including further support for IAVI and support for the Global Vaccine Enterprise.

In addition to this direct support, the UK has tax relief for investments in research into vaccines and other medicines for HIV and AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. The Vaccines Research Relief is effective on expenditure from April 2003. It is too early to report on the success of the Vaccines Research Relief since company tax returns are retrospective in nature. The first claims are not expected until later this year. However, a programme of evaluation will be implemented once data begins to be received. It is important to bear in mind the long-term nature of research decisions and outcomes and the fact that the impact of the relief is likely to appear over the medium to long term.

DFID officials have been meeting regularly with pharmaceutical companies and business associations as part of our work on increasing access to medicines in developing countries. These meetings have dealt with issues such as the affordability of existing medicines and other health technologies, and the need for increased research and development into new technologies—including vaccines—for diseases disproportionately affecting developing countries.

Beijing + 10

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his plans are for his Department's involvement in the Beijing Platform for Action known as Beijing + 10. [187534]

Hilary Benn: The review of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action will be an integral part of the UK Government's work on gender equality in 2005. The 49th Session of the Commission for the Status for Women (CSW) at the United Nations in March 2005 will review and appraise the implementation of Beijing over the last 10 years. A cross-Whitehall UK Government delegation will actively participate at CSW, working to ensure that the gains achieved at Beijing in 1995 are upheld. DFID has already begun contributing to this process, completing a United Nations questionnaire on progress made in the UK since 1995, which will feed into the UN Secretary-General's report.

DFID is also working closely with the European Union Gender Group and other donors through the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) Gender Network, to develop a contribution to the review. We are attending regional preparatory meetings and working with civil society organisations. These include the UK Gender and Development Network, to whom DFID has provided support on a study examining the links between the Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Gender equality is relevant to the achievement of all the MDGs, not only that specifically aimed at gender equality and the empowerment of women. The review will be an opportunity to underline the continuing relevance of the Beijing Platform for Action to the achievement of gender equality.

Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how his Department's policy on taking risks of natural and man-made disasters into account will change following the report by his Department's Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department. [186721]

Hilary Benn: A reduction in the impact of natural and man-made disasters is an important precondition for poverty reduction in many countries.

DFID is in the process of reviewing how we might step up our work in this area. A scoping study, commissioned by DFID's Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department and undertaken by the Overseas Development Group, will soon report. The study will examine the relationship between development and disasters so as to help the development community and DFID better understand how we might tackle disasters risk most effectively. It will also consider how to better integrate disaster risk reduction into development. We intend to develop a forward strategy for DFID on disaster reduction in the light of the findings of this study. The findings will be disseminated to interested parties.

Departmental Contracts

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many contracts were let by his Department and agencies for which he is responsible to Halcrow Group Ltd. for the financial years *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2002–03, *(c)* 2001–02, *(d)* 2000–01 and *(e)* 1999–2000; what the value of each contract was; and what the nature of each contract was. [188311]

Hilary Benn: DFID's headquarters has issued the following contracts to the Halcrow Group Ltd. since 1999. A small number of low-value contracts may also have issued from DFID's overseas offices, but information on this is not held centrally, and could be provided only by incurring a disproportionate cost.

Ref.	*Project title*	*Contract issued value (£)*	*Value plus any amendments/ extensions (£)*	*Contract let*
19986930	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF): Advice and Guidance on the Build-Operate Train Tran	426,749	491,520	28 April 1999
19997568	Construction Adviser	29,090	66,290	10 May 1999
19997201	Malawi Haulage Costs Study	102,590	110,840	13 May 1999
19999064	Kharkiv Solid Waste Management: Ukraine	49,947	49,947	3 November 1999
19999310	Drainage Engineer	89,495	89,495	20 December 1999
20000009	World Bank Urban Transport Strategy Review—Review of Experience in Competition in Urban Public Trans	29,762	29,762	7 January 2000
20000012	World Bank Urban Transport Strategy Review—Review of Urban Mass Transit in Developing Countries	39,987	39,987	7 January 2000
19999349	Slope Stability/Geotechnical Engineer	22,780	22,780	19 January 2000
19999283	Construction of Bhairab Bridge: Phase 2	2,484,879	6,103,093	7 February 2000
20000182	Professional Advice and Specialist Human Resources: Transport (Halcrow)	0	0	9 February 2000
20000203	Professional Advice and Specialist Human Resources: Energy (Halcrow Gilbert)	0	0	17 February 2000
20000160	Provision of Professional Advice and Specialist Human Resources (Halcrow)	0	0	2 March 2000
20000373	Kharkiv Solid Waste Management—Ukraine	7,111	7,111	7 March 2000
19999353	Philippines National Road Bridges Project	562,525	562,525	16 August 2000
20001267	Municipal Utilities Development Programme (MUDP)	98,921	98,921	12 September 2000
20001218	Strengthening Capacity in Environmental Project Development	547,455	565,510	3 November 2000

Ref	Project title	Contract issued value (£)	Value plus any amendments/ extensions (£)	Contract let
20001831	World Bank Toolkits for Privatisation Participation in Water and Sanitation	10,507	10,507	6 November 2000
20012053	Integrating Gender, Poverty Reduction and Energy	21,077	21,077	5 January 2001
20001956	WB/GEF Project (Rostov): EIA	274,000	275,000	11 January 2001
20012593	Guyana Water Sector Programme—Drafting of TORS for a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Guy	1,536	1,536	19 April 2001
20012771	Municipal Utilities Development Programme	46,751	46,751	17 July 2001
20013244	Kosovo—Pristina University Hospital—Assessment Water and Sanitation	27,080	27,080	9 October 2001
20012518	Gerald's Park Airstrip Consultancy	262,641	458,607	25 March 2002
20023903	Guyana Water: Management Contract—Conflict of Interest	968	968	10 June 2002
20034599	Gerald's Park Airstrip Consultancy—Phase 2	355,081	477,786	21 March 2003
20034654	Advice to IUDD in the Engineering Sector—Halcrow Group	0	0	31 March 2003
200304865	SUSMAQ Output to Purpose Review	16,370	17,870	2 July 2003
200304923	Recovery and Infrastructure Group (RIP)	783,962	2,512,757	11 July 2003
200305075	Set up of the Coalition Provincial Authority South (CPA-S)	928,994	1,611,156	12 September 2003
200305122	Transport Advice to DFID'S Engineering KAR Programme	29,980	57,433	30 September 2003
200405398	South East Asia Access for Rural Poor Programme	132,508	229,820	3 March 2004

Education (Gender Disparity)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact on girls' school enrolment of increased access to sanitation; and how this is taken into account in the design of the programmes funded by his Department in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goal to eliminate gender disparity in education. [188058]

Hilary Benn: DFID's assessment of this relationship is two-fold. First, access to basic facilities such as school toilets, safe drinking water, clean surroundings and information on hygiene all improve the quality of the school environment and result in better learning outcomes for girls. Provision of basic facilities ensures universal basic education and results in increased enrolment of girls in schools. Basic sanitation for girls in particular, can lead to lower dropout rate for girls, especially at puberty. For example, in Bangladesh, a school sanitation and hygiene education programme reported to increase girls' attendance rates by 11 per cent.

Second, parents are more likely to send girls to school when they have ready access to safe, drinking water and girls are no longer required to collect water from distant water pumps.

An example of how this assessment has been used in DFID's work is in Sudan. As part of its support for the peace process in Sudan, DFID has provided approximately £2 million to assist the United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) education programmes in the conflict affected areas of the country, providing books and materials to over 2,000 primary schools and supporting the construction of water and sanitation facilities.

Gaza Strip

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the humanitarian situation in the town of Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip. [187517]

Hilary Benn: The Israeli operation "Forward Shield" in Beit Hanoun has led to extensive damage and destruction to property, including agricultural land and infrastructure, in one of Gaza's most important agricultural regions. The levelling of a further 17 per cent. of total arable land in the last two months adds to the debilitating impact on the livelihoods and food security of Palestinians in the area. Over 50 per cent. of total agricultural land in the area has now been uprooted since September 2000. As a result of residential buildings being destroyed, 145 people have been made homeless and another 580 people have had their homes damaged. Damage to public property has led to breaks in the water, power, sewerage and road networks. In addition, 17 privately owned water-wells were destroyed with consequences for access to drinking water and agricultural use. DFID funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency provides support for affected people in the area.

Sudan

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent meetings he has had with non-governmental organisations to discuss the humanitarian situation in Darfur, Sudan. [186440]

Hilary Benn: During my visit to Sudan in June, I met with representatives from non-governmental organisations in Khartoum and Darfur. Since my return, I have been in correspondence with several NGOs including Oxfam, Amnesty International and Save the Children UK. Officials from the joint FCO/ DFID Sudan Unit hold frequent meetings with NGO representatives in Khartoum and London.

The Foreign Secretary also met with NGO representatives in Khartoum and Darfur during his visit to Sudan in August. He also met with representatives in London prior to his departure and following his return.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent representations he has received about the humanitarian situation in Darfur, Sudan. [186473]

Hilary Benn: I am gravely concerned about the situation in Darfur, Sudan and am keeping in close contact with developments. I am in regular dialogue about the humanitarian situation in Darfur with UN agencies, and Development Ministers in other donor Governments. I am also in regular correspondence with the NGO community. I receive numerous letters on Darfur from Members of this House, as well as from members of the public.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the humanitarian situation in *(a)* Sudan and *(b)* the Darfur region. [186478]

Hilary Benn: Sudan is a country in the midst of a chronic complex emergency. UN social indicators continue to be among the lowest in the world. Large areas of the country outside the more affluent area of Khartoum continue to need life-saving and life-sustaining assistance. Continuing conflict in many areas has resulted in persistently high levels of poverty as agricultural production is disrupted and land taken out of cultivation due to instability.

With the expectation of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in the coming months, humanitarian needs are likely to increase as the needs of returning internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees from the conflict between the north and south of Sudan add to those affected by natural disaster.

In Southern Sudan, 23 years of conflict has created critical food insecurity, an almost total lack of primary health care outside of what is provided by NGOs, and crisis levels of mortality and morbidity across the area. The conflict is estimated to have displaced 4 million people out of a total population of 5 million, some of whom are now refugees and some are IDPs. (A breakdown of this is provided in the table). The critical issue for the humanitarian community in the south is ensuring a stable and sustainable environment to help displaced people to return home. While the Comprehensive Peace Agreement holds out the prospect of peace in Southern Sudan, fighting continues, with an outbreak of militia activity in the Shilluk Kingdom, which has displaced 50,000 people since March 2004.

Other areas of concern in Sudan include the Red Sea State in Northern Sudan, where the population of 700,00 has suffered persistent drought and repeated crop failures since 1988. The rainfall and predicted agricultural production for 2004 is better than the last few years, but due to the prolonged nature of the crisis, a large proportion of the general population is likely to remain short of food and to require food and nutritional assistance for some time to come.

Summary of Sudanese IDPs and refugees

	Number	*Source*
IDPs		
Greater Khartoum	2,000,000	Norwegian Refugee Council, 2004 and UN OCHA, 2004
Northern Sudan (not Khartoum or Darfur)	362,000	
Darfur	1,000,000+	
Southern Sudan	750,000+	
Total	4,112,000	

Summary of Sudanese IDPs and refugees

	Number	*Source*
Sudanese refugees		
Uganda	223,000	UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2004
Chad	110,000	
Ethiopia	90,000	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	70,000	
Kenya	68,000	
Central African Republic	36,000	
Egypt	30,000	
Eritrea	660	
Total	627,660	
Refugees in Sudan		
Total from Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea and others	270,000	UNHCR, 2004

The humanitarian situation in Darfur remains dire and urgent action is needed on all sides. Over 1.2 million people have been internally displaced in Darfur, and a further 200,000 have fled to Chad. The needs are enormous. Security in the camps has improved, but reports of attacks continue outside the camps, and IDPs, refugees and host communities in Darfur and Eastern Chad remain vulnerable as inter-tribal fighting continues and the levels of banditry and general insecurity remain. IDPs and refugees still lack adequate water and sanitation and many do not have adequate shelter against the rain and extreme conditions. Outbreaks of disease are a serious concern (a hepatitis E outbreak has already been diagnosed in West Darfur). Aid agencies are scaling up delivery of assistance, but capacity constraints remain. The UN estimates that 1,000 international staff are needed to cope with the crisis; 500 are currently working in Darfur. Humanitarian access has however improved and over 45 NGOs are registered, although not all are operational. The rainy season from May to September has also resulted in logistical difficulties, with the World Food Programme (WFP) resorting to airdrops of food in some inaccessible areas. A further constraint is that resources are still limited. The UN has revised its appeal for the crisis in Darfur and now estimates that it needs a total of $530 million for Chad and Darfur, of which $255 million is unmet. The UK is the second largest bilateral donor to the humanitarian response, having allocated £62.5 million since September 2003. DFID is urging other donors to do more.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the United Kingdom Government will take *(a)* to prevent the forced return or relocation of (i) internally displaced people and (ii) refugees in Sudan and *(b)* to ensure that local Sudanese security forces and police protect the human rights of those who have suffered. [187821]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

The Government of Sudan on 21 August agreed with the International Organisation for Migration that the latter would determine that returns of Internally Displaced Persons or refugees are voluntary and appropriate. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on 30 August noted that the Government of Sudan was

abiding by this commitment. We will continue to press the Government of Sudan to fulfil their obligations to provide proper protection to the civilian population, as called for in UNSCR 1556. We are providing support for the African Union Cease-fire Commission observer mission (£2 million in addition to EU funding of €12 million), and have provided £250,000 to fund eight UN human rights monitors in Darfur.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will outline the role the United Kingdom Government intend to play to help peace talks between the warring parties in Darfur to lead to a just and meaningful peace that addresses the root causes of the conflict. [187822]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

Peace talks continue in Abuja, and the parties have drawn up a humanitarian protocol, which will commit them to improved humanitarian access. Discussions are currently focusing on security issues. These talks are key. Only through political negotiation will we be able to find a sustainable solution to the conflict. The UK is offering its full support to the African Union mediators; a UK observer is present in Abuja and we are working with our international partners, including through the UN Security Council, to bring pressure to bear on the parties to the conflict to engage constructively.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action the United Kingdom Government will propose to the UN following the passing of the 30 August deadline imposed by the UN on the Sudanese Government; and what the United Kingdom Government's policy towards the Sudanese Government will be. [187823]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the statement my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary made to the House on 7 September 2004, *Official Report*, columns 615–18.

Locusts

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action he is taking to assist the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation in its request for more international aid to help tackle the locust plague in West Africa. [188103]

Hilary Benn: The UK committed £1.5 million ($2.7 million at current exchange rate) in August to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) international emergency appeal for the immediate control of the locust swarms. In total the international community has pledged $37 million.

To date, the FAO has provided about $5 million to six countries and to four regional projects across West and North Africa. There is currently unspent donor money available from the international appeal. As the situation is easing in Morocco and Algeria, their governments are also redeploying resources in the south.

The Department for International Development continues to monitor the situation closely. In the event that the situation deteriorates rapidly, the UK will review its response in line with the FAO and in-country logistics capacity given the difficulty of operating in such remote areas.

Zambia

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to his answer of 21 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1219W, on Zambia, what specific projects have received support in the Milanzi constituency of the Eastern Province of Zambia. [187537]

Hilary Benn: To date, one project specific to Milanzi constituency is receiving support. A local NGO called Shade the Shame has just been granted funding of £10,000 from the DFID financed Small Grant Scheme (SGS). Shade the Shame co-ordinates the activities of women's clubs in the district and currently has 22 affiliate clubs with 1,200 members. Each club specialises in a particular income generating activity. DFID's Grant will help purchase more equipment for the clubs, enhancing their productivity and increasing members' incomes.

The SGS is managed by the British High Commission, and has a small budget each year. Priority is given to small-scale community enterprises that show an awareness of HIV and AIDS prevention and coping initiatives, and are environmentally sensitive.

The Eastern Province of Zambia is the main focus for SGS funding this year. DFID is in the process of assessing a large number of applications from the Province, including some more proposals from the Milanzi constituency. Final decisions will be made by the end of September.

TREASURY

Civil Service Redundancies

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost to each Government department of redundancy payments arising from staff reductions announced in the 2004 Spending Review. [187939]

Mr. Boateng: Individual departments are responsible for managing any efficiency related workforce changes.

Honesty Hotline (Newhaven)

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many individuals have used the Honesty Hotline installed by HM Customs at Newhaven Port to report occasions where they may have exceeded the duty limit in each month since its installation. [188086]

John Healey: Customs does not maintain records on the number of calls of the type described originating at Newhaven.

Mountain Rescue Teams

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will extend the zero rating of VAT to all purchases by mountain rescue teams to other items. [188092]

John Healey: Under long-standing formal agreements with our European partners, we are not able to extend or add to the current list of zero rates.

However, as part of the wide range of VAT reliefs available to charities, rescue, or first aid charities may purchase VAT-free the specialised telecommunications, aural, visual, light enhancing or heat detecting equipment which they use. These charities are also able to buy medicines, medical equipment, ambulances and certain vehicles designed to transport disabled people free of VAT.

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will introduce an across the board exemption from vehicle tax for dedicated rescue vehicles used by mountain rescue teams. [188093]

John Healey: Any changes to taxation policy are made by the Chancellor in the context of his Budget statement after considering relevant economic, social and environmental factors.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Human Rights

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) how many claims have been made in UK courts citing breach of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 in each year since passage of that Act; [188601]

(2) how many court judgments have found a breach of the claimant's rights under the Human Rights Act 1998 in each year since passage of that Act. [188602]

Mr. Lammy: This information is not maintained centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Legal Services Commission

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs, if he will break down by type of debt the money owed to the Legal Services Commission. [185950]

Mr. Lammy *[pursuant to his reply, 21 July 2004, Official Report, c. 376W]:* I listed in my previous answer the break down by type of debt of the money owed to the Legal Services Commission in 2003–04. This omitted to indicate that these figures were in thousands and the following table now reflects this.

	£000
Contribution due from funded clients	29,509
Costs to be recovered	25,431
Statutory charge	263,896
Damages	12,904
Amounts due from suppliers	31,718
Recovery of defence costs orders	1,722
Accrued income European social fund	82
Prepayments and other accrued income	404
Total	365,666

Magistrates Court Cells (Aberystwyth)

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment has been made of the health and safety standards in Aberystwyth Magistrates' Court cells. [187075]

Mr. Leslie *[holding answer 9 September 2004]:* Custody facilities at courthouses are audited by the Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS) at regular intervals against current standards of health and safety, decency and security. On 2 June 2004, a PECS audit concluded that the Aberystwyth Magistrates' Court cell complex meets basic health and safety standards.

However, access to the cell area fails to meet the established security standards because there is no van dock and there is no direct access to the custody area from the courtrooms. In order to reduce risk the number and type of hearings with defendants in custody at the courts has been reduced. This allows the custody officers a greater degree of control over each custodial defendant brought before the Court.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

British Agricultural Products

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures she has taken to promote British agricultural products abroad. [186669]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: UK Trade and Investment works closely with Defra to help the British agricultural industry trade internationally. Our primary means is through the International Agriculture and Technology Centre based at Stoneleigh Park, which arranges a series of targeted events, inward and outward missions, and attendance at exhibitions where companies can improve their business prospects through international trade.

British Energy

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the current Government-backed rescue package for British Energy. [186330]

Mr. Timms: The terms of the Government's support for British Energy's restructuring plan were set out in the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 28 November 2002, *Official Report*, column 488. The latest position was set out by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in her statement on 17 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 48WS.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which her Department is responsible. [187312]

Ms Hewitt: The Department has 16 rooms set aside for use by smokers and three rooms set aside for worship. Each building has a first aid room that can be used by nursing mothers and pregnant women.

Foresight Project

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which scientists participated in the scoping workshops that began the Foresight project on Brain Science, Addiction and Drugs in March and April. [187552]

Ms Hewitt: Set out as follows, is a list of the scientists who attended the two workshops my Department ran to help decide the focus for the Foresight project on Brain Science Addiction and Drugs.

Attendee	*Organisation*
Ball, Dr. David	Institute of Psychiatry
Barrett, Dr. Geoff	Dstl
Cave, Dr. Jonathan	University of Warwick
Collingridge, Professor Graham	University of Bristol
Cox, Professor Miles	University of Wales
Crome, Professor Ilana	Keele University
Curran, Professor Val	UCL
Davis, Dr. Paul	NHS
Dayan, Professor Peter	Gatsby Institute, UCL
Drummond, Professor Colin	St. Georges Medical School
Duka, Dr. Theodora	University of Sussex
Edwards, Professor Griffith	Institute of Psychiatry
Everitt, Professor Barry	University of Cambridge
Farrell, Professor Graham	University of Loughborough
Godfrey, Professor Christine	University of York
Gossop, Professor Michael	Institute of Psychiatry
Hammersley, Professor Richard	University of Essex
Heather, Professor Nick	University of Northumbria
Heffernan, Dr. Dorothy	Psychoactivate
Ingram, Professor Colin	University of Newcastle
Iversen, Professor Leslie	University of Oxford
Iversen, Professor Susan	University of Oxford
Kelly, Dr. Paul	University of Edinburgh
Killcross, Dr. Simon	University of Cardiff
King, Sir David	Chief Scientific Adviser, OST
Marsden, Professor Charles	University of Nottingham
McKeganey, Professor Neil	University of Glasgow
Morton, Dr. Jenny	University of Cambridge
Mulkeen, Dr. Declan	Medical Research Council (MRC)
Mundy, Dr. Chris	National Institute of Neurosciences
Nutt, Professor David	University of Bristol
Orford, Professor Jim	University of Birmingham
Pearson, Professor Geoffrey	Goldsmiths College
Pembrey, Professor Marcus	University of Bristol
Plant, Professor Martin	University of West of England
Plant, Professor Moira	University of West of England
Robbins, Professor Trevor	University of Cambridge
Rose, Professor Steven	Open University
Rouse, Ms Ros	ESRC
Sahakian, Professor Barbara	University of Cambridge
Stephens, Professor Dai	University of Sussex
Stimson, Professor Gerry	Imperial College
Strang, Professor John	Institute of Psychiatry
Williams, Dr. John	Wellcome Trust

A copy of the key points raised at the workshops and the areas we are seeking to explore is available at www.foresight.gov.uk.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Adults with Learning Difficulties (Housing)

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to amend planning guidance to local authorities on the development of residential homes for adults with learning difficulties in rural areas; and if he will make a statement. [188451]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister consulted last year on a proposed update to Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3), titled "Influencing the Size, Type and Affordability of Housing". The proposed update places more emphasis, than currently in PPG3, on producing a better match between the housing planned and the needs of the community, particularly in terms of the size, type and affordability of housing, both in urban and rural areas. We intend to publish the update in the autumn.

Local planning authorities should already be assessing the housing needs of specific groups, including adults with learning difficulties, as part of their local housing needs assessment. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently revising the guidance to local planning authorities on carrying out such assessments and will be publishing an updated guide by the end of the year.

Agricultural Land Sales

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will extend the consultation on planning aspects of the subdivision and sale of agricultural land to include woodlands and meadows. [188080]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not aware that the same concerns over the planning issues that have arisen in the context of subdivision and subsequent sale of agricultural land apply to woodlands and meadows. Accordingly they have not specifically been included in our consideration of possible solutions.

Brighton (Football Stadium)

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish the guidelines he is making available to the inspector who will consider the reconvened public inquiry into the application for a football stadium for Brighton and Hove Albion. [188087]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister advised the agent to Brighton and Hove Albion FC by letter of 26 July 2004 that he wished to re-open the inquiry concerning this application. The reason given in the letter for doing so was that he wished to be further informed upon the question of the availability and suitability of seven alternative sites. That letter was copied to the main parties to the inquiry and is in the public domain.

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his recent announcement reopening the public inquiry into the planning application for a football stadium for Brighton and Hove Albion, whether he has accepted that there is a national need for such a stadium. [188088]

Keith Hill: The First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has not yet reached a view on the proposal for a football stadium at Falmer. Arrangements are currently being made for the inquiry to be re-opened. A decision will be made on the basis of the material planning considerations and all the available evidence, including the report of the re-opened inquiry, once that is submitted to my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

Council Tax

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the band D council tax precept levied by the Greater London Authority (GLA) is; and how it has changed since the GLA's establishment. [188290]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is tabled as follows:

Taxpayers living in the City of London are not required to contribute towards the Metropolitan police because the City provides its own police force. Separate figures are therefore given for the Band D council tax payable by taxpayers in London and the City.

	GLA Band D council tax for London boroughs (£)	*Percentage increase*	*GLA Band D council tax for City of London (£)*	*Percentage increase*
2000–01[1]	122.98	—	32.03	—
2001–02	150.88	22.7	32.03	0.0
2002–03	173.88	15.2	43.29	35.2
2003–04	224.40	29.1	65.27	50.8
2004–05	241.33	7.5	57.25	-12.3

[1] The amounts for 2000–01 were set by central government rather than by the GLA.

Disabled Facilities Grant Programme

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what conclusions have resulted from the joint review with the Department of Health in the context of the Spending Review 2004 of the disabled facilities grant programme. [188184]

Keith Hill: Following the Spending Review, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is considering how to allocate the total resources between different programmes. The joint review with the Department of Health of the operation of the disabled facilities grant programme is on-going, and its conclusions will be announced in Spring 2005.

Energy Crops Grant Scheme

Mr. Gray: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs prior to the publication of Planning Policy Statement 22 about its Energy Crops Grant scheme under the England Rural Development Programme. [188464]

Keith Hill: Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs were involved in several discussions relating to the contents of Planning Policy Statement 22 (PPS22) prior to its publication. However, as PPS22 is a national planning policy statement, and the planting of crops, for whatever purpose, is not a planning matter, the Energy Crops Grant Scheme was not specifically discussed.

Fly-posting

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice *(a)* the Department and *(b)* the Environment Agency gives to local authorities on how to deal with illegal fly-posting. [188407]

Keith Hill: The Government's advice to local planning authorities on how to deal with fly-posting is set out in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Good Practice Guide "The Control of Fly-Posting" published in 2000. Advice is also given in part V of DOE Circular 5/92 and Welsh Office Circular 14/92.

Forest of Dean Local Plan

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister by what date he will determine whether he will direct the Forest of Dean district council, under section 44(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), in relation to the adoption of their District Local Plan. [188294]

Keith Hill: On 17 August 2004 the Government Office for the South West, on behalf of the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, directed the Forest of Dean district council not to adopt the Local Plan. This direction will remain in place until it has been decided whether to intervene further. There is no statutory timetable prescribed for action under the provisions of section 44(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) but my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is anxious to ensure that the current situation is resolved as quickly as possible.

High Hedges

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when regulations allowing local authorities to tackle high hedges will come into effect. [188295]

Keith Hill: Regulations bringing into force the provisions in part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act, which give local authorities powers to deal with complaints about high hedges, are expected to come into effect towards the end of 2004.

Highways Maintenance

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average Standard Spending Assessment/Formula Spending Share funding per head has been for highways maintenance in *(a)* England and *(b)* North Somerset in each year since 1997. [188657]

Mr. Raynsford: Tabled as follows are the highway maintenance Standard Spending Assessment/Formula Spending Share (SSA/FSS) per head for both England and North Somerset for each year since 1997, as requested.

£ per head

	England	North Somerset
1997–98	35.97	34.37
1998–99	36.00	33.89
1999–2000	36.79	33.80
2000–01	37.55	34.85
2001–02	38.29	37.00
2002–03	39.10	38.66
2003–04	39.74	37.47
2004–05	40.43	38.74

Both Standard Spending Assessments and Formula Spending Shares are neither the amount an authority has spent on a particular service nor are they the Government's assessment of how much money should be spent on a particular service by an authority. Additionally they are not grant. They are simply formulae used in the calculation of Revenue Support Grant.

Listed Buildings

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many buildings listed for their historic or architectural interest were demolished in each of the last three years for which figures are available *(a)* as a result of permission of the local planning authority, *(b)* on appeal to a government planning inspector and *(c)* without permission; [187989]

(2) how many owners of buildings listed for their historic or architectural interest were prosecuted in each of the last three years for which figures are available for demolishing the buildings without permission; and if he will make a statement. [187990]

Keith Hill: This information is not collected by central Government. However, since the 4 May English Heritage have been logging records of Listed Building Consent applications for total demolition, and by the close of the 2004–05 financial year will be able to provide a report on the number of applications.

Local Government/Finance

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether local authorities are required to obtain the best value for land and buildings of which they dispose. [187988]

Keith Hill: Local authorities have discretionary powers to dispose of land in any manner they wish under sections 123 and 127 of the Local Government Act 1972. Under these provisions, disposals must be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable, unless the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister gives his consent to the disposal. The 2003 General Disposal Consent which was issued in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Circular 06/2003 on 4 August 2003, allows authorities, in certain circumstances, to dispose of land at less than market value without having to seek the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's specific consent. Where authorities wish to dispose of open space land that is used for public recreation, they must first advertise their intentions in a local newspaper to comply with the statutory requirements of the 1972 Act and consider any objections they receive.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average Standard Spending Assessment/formula spending share funding per head has been for all services in *(a)* England and *(b)* North Somerset in each year since 1997; and if he will estimate the sums that would be available for services in North Somerset if the average SSA/FSS funding per head were the same as the English average. [188658]

Mr. Raynsford: Tabled as follows are the total Standard Spending Assessment/Formula Spending Share (SSA/FSS) per head for both England and North Somerset for each year since 1997, as requested.

£ per head

	England	North Somerset
1997–98	829.45	660.18
1998–99	869.19	688.86
1999–2000	907.66	713.57
2000–01	943.33	736.84
2001–02	980.69	767.95
2002–03	995.30	779.11
2003–04	1,177.45	953.27
2004–05	1,222.22	954.08

The England figure covers all services, including police and fire services.

Police services in the North Somerset area are provided by the Avon and Somerset Constabulary; and fire services are provided by the Avon Fire and Rescue Service. The Police Service is funded directly via Formula Grant throughout the period covered in the table. The Fire Service was also funded directly via Formula Grant in 2004–05; previously the Avon Fire and Rescue Service levied for this service on North Somerset council. North Somerset's FSS data reflect these arrangements i.e. the FSS does not cover police services nor does it cover fire services in 2004–05.

Both Standard Spending Assessments and Formula Spending Shares are neither the amount an authority has spent on a particular service nor are they the Government's assessment of how much money should be spent on a particular service by an authority. Additionally they are not grant. They are simply formulae used in the calculation of Revenue Support Grant.

It is not therefore possible to calculate the amount of Formula Grant that would have been provided to North Somerset if it had received the England average FSS per head.

Mobile Phone Masts

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning appeals against the refusal of the siting of mobile telephone masts were made in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and of these how many were upheld in favour of the mobile telephone companies. [187987]

Keith Hill: No information is held about appeal decisions for mobile phone masts specifically. The following information therefore relates to appeal decisions about telecommunications development generally.

	Number of appeals decided	Number of appeals allowed	Number of appeals disallowed	Percentage allowed
2000–01	281	183	98	65.12
2001–02	456	294	162	64.47
2002–03	830	531	299	63.98
2003–04	630	363	267	57.62
2004–05	129	69	60	53.49

Note:
All figures relate to the period in which the appeal was received, not necessarily the period in which it was decided.

Satellite and Cable TV Subscriptions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of satellite and cable subscriptions in his Department's buildings was in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will list the premium channels to which his Department subscribes. [185783]

Phil Hope: In 2003–04, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister spent £21,310 inc. VAT on cable and satellite subscriptions. This comprised £1,750 on satellite and £19,560 on cable subscriptions. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister subscribes to the cheapest available business package. This includes no premium channels although until November 2003 it included Sky Sports 1.

In the London HQ buildings the business of the House and division bells are also delivered over the cable network.

Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government Offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

Unauthorised Caravanning

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to coordinate policy, law and collection of statistics between the administrations in the common travel area for unauthorised caravanning and encampments. [188236]

Keith Hill: Strong links already exist between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Republic of Ireland's Department of the Environment in respect of Gypsy and Traveller policy. There have been recent official-level discussions on policy, law and data collection as part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Review of Gypsy and Traveller policy. These discussions will inform the recommendations of the Review.

Robust laws and guidance are in place in both the UK and the Republic to deal with incidents of unauthorised camping. In addition, statistical data on the nomadic Gypsy and Traveller community is collected and published twice yearly in England, and yearly in the Republic.

DEFENCE

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187310]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence is fully committed to providing a safe environment and workplace where all staff are valued and respected irrespective of different background and cultures.

The provision of dedicated rooms for the areas covered in the question is not a central responsibility, but a matter for each individual Head of Establishment. Records are not held centrally and to gather and collate such information would incur disproportionate costs.

HMS Daedalus

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the expressions of interest in HMS Daedalus that he has received. [188144]

Mr. Caplin: As a result of English Partnership's 40-day consultation with other Government Departments, two 'Expressions of Interest' have been received as Priority Assessment Reports from the Maritime Coastguard Agency (Department of Transport) and the South-East England Development Agency.

MOD Estate (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the size of the Ministry of Defence estate in Northern Ireland. [187422]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence estate in Northern Ireland currently consists of:

2751.643 Ha Freehold

274.522 Ha Leasehold

and 566.037 Ha Licensed land.

Separated Service Recording Systems

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much separated service was recorded by the *(a)* RAF Separated Service Recording System in each year since 2002 and *(b)* Navy Separated Service Recording System in each year since 2001. [187126]

Mr. Caplin: The information is as follows:

(a) RAF Separated Service

The following table shows Separated Service recorded by the RAF Separated Service Recording System in each year since 2002.

	Number of personnel spending time on Separated Service	Number of instances of Separated Service	Number of days spent on Separated Service
2002	35,400	109,600	2,205,500
2003	35,300	110,400	2,236,700
2004 (up to 30 June)	27,300	60,900	925,100

Separated service includes deployment, training for deployment and routine tasks and routine training courses.

(b) Navy Separated Service

A system for recording separated service has been implemented, but data is still being gathered and problems have arisen in transferring data from ships and units to the central systems. The coverage of the data is therefore still insufficient to allow meaningful statistical analysis at this time.

SERCO-Denholm

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 16 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1356–57W, on SERCO-Denholm, whether it is his policy that the pension rights of these workers should be equivalent to the pension rights that they would have obtained had they remained in the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme throughout their period of employment with the new employer; and if he will make a statement. [187832]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 8 September 2004]:* The transfer of Ministry of Defence employees to SERCO-Denholm, following the Marine Services Market Test, reflected the accepted practice at that time, namely that the pension scheme would be broadly comparable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme at the point of transfer. Subsequently, the policy was changed under the Government's code of practice entitled 'Transfer of Government Staff: A Fair Deal for Pensions', which was issued in 1999 and expanded in June 2004. When Government employees are transferred under the 'Fair Deal' policy, a broadly comparable scheme and bulk transfer terms have to be considered in any second and subsequent generation transfers.

Strategic Missile Defence

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his Danish counterpart on strategic missile defence; and if he will make a statement. [188089]

Mr. Hoon: I have had no recent discussions on missile defence with my Danish counterpart. Officials keep in touch with the Danish authorities on matters of common interest relating to missile defence.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Government's policy is on stationing strategic missile defence sites on the UK mainland; and if he will make a statement. [188090]

Mr. Hoon: The Government have not reached a decision on whether to acquire a strategic ballistic missile defence capability for the United Kingdom. The UK has agreed only to the use of RAF Fylingdales as part of the United States missile defence system.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received from his US counterpart on the proposal for strategic missile defence stations to be situated in Central Europe. [188091]

Mr. Hoon: I have received no such representations on the issue of strategic missile defence stations in Central Europe. Officials keep in close touch with the US Administration as well as with NATO allies, on missile defence issues, including the offer by the US to extend missile defences to friends and allies.

Territorial Army (Iraq)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his appraisal is of the role of the Territorial Army in the Iraq war and subsequent peace-keeping operation. [186490]

Mr. Caplin: The Territorial Army (TA) has performed, and continues to perform, a vital and active role alongside their regular counterparts, contributing to a wide range of our operations in Iraq. Indeed, the TA currently provides approximately 20 per cent. of our ground forces in Iraq.

The TA is a highly valued and respected part of our armed forces, and the work of all those who have deployed has been greatly appreciated. The use of Reservists during this campaign has been entirely in line with the recommendations of the Strategic Defence Review. The roles undertaken by the TA have clearly demonstrated the strategic intent of having more capable, usable and relevant reserve forces, which support their regular counterparts on operations.

WALES

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188216]

(2) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188217]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to her today by the Foreign Secretary.

Public Services (Comparative Provision)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what research his Department has commissioned regarding comparative levels of public services in England and of Welsh Assembly run public services in Wales, with particular reference to *(a)* health and *(b)* education. [186754]

Mr. Touhig: None.

A wide range of information and data on health and education in England and Wales is produced by both the Government and the National Assembly for Wales and is publicly available.

The Statistical Directorate of the National Assembly for Wales produces statistics related to health and education in Wales. This can be found by accessing the website: www.wales.gsi.gov.uk.

Information on health in England can be obtained from the Department of Health at: www.dh.gov.uk

Information on education in England can be obtained from the Department for Education and Skills at: www.dfes.gov.uk

The Office for National Statistics also produces a large amount of publicly available information, which can be accessed via their website: www.statistics.gov.uk

Truancy

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when he next plans to meet Welsh Assembly secretaries to discuss strategies to deal with crime linked to school truancy in Wales. [186755]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I regularly meet Assembly Ministers to discuss matters affecting Wales.

A number of multi-agency arrangements are employed to tackle truancy in Wales. The police and Community Safety Partnerships are key stakeholders in these initiatives, and programmes are in place to deal with young people showing a significant risk of developing criminal and antisocial behaviour.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Serious Fraud Office

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Solicitor-General what recent assessment she has made of the conviction rate achieved by the Serious Fraud Office. [187726]

The Solicitor-General: In the year ending 4 April 2004, the conviction rate in SFO cases was 51 per cent. Over the past five years the average conviction rate was 75 per cent.

At the conclusion of each case the SFO holds a conference to consider what lessons can be learned.

PRIME MINISTER

Gifts

Sue Doughty: To ask the Prime Minister whether he received any gifts from Prime Minister Berlusconi while he was a guest of the Italian Prime Minister during summer 2004. [188111]

The Prime Minister: The Government are committed to publishing an annual list of gifts received by Ministers in an official capacity valued at more than £140. The list of gifts for 2004–05 will be published as soon as possible after the end of this Financial Year.

Honours

Mr. Drew: To ask the Prime Minister what procedures are in place for the removal of an honour from an individual convicted of a serious crime in this country or abroad. [188409]

The Prime Minister: Her Majesty the Queen may, on the advice of Ministers, cancel membership of any of the Orders of Knighthood or appointment as Knight Bachelor. Cancellation is considered in cases where the retention of the appointment or award would bring the honours system into disrepute. Proposals for forfeiture are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Press (Meetings)

Sue Doughty: To ask the Prime Minister what meetings he has had with the *(a)* proprietors and *(b)* editors of national newspapers in the last 12 months; who instigated each meeting; and what subjects were discussed in each meeting. [188179]

The Prime Minister: I have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings under exemptions 2 and 7 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

All-postal Ballots

20. **Mr. Robathan:** To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission if he will make a statement on the recent report of the Electoral Commission on all-postal ballots. [187917]

Mr. Viggers: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave earlier this afternoon to my hon. Friend the Member for Lichfield (Michael Fabricant).

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what steps the Committee is taking to determine whether the Electoral Commission is assessing the integrity of the postal ballot in an efficient and effective manner. [187912]

Mr. Viggers: The Speaker's Committee has a statutory obligation to satisfy itself that the Electoral Commission's Estimates and Corporate Plans are consistent with the economical, efficient and effective discharge by the Commission of its functions before it lays these before the House. Within that framework, and subject to any statutory directions it may receive from the Government in respect of particular matters, it is for the Commission itself to decide how it discharges its functions.

On 27 August, in accordance with its statutory obligations under the European Parliamentary and Local Elections (Pilots) Act 2004, the Commission published four regional evaluation reports following the all-postal pilot schemes earlier this year. The reports include assessments as to the integrity of the pilot schemes; a separate report published on the same day also makes recommendations for future improvements in relation to postal voting more generally.

Mr. Betts: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission if he will make a statement on the recent report by the Electoral Commission on all-postal ballots. [187913]

Mr. Viggers: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave earlier this afternoon to my hon. Friend the Member for Lichfield (Michael Fabricant).

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Competitive Sport

Andy Burnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to encourage schools to take part in competitive sports fixtures. [187907]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government are firmly in favour of competitive school sport. The Physical Education (PE) National Curriculum requires that all pupils are taught competitive games throughout their compulsory schooling. Increasing the quality and amount of competitive school sport is also a key aim of the Government's national PE, School Sport and Club Links strategy.

Spearheading action is the creation of a network of 400 School Sport Partnerships—families of schools—that work together to enhance school sport opportunities. There are already 313 School Sport Partnerships covering 50 per cent. of schools in England. All schools will be within a partnership by 2006. All partnerships deliver a programme of out-of-school hours sports activities, including sports competitions.

The 2003–04 PE, School Sport and Club Links survey—results were published on 29 April and a copy of the report was placed in the House of Commons Library—found that: 96 per cent. of the 6,500 schools taking part held a sports day, in a typical week 22 per cent. of pupils are involved in intra school sports competitions and during the last academic year 33 per cent. of pupils had taken part in inter school sports competitions.

Deacon's Academy, Peterborough

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the admission criteria for the proposed Deacon's Academy in Peterborough. [187833]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 8 September 2004]*: I am currently considering proposals to enter into a funding agreement to establish the Thomas Deacon Academy in Peterborough. Admissions arrangements form part of these proposals. I hope to reach a decision shortly.

Foreign Language Teaching

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many maintained secondary schools did not offer study of a modern foreign language to *(a)* any and *(b)* all pupils at key stage 4 in the last period for which figures are available. [188038]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department does not collate information on the numbers of maintained secondary schools offering modern foreign languages to *(a)* any or *(b)* all of their pupils at key stage 4. However, modern foreign languages remained part of the National Curriculum at key stage 4 until the end of the last academic year and as such the Department would have expected all schools to offer modern foreign languages to all pupils at key stage 4.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many language assistants are employed in maintained primary schools; [188039]

(2) what estimate he has made of the percentage of *(a)* children in maintained schools learning a modern foreign language at Key Stage 2 and *(b)* maintained primary schools teaching a modern foreign language at Key Stage 2. [188040]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: These data are not collected centrally by the Department. We have commissioned baseline research into modern foreign language teaching and learning at Key Stage 2. This report, which was originally planned to be published earlier in the year, will now be published at the end of September. The report will give an indication of these figures, at the time of the survey in 2003.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when his Department will issue an invitation to tender for the operation of the voluntary recognition system for language skills. [188041]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Following a tendering exercise, the contract for the operation of the voluntary recognition system for languages was awarded to the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) in February 2004.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when his Department will introduce the voluntary recognition system for language skills; and which languages will be covered. [188042]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Following a limited pilot in 2004/05, the first suite of external qualifications for the voluntary recognition system for language skills—The Languages Ladder—will be nationally available in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Punjabi, Spanish and Urdu in the academic year 2005/06. A wider range of languages will be on offer from 2006/07 and additional languages will be added to the scheme in subsequent years.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what budget his Department has allocated for the voluntary recognition system for language skills for *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06 and *(c)* 2006–07. [188043]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: £2 million has been allocated for the development and operation of the voluntary recognition system for language skills for each of the years 2004–05 and 2005–06. Until a decision on the allocation of the latest spending review settlement is made, it is not possible to say how much funding has been allocated for 2006–07.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the work of the National Director for Languages. [188044]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Dr. Lid King, previously Director of CILT—The National Centre of Languages, was appointed National Director for Languages in September 2003. Dr. King plays a key role in the implementation of the Government's National Languages Strategy, giving strategic direction, stimulating and co-ordinating action across all sectors, and championing languages in general. He works closely with key stakeholders in primary, secondary, further and higher education, adult learning and business.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what budget was available to the National Director for Languages in 2003–04; and what budget will be available to that office for financial years *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [188045]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The National Languages Strategy is supported by dedicated investment which will rise to £10 million per year by 2005–06. In 2003–04, £4 million was available and in the current financial year, 2004–05, £8 million is available.

Head Teachers

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average length of time a head teacher spent in post in the *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary sectors was in the latest year for which figures are available. [187752]

Mr. Miliband: Information on teachers' length of service is obtained from the Database of Teachers Records which is maintained primarily for pensions administration purposes. This source provides the total amount of service of teachers since they were first appointed but not the length of time spent in a particular post or at a particular grade.

Table 22 of the School Workforce in England 2003 volume of statistics contains details of the total length of service of current head teachers by phase of education. This publication has been placed in the House of Commons Library or can also be accessed from the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000380/index.shtml.

Primary Class Sizes

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average number of pupils in primary classes in the London Borough of Havering was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004; and what the figures are for all other London boroughs. [187733]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary schools[1]: Average size of one teacher classes 1997 and 2004 (provisional v2)—position in January each year—by local education authority

Local education authority		*1997*	*2004*
201	City of London	26.0	[2]
202	Camden	27.1	27.0
203	Greenwich	26.0	25.7
204	Hackney	26.1	26.1
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	25.3	25.2
206	Islington	26.6	25.7
207	Kensington and Chelsea	25.3	26.1
208	Lambeth	25.2	25.8
209	Lewisham	26.1	25.9
210	Southwark	26.4	25.7
211	Tower Hamlets	26.2	26.1
212	Wandsworth	25.8	26.0
213	Westminster	24.2	26.0
301	Barking and Dagenham	27.0	25.8
302	Barnet	26.2	27.1
303	Bexley	28.8	27.5
304	Brent	26.5	27.3
305	Bromley	28.5	27.2
306	Croydon	28.3	27.1
307	Ealing	27.1	26.5
308	Enfield	29.1	27.9
309	Haringey	26.9	27.5
310	Harrow	27.5	26.3
311	Havering	27.9	27.1
312	Hillingdon	27.2	26.5
313	Hounslow	26.8	26.1
314	Kingston upon Thames	29.4	27.0
315	Merton	27.3	25.5
316	Newham	27.9	27.4
317	Redbridge	28.4	27.5
318	Richmond upon Thames	27.2	26.6
319	Sutton	28.1	27.6
320	Waltham Forest	26.6	26.2

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Provisional figures not available. Final figures available after 30 September.

School Building Projects

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* average, *(b)* shortest and *(c)* longest length of time taken between 1997 and 2004 to complete a building project to expand capacity in a school was from the start of specifying the project to the opening of the new capacity; [187751]

(2) what the *(a)* average, *(b)* shortest and *(c)* longest length of time taken between 1997 and 2004 to complete a building project for a new school was from the start of specifying the project to the opening of the new building. [187750]

Mr. Miliband: School building projects are procured locally, and we do not normally, therefore, collect information on specific projects.

With the advent of the Building Schools for the Future programme, however, the Department intends to collect and use such information to improve procurement timeframes across the sector and to embed best practice over the construction life cycle. This drive for efficiency gains will be reinforced through a performance management regime across the Building Schools for the Future programme.

School Music

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the Government's strategy for music in schools. [187894]

Mr. Miliband: Music is a statutory entitlement for all pupils up to the age of 14, and can be taken as an option at Key Stage 4. The music curriculum provides an opportunity for all children to sing and play musical instrument; as well as to listen to, compose and perform music from a range of different cultures and times.

The Department has also made a commitment, over time, to offer every primary school child the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. For the exceptionally talented, additional opportunities exist through the Music and Dance Scheme, junior conservatoires and the National Youth Music Organisations.

Our priorities for the future of music education are set out in the Music Manifesto, which was launched on 6 July 2004. They are to:

provide every young person with first access to a range of music experiences;

provide more opportunities for young people to deepen and broaden their musical interests and skills;

identify and nurture our most talented young musicians;

develop a world class workforce in music education; and

improve the support structures for young people's music making.

You can find out more about how the Department will deliver these key objectives by visiting our pledge on the Music Manifesto website at: www.musicmanifesto.co.uk

School Sports Facilities

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to open up schools sports facilities to the wider community out-of-hours. [187904]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We want all schools to be extended schools, making wider use of their facilities, including sports facilities. Our recently published Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners includes our vision for extended schools at both primary and secondary level which focuses on schools making wider use of their facilities and providing a core offer of services, including widespread community use of specialist facilities such as sports halls.

The Government have made funding available to support local co-ordination and management of extended services in schools, and to create up to 240 full service extended school models, with at least one in each LEA area, by 2006. These schools will provide a prescribed core range of extended services and facilities, including sports and arts facilities.

School Sports Partnerships

Angela Watkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* schools and *(b)* school pupils are not participating in a school sports partnership. [187910]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is not held in the format requested. From September 2004, there are 313 School Sport Partnerships incorporating 50 per cent. of schools in England, this will increase to at least 75 per cent. of schools by 2005. All schools and pupils will be within a School Sport Partnership by 2006.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Beijing + 10

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his plans are for his Department's involvement in the Beijing Platform for Action; known as Beijing + 10. [187533]

Mr. Rammell: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply my right hon. Friend the Minister for Women gave on 7 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 937W.

Butler Report

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to paragraph 512 of the Butler Report, HC 898, on what date the Secret Intelligence Service became aware that the validity of the intelligence report on which the 45 minute claim was based had come into question; on what date Government ministers were informed of this; and how many links there were in the reporting chain for the 45 minute claim intelligence report. [187394]

Mr. Straw: Government Ministers were informed at the beginning of June about concerns that had arisen in mid-May regarding the validity of the intelligence reporting on which the 45-minute claim was based. Paragraph 399 of the Butler Report explains why it is not possible to set out in full the analysis of main SIS sources whose reporting underpinned JIC assessments, and this applies to details such as the number of links in the reporting chain for specific reports.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to paragraph 442 of the Butler Report, HC 898, for what reasons there was an urgent requirement for intelligence. [187395]

Mr. Straw: The urgent need for intelligence was a result of the international community's lack of reliable information as to Iraqi activities in the absence of UN inspectors between December 1998 and November 2002 caused by Iraq's continuing failure to meet its obligations under UN Security Council Resolutions. As the Butler Report itself states, obtaining intelligence on Iraq had been a long-standing high priority throughout the years of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Chinese Students (Visas)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Chinese students were refused *(a)* short stay summer visas and *(b)* higher education visas in 2004–05. [187951]

Mr. Mullin: Applicants for short courses of study in the UK apply in the visitor category and it is not possible to separate them out from other visit visa applications without incurring disproportionate costs.

Students applying for courses in higher education are not recorded separately from other student applications and again to do so would incur disproportionate costs.

However, I am able to provide the following figures, which relate to all student entry clearance applications submitted in China so far this financial year (1 April to 8 September):

Applications	*Number*	*Percentage*
Received	21,776	—
Issued	14,624	67
Refused	6,790	31

These figures do not add up exactly as applications may be received at the end of the period under review but issued or refused in the next.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter to him dated 2 August from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Arshad Mahmood Rashad. [188003]

Mr. Mullin: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Rammell) sent an interim reply on 6 September while details of the application were being verified. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary sent a substantive reply on 9 September.

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the hon. Member for Walsall, North will receive a reply to his letter of 29 July on behalf of a constituent reference 316919/04. [188010]

Mr. Mullin: I replied to my hon. Friend's letter on 9 September.

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188186]

(2) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as it is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188188]

Mr. Straw: This is a useful suggestion and HMG will consider it further in line with its policy of keeping Parliament better informed on EU business.

Cyprus

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what involvement the British high commissioner for Cyprus is having with *(a)* the Greek Cypriot and *(b)* the Turkish Cypriot Mayors of Famagusta in efforts to redevelop the town. [187845]

Mr. MacShane: The British high commission, including the high commissioner, maintains contacts with a wide range of individuals and groups on both sides interested in the development of Famagusta.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* support from the British Government and *(b)* financial support from the European Union he will seek to give to the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot Mayors of Famagusta to reopen the port of Famagusta. [187846]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to him on 1 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 680W.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he had in his recent meeting with Mr. Mehmet Ali Talat on his willingness to co-operate with the Greek Cypriot Government on seeking to resolve the issue of missing people following the events of 1974 in Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [187847]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary did not directly address the question of missing persons on Cyprus in his meeting with Turkish Cypriot leader Talat on 1 July. But the Government have in the recent past made it clear to Mr. Talat that we applaud his commitment to resolve this longstanding issue.

As my hon. Friend knows, staff at the British High Commission in Nicosia work closely with the United Nations' Acting Third Member of the Committee on Missing Persons in order to identify areas where the UK can play a helpful role. We welcome the recent resumption of formal meetings of the Committee on Missing Persons and urge both sides to do all they can to resolve this painful humanitarian issue as soon as possible and in the best interest of the families.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Northern Cyprus Administration to ensure that the land on which property developments are taking place do not belong to Greek Cypriot people who left Northern Cyprus following the events of 1974; and if he will make a statement. [187848]

Mr. MacShane: Satisfactorily resolving the issue of property is central to achieving a comprehensive and sustainable settlement in Cyprus. The UN Secretary General's comprehensive proposals set out a way to resolve the property questions, based in part on Greek Cypriot ideas. It is a matter of deep regret that the UN Secretary-General's settlement plan was rejected by the Greek Cypriots on 24 April.

In our contacts with both sides, we have always urged that they avoid any action that might be prejudicial to a settlement. This applies to all aspects of the Cyprus problem, including property.

Because of the political situation in Cyprus, the Government advises that UK citizens take qualified legal advice before purchasing property anywhere on the island. We also point out that those considering a purchase in the north of Cyprus should be aware that the non-recognition of the 'TRNC' and a future settlement of the Cyprus problem could have implications for their property.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he had in his recent meeting in London with Mr. Mehmet Ali Talat on the involvement of the Turkish army in the day-to-day affairs of Northern Cyprus; and what future role he wishes to see the Turkish army have in Cyprus. [187849]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I discussed a wide range of issues with Mr. Talat, including Turkish troops in northern Cyprus.

An integral element of the UN Secretary General's comprehensive proposals, supported by the UK, was the demilitarisation of the island and progressive withdrawal of foreign troops (both Greek and Turkish)—ultimately leaving just 950 Greek and 650 Turkish troops, as sanctioned by the 1960 treaties. As the plan was not accepted by both sides, there is no agreement on early withdrawal of Turkish troops.

Any steps taken now, however, to reduce existing troop levels by either side would be welcome.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he had in his recent meeting with Mr. Mehmet Ali Talat on the future of Famagusta and of the development of facilities within the town; and if he will make a statement. [187850]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary did not discuss the development of Famagusta town with Mr. Talat during their meeting on 1 July.

I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to him on 1 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 680W.

Guantanamo Bay

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when complaints made by British citizens held in detention by the United States Government at Camp Delta in Guantanamo in Cuba, in respect of their treatment during questioning and generally while being detained, were made known to him; what investigations he made into the allegations; what consequent actions he took; whether he has examined the allegations made by three British former detainees from Tipton in their collective dossier released in August; and what representations he has made to his United States counterpart on this matter. [187501]

Mr. Mullin: British officials have visited British nationals detained at Guantanamo Bay on eight occasions. Following each visit, Ministers have been informed of the details of the visit, including any complaints made by the detainees. Follow-up action has then been taken with the US authorities at all levels, including at Foreign Minister level. We continue to pursue actively with the US authorities our outstanding welfare concerns. We are also examining the recent report issued by the three British former detainees from Tipton.

Iraq

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1303W, on Iraq, what methodology was used to assess that there was no new information contained in the quantities of documents that remained to be translated; and whether all the documents that formed the declaration have now been translated. [187392]

Mr. MacShane: In the interests of speed, the process of analysing the Iraqi declaration concentrated on identifying key words and passages to which priority translation was given. It quickly became clear that Iraq had not provided information on the outstanding disarmament issues that had been identified by the UN Special Commission in their final report.

Translation of the declaration was complete by mid-March 2003.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether UNMOVIC and the IAEA decided that parts of the Iraqi declaration of its weapons of mass destruction needed to be excised before it distributed the report to all members of the UN Security Council; and whether all members of the Security Council have now received *(a)* an unedited and *(b)* an edited version of the declaration. [187393]

Mr. MacShane: Certain passages of the Iraqi declaration relating to Iraq's nuclear programme were excised by UNMOVIC and the IAEA before distribution to non-nuclear weapon states. All members of the Security Council at the time received copies of this edited version. The full version was made available only to the Permanent Members of the Security Council.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the UK Government became aware that Iraq had 500 tonnes of yellowcake stored at a facility near Tuwaitha, south of Baghdad. [187396]

Mr. MacShane: Under UN Security Council resolution 687, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was mandated to investigate and dismantle Iraq's nuclear weapons programmes and to monitor all nuclear-related activity in Iraq. As part of this process, in the early part of the 1990s, the IAEA consolidated Iraq's stockpiles of nuclear materials and other radioactive sources on a single site near Tuwaitha for ease of on-going monitoring. The yellowcake in question was included in this exercise. It was also declared by Iraq as part of their Full, Final and Complete Declaration of nuclear activities and materials submitted to the UN in 1996. All of the materials consolidated at the site were subject to continuous IAEA inspection and verification.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 22 July, *Official Report*, column 544W, on Iraq, whether the Leader of the Opposition had access to the same primary intelligence as the Prime Minister relating to *(a)* the September 2002 dossier, *(b)* the February 2003 dossier and *(c)* the threat posed to the UK by Iraq from May 1997 to the commencement of military action against Iraq in March 2003. [187715]

Mr. Straw: The details of briefings given on Privy Council terms are confidential.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the oral answer from the Minister for the armed forces of 7 September 2003, *Official Report*, column 612, on Iraq, what discussions he has had with the Government of Iraq about the banning of al-Jazeera. [188481]

Mr. Alexander: The decision to close the al-Jazeera office in Baghdad was made by the Iraqi Interim Government.

We have repeatedly made clear to the Iraqi Government the importance we attach to media freedom in Iraq and the need to strengthen the institutions established by the Coalition Provisional Authority to ensure this. We will continue to do so.

North Korea

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on North Korea's nuclear weapons programme. [186867]

Mr. MacShane: We continue to be concerned about North Korea's nuclear programme, and have been monitoring the six-party talks process aimed at resolving the current impasse.

My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Rammell) is visiting North Korea from 11 to 14 September. North Korea's nuclear programme will be one of the issues which he intends to raise during his visit.

Sudan

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what percentage of the aid package for the Sudan announced in July has been spent; and if he will make a statement. [186358]

Hilary Benn: In July, the Chancellor announced that the UK would make available an allocation for Sudan of £150 million for the financial years 2005–06 to 2007–08. This is to be disbursed following the conclusion of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The signature of six protocols in Naivasha in June represented significant progress towards a Comprehensive Peace Agreement, but negotiations are continuing in order to resolve the remaining outstanding issues, pressing the parties to push on with these negotiations. However, we have made it clear to the Sudanese Government that they will not enjoy a peace dividend from the international community unless there is also progress in Darfur.

The UK is the second largest donor in Darfur. The Department for International Development has allocated £62.5 million for humanitarian assistance between September 2003 and March 2005. Of this total, £36.9 million has been committed to date (to the UN, ICRC and NGOs).

DFID is also continuing to provide assistance in the rest of the country, this is to meet ongoing humanitarian needs and in support of our goal of helping Sudan to reach a just and lasting peace and to lay foundations for sustained poverty reduction.

Switzerland

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent action he has taken to ensure that Switzerland abides by its bilateral agreements with the EU on migration and employment of UK and other EU nationals; and if he will make a statement. [187492]

Mr. MacShane: A Joint Committee is responsible for the management and proper application of the bilateral agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the Free Movement of Persons, which sets out reciprocal arrangements for migration and employment. To date, the UK has not needed to pursue the issue of Switzerland's compliance.

Venezuela

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Venezuelan Government, *(b)* the Venezuelan Opposition Parties and *(c)* the organisers of the petition for a recall referendum on President Chavez regarding this recall referendum; and if he will make a statement. [186389]

Mr. Rammell: None. However, our Embassy in Caracas has a regular dialogue with all sides in Venezuela. I refer my hon. Friend to my press statement, issued on 17 August on the outcome of the recall referendum on 15 August. I called on all sides in Venezuela to respect the result of the referendum, as endorsed by the international observers, and work towards national reconciliation. A copy of the statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last had discussions with President Chavez of Venezuela about the current unrest in Venezuela; and if he will make a statement. [186390]

Mr. Rammell: Neither my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary nor I have held any discussions with President Chavez. We have consistently urged all sides in Venezuela to follow the democratic path, work towards a constitutional resolution to the political unrest and strive for national reconciliation. I made this clear in my press statement, issued on 17 August, on the outcome of the recall referendum on 15 August. A copy of the statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the British Government will play an independent role in monitoring the recall referendum which is due to take place in Venezuela in August; and if he will make a statement. [186415]

Mr. Rammell: We did not participate as observers of the recall referendum on 15 August, either independently or otherwise. We fully support the official observers of the referendum, the Organisation of American States and the Carter Centre. I commended them in my press statement on 17 August on the outcome of the referendum. I called on all sides in Venezuela to respect the result of the referendum, as endorsed by the international observers, and work towards national reconciliation. A copy of the statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Television Licence Fees

10. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much was raised in television licence fees *(a)* 10 years ago and *(b)* in the most recent year for which figures are available. [187902]

Estelle Morris: £1.65 billion in television licence fee revenue was raised in 1993–94 and £2.8 billion in 2003–04.

The figure for 2003–04 includes payments of £408 million by the Department for Work and Pensions to the BBC for free television licences for over-75s.

Broadband Television

11. **Mr. Flook:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the likely penetration of broadband television via the internet over the next 10 years. [187903]

Tessa Jowell: The take-up of broadband in the UK is now rapid with a wide range of suppliers in the marketplace and there are now about 50,000 new broadband subscribers every week. BT is now in a position to ensure that over 99 per cent. of all households could acquire a broadband connection if they so wished.

However, broadband TV remains in its infancy, and it will be many years before it could be regarded as universally available. Because of broadband TV's current small scale and technological limitations Government has not as yet made a specific assessment of where the market for broadband TV will be in the next 10 years, but of course Ofcom and other experts are routinely monitoring changes in technology and in consumer behaviour.

Domestic Tourism

14. **Tony Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make a statement on initiatives to promote domestic tourism in summer 2004. [187908]

Mr. Caborn: Last year Visit Britain launched its domestic marketing strategy to promote tourism in England. Since then Visit Britain has run a number of campaigns including 'City Culture' and 'Waterside England'. Next week sees the launch of the 'Enjoy England' autumn campaign and 'Taste England' campaign. Further campaigns are being planned.

BBC Worldwide

15. **Mr. Sheerman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what representations she has received concerning the future of BBC Worldwide; and if she will make a statement. [187909]

Estelle Morris: My hon. Friend has written about this matter. The future of the BBC's commercial services is a key issue for Charter review and we have received a range of representations in that context. The BBC is currently undertaking its own review of its commercial services, which is due for completion during the autumn. I understand that no decisions have so far been taken concerning BBC Worldwide or any other issue covered by the review.

Lottery Receipts

Mr. Illsley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what representations she has received regarding the fair distribution of lottery receipts. [187898]

Estelle Morris: The Government wants to see all areas of the country benefiting from the huge success of the national lottery.

We consulted widely on the lottery and our reforms will provide a more transparent and streamlined application process for applicants—so more communities can benefit from the lottery's success.

Sport England Database

Jim Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make a statement on the launch of Sport England's Active Places online database. [187905]

Mr. Caborn: Active Places is a free to use, comprehensive on-line database of sports facilities in England. It provides details of more than 10,000 facilities, including swimming pools, synthetic pitches, health and fitness centres and ski slopes.

Active Places was officially launched on 11 July at the BAA Heathrow London Youth Games by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and Roger Draper, Chief Executive of Sport England.

The Active Places database can be found on www.activeplaces.com

Olympics 2012

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Government is taking to promote the Olympic bid for 2012. [186953]

Tessa Jowell: The Government wholeheartedly supports the bid and has built a strong alliance with the British Olympic Association, the Mayor of London and the bidding company with the aim of delivering the best ever Games in London 2012.

This was most recently demonstrated in Athens during the Olympic Games where both the Prime Minister and I took part in the London 2012 Bid presentation to the International Olympic Committee.

The Government will continue to seek opportunities to support and promote the bid as we believe that hosting the Games in 2012 will bring excellent benefits to sport, our young people and to communities throughout the UK.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to involve Cabinet ministers in the promotion of London's Olympic bid; and what plans she has to promote London's Olympic bid nationwide. [187133]

Tessa Jowell: The Government wholeheartedly supports the bid and believes that hosting the Games in 2012 will bring excellent benefits to sport, our young people and to communities throughout the UK.

London 2012 will be making a presentation to the full Cabinet. In addition the Misc 25 Cabinet Committee was set up to consider issues relating to the London 2012 bid.

I will continue to work with my ministerial colleagues to help to develop and promote a winning UK bid.

Art Galleries

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which planned new art galleries have been guaranteed Arts Council funding; and for how many years the funding has been guaranteed. [187977]

Estelle Morris: Arts Council England has awarded over £14 million of lottery capital funds to new visual arts projects since 1 January 1998. Funds are allocated at the beginning of the project and are drawn down over a period of time until the project is completed.

. Details of new awards guaranteed by Arts Council England are set out in the table.

Organisation name	*Location*	*Arts Council England region*	*Approved amount (£)*
Future Factory and Angel Row	Nottingham	East Midlands	5,000,000
ACME Studios	London	London	2,000,000
Whitechapel Art Gallery	London	London	500,000
Waygood Gallery	Newcastle	North East	750,000
Storey Gallery	Lancaster	North West	693,600
Newlyn Art Gallery	Penzance	South West	1,200,000
Sherborne House	Sherborne	South West	288,860
Centre for Creative Arts	Wakefield	Yorkshire	4,000,000

Note:
Table supplied by Arts Council England.

BBC Charter

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent discussions the Government has had with the BBC regarding plans to renew the Charter. [186859]

Tessa Jowell: Officials have conducted extensive discussions with the BBC and others since the launch of Charter review, and I have met the Chairman of the BBC Governors twice recently.

CSV Lending Time Project

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what assessment she has made of the CSV Lending Time project to develop volunteer involvement in the library services of six local authorities; [187834]

(2) what assessment she has made of how the lessons learned from the CSV Lending Time pilot projects can be transferred to and adopted by other local authorities; [187835]

(3) whether she has requested reports on the CSV Lending Time pilot schemes from the local authorities involved; [187836]

(4) what plans she has to ensure long-term support for the CSV Lending Time pilot projects. [187837]

Estelle Morris: The Lending Time project was evaluated by Shared Intelligence who published a final report in June 2004. This report outlines lessons learned from the project and provides a series of key recommendations to develop volunteer involvement with public libraries. All of the pilot projects had an opportunity to contribute to the evaluation so separate reports from each local authority were not requested. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) will use the lessons learned from this project in the development of a new work programme to establish how libraries can most effectively support civic renewal and engage with communities in shaping and delivering services that meet local needs. Community Service Volunteers who led the Lending Time project will appoint someone to a post, funded by MLA through Framework for the Future, the Government's strategy to improve public libraries, to take this work forward until March 2006.

The aim of the project was to explore the ways in which volunteering could be involved in libraries' work in a long-term and sustainable manner to enhance the service using existing financial resources. The pilots have now been completed and there is no further central funding for them. It is for the local authorities involved in the project to decide whether or not to continue funding.

European Culture/Languages

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Department is spending in 2004–05 on promoting knowledge of other European cultures and languages in the entertainment sector. [188301]

Estelle Morris: My Department does not monitor spending in the way this question suggests. However, one example we do know of where Lottery money has been used to promote knowledge of European cultures and languages is the UK Film Council. A total of £2,109,102 has been spent in 2004/05 in the following ways:

UK Film Council Funding 2004–5

Scheme	*Detail*	*Amount Invested 2004–5 £ million*
Print and Advertising Fund	Support distribution of Specialised films, including European and Foreign Language films	1,000,000
Co-Production	Lila dit sa (France) -produced last year but paid within period, and for release within period	400,000
Co-Production	Innocense (France) produced last year but paid within period, and for release within period	397,330
Co-Production	Only Human (Spain)	298,772
Co-Production Tournament	Pilot forum between UK and Scandinavia to promote good practise and understanding of national film culture and talent. A huge success, so more planned.	13,000
Total.		2,109,102

Freeview

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which areas of the South-West Bedfordshire constituency are unable to receive Freeview; and when she expects all areas in the constituency to be able to receive this service. [188246]

Estelle Morris: Ofcom do not hold data on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) coverage in individual constituencies. However, according to Ofcom, Freeview coverage in South-West Bedfordshire is patchy, with coverage from both the Oxford and Sandy Heath Transmitters.

At present around 73 per cent. of UK households can access DTT services, but the Government are committed to ensuring that at Switchover everyone who can currently get the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form (BBC 1 and 2, ITV, Channel 4/S4C and Channel 5) can receive them on digital systems.

Much progress has been made in the discussions between the Government, Ofcom and the Public Service Broadcasters and while the broadcasters have not reached a full consensus on the optimum timetable, some—including the BBC—have suggested that 2012 may be the most appropriate date for the completion of Switchover.

Historic Buildings

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she last met the English Heritage Directors to discuss policy on historic buildings being included in the registered list; and if she will make a statement. [188046]

Mr. Caborn: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and other Ministers have regular meetings with the English Heritage Chairman and Chief Executive, most recently on 22 June 2004. Among other things they discussed the Review of Heritage Protection including the new Register of Historic Sites and Buildings in England.

Licensing Arrangements

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what access *(a)* local and *(b)* national temperance societies will have to discussions on licensing when the new licensing arrangements come into operation. [188315]

Mr. Caborn: Members of local and national temperance societies have the same rights as any other citizen. The Licensing Act 2003 provides that interested parties, including persons living or involved in a business in the vicinity of a premises or bodies representing them, may make representations about applications for provisional statements and about the grant or variation of premises licences or club premises certificates, except where a simple conversion of an existing licence or certificate is made under the grandfather rights provisions in Schedule 8 of the Act. Interested parties may also apply for the review of a licence or certificate at any time as well as make representations about a review once it has been applied for. Representations must be about the effects of the application on the promotion of the licensing objectives. Members of local and national temperance societies will be able to make representations if they are interested parties under the terms of the Act.

Regional Broadcasting

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance she gives to Ofcom relating to regional programming by broadcasting companies. [187901]

Estelle Morris: None. The Communications Act 2003 set out clear responsibilities for OFCOM to secure regional programming by broadcasting companies. Ofcom is currently reviewing public service television broadcasting and regional broadcasting forms an integral part of that review.

Supporters Direct

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much public funding has been received by Supporters Direct in each financial year since 2000–01. [188062]

Mr. Caborn: Supporters Direct has received the following funding:

£

Financial year	*England and Wales*	*Scotland*
2000–01	250,000	—
2001–02	250,000	—
2002–03	294,000	75,000
2003–04	325,000	75,000
2004–05	[1]325,000	[1]90,000

[1] TBC

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what mechanisms are in place to ensure the allocation of public funds to supporter's trusts by Supporters Direct is transparent, equitable and objective. [188063]

Mr. Caborn: There are strong mechanisms in place to safeguard the allocation of funding to supporters trusts by Supporters Direct.

Supporters Direct are regulated by the Financial Services Authority and they evaluate the eligibility of all groups applying for funding according to clear criteria, laid down and enforced by the Supporters Direct Board. Details can be found on the Supporters Direct website at www.supporters-direct.org.

All grants to Supporters Direct are capped at a maximum reimbursement of 50 per cent. up to a value of £1,000. This is a one-off payment. All expenditure is documented by receipts. All grants are reported to the Board of Supporters Direct and grants are only made to existing supporters trusts.

Supporters Direct are currently audited by Limehouse and Co.

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what procedures are in place to prevent Supporters Direct's allocation of public funds being influenced by the club interests of current members. [188064]

Mr. Caborn: Supporters Direct is an Industrial and Provident Society and has rules approved by and registered at the Financial Services Authority. Those rules were drafted by the official lawyers to the Co-operative Movement.

Its members are the existing supporters' trusts. Membership of Supporters Direct is subject to the provisions in its rules and the policy on membership agreed by the Board of Supporters Direct. The funding it receives from Sport England and Sport Scotland respectively is related to agreed business plans, and is managed according to policy laid down by the Board of Supporters Direct, which is elected by the members.

As a body in receipt of public funding, the Board have a clear conflict of interest policy, and a register of board members' interests is maintained. Members with an interest in a particular issue do not debate or vote on the issue, and staff with an interest do not undertake to work on it.

Television Licences (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many old age pensioners in the Tamworth constituency have benefited from the introduction of free television licences. [188115]

Estelle Morris: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide breakdowns by parliamentary constituency of the number of free licences issued. However, 2001 Census data for Parliamentary constituencies identifies that there are approximately 3,650 people aged 75 or over living in the Tamworth constituency.

Television Reception

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to seek solutions for those people in the Stroud constituency who can neither receive a digital signal nor access satellite because of signal problems. [188414]

Estelle Morris: Ofcom do not hold data on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) or digital satellite coverage in individual constituencies.

Total core analogue TV coverage for the four main public service channels (BBC1, BBC2, ITV1 and Channel 4) stands at 98.5 per cent. of UK households. In addition, according to Ofcom figures, digital satellite is available to between 96 per cent. and 98 per cent. of UK households.

The Government is committed to ensuring that at Switchover, everyone who can currently get the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form (BBC 1 and 2, ITV, Channel 4/S4C and Channel 5) can receive them on digital systems.

Much progress has been made in the discussions between the Government, Ofcom and the Public Service Broadcasters. While the broadcasters have not reached a full consensus on the optimum timetable, some—including the BBC—have suggested that 2012 may be the most appropriate date for the completion of Switchover.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress is being made on the roll-out of digital television to those areas which have yet to receive it. [188415]

Estelle Morris: The Government is committed to ensuring that, at switchover, everyone who can currently receive the public service channels can receive them in digital form, and that digital television is available throughout the country.

Digital satellite signals can already reach the vast majority of UK homes. Around 73 per cent. of the population can receive digital terrestrial television, but it is not possible to increase reception before switchover, as signals currently have to be transmitted at low power to prevent interference with analogue signals.

Much progress has been made in the discussions between the Government, Ofcom, and the public service broadcasters. While the broadcasters have not reached a full consensus on the optimum timetable, some—including the BBC—have suggested that 2012 may be the most appropriate date for the completion of switchover.

HEALTH

Government Information (Access)

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what response he has made to the comments made by the Parliamentary Ombudsman regarding delays by his Department in responding to complaints under the code of practice on access to Government information made in her review of departmental performance against requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding published on 30 June; what action he is taking to end the delays; and if he will make a statement. [186675]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government takes any delays in responding to complaints under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information seriously.

The Government regrets that delays do unavoidably occur in a small minority of complex cases. However, the Ombudsman's review of the first nine months of the Memorandum of Understanding (September 2003—May 2004) shows that in most cases the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding were met.

In all cases, Departments endeavour to ensure that the time limit of three weeks for departments to respond to a "statement of complaint" from the Ombudsman is met. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, the Department aims to enter into dialogue with the investigating officer should there be any difficulty in replying by the date set by the Ombudsman.

Ashworth Hospital

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the budget for Ashworth Hospital has been for each of the last five years. [186831]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available for the last five years. The budget for the Ashworth Special Hospital Authority is only available from 1999–2000 to 2001–02 and is shown in the table.

	Amount (£)
1999–2000	51,435,000
2000–01	61,169,000
2001–02	63,731,000

Note:

The Ashworth Special Hospital Authority was dissolved in 31 March 2002, with the majority of its services moving to the Mersey Care National Health Service Trust. The information requested is not collected centrally at individual hospital level.

Source:

Summarised accounts of Ashworth Special Hospital Authority 1999–2000 to 2001–02.

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been allocated to *(a)* improving awareness and education and *(b)* research regarding autistic spectrum disorders in each of the last five years. [187774]

Dr. Ladyman: Through grants to the National Autistic Society, the Department has funded a range of projects to increase awareness and understanding of autism. The funding since 1999 is shown in the table. An additional £156,000 grant, over three years, was announced in May 2004.

	£
1999–2000	40,000
2000–01	40,000
2001–02	86,000
2002–03	97,000
2003–04	100,000
2004–05	56,000

The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body, which receives its grant-in-aid from the Office of Science and Technology, part of the Department of Trade and Industry. The MRC spend on autism since 1998 is shown in the table.

	£ million
1998–99	1.04
1999–2000	1.11
2000–01	1.18
2001–02	1.26
2002–03	1.30

In addition the Department allocated a further £2.5 million to the MRC in 2001–02, earmarked specifically for autism research. The Scottish Executive has given the MRC a further £250,000.

Breast Cancer

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to encourage women aged 25 to 35 years to undertake breast self-examination. [187301]

Miss Melanie Johnson: 80 per cent. of breast cancers occur in women aged over 50, with less than 2 per cent. occurring in women aged under 35. The Department supports breast awareness, rather than ritualistic monthly self-examination, for which there is little evidence. It is important for all women of any age to be breast aware, and report any changes to their doctor. The Department, together with Cancer Research UK, produces a leaflet entitled "Be Breast Aware", which is widely available from primary care surgeries and breast screening units. Around 1.5 million copies of this leaflet are produced each year.

Cancer (NICE Guidelines)

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the implementation of the revised National Institute for Clinical Excellence Referral Guidelines for Suspected Cancer will be enforced and monitored; and if he will make a statement. [185849]

Miss Melanie Johnson: "National Standards, Local Action: Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework 2005/06–2007/08" was published on 21 July 2004. This document sets out the new healthcare standards which every English national health service body must take into account and which the Healthcare Commission will take into account in developing their criteria for their reviews of English NHS bodies. Guidance from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is reflected in these standards in two ways.

Recommendations in "technology appraisal guidance" are included in a "core standard" for the NHS—all NHS bodies should "ensure that they conform to NICE technology appraisals and, where it is available, take into account nationally agreed guidance when planning and delivering treatment and care".

"Clinical guidelines" form part of the "developmental standards"—standards which the NHS is expected to achieve over time. The standard requires patients to receive effective treatment and care that "conform to nationally agreed best practice, particularly as defined in ... NICE guidance".

The referral guidelines for suspected cancer are currently subject to consultation and do not constitute NICE's formal guidance. The first consultation period ends on 11 August 2004, with the final guidelines expected to be published in March 2005.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role he expects the revised National Institute for Clinical Excellence Referral Guidelines for Suspected Cancer to have in improving the treatment of pre-cancerous skin conditions in primary care. [185850]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is currently consulting on the first draft of the revised referral guidelines for suspected cancer.

As the guideline recommendations presented are provisional and do not constitute NICE'S formal guidance, it would not be appropriate to comment in detail at this stage. The guidelines, once published, will assist primary healthcare professionals in determining those patients with suspected skin cancer who need to be referred urgently to see a specialist within two weeks, those patients who can be referred for a routine appointment and those who can be safely watched and, where appropriate, treated at a primary care level.

The revised guidelines are expected to be published in March 2005.

Cervical Cancer Screening

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what contractual arrangements are in place between the NHS and suppliers of products involved in cervical cancer screening procedures, including notice periods for the termination of such contracts. [186568]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There is no national contract for the national health service relating to products used during the current process of preparing cervical samples. However, the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency has just awarded a contract for liquid based cytology, which, over the remaining four years of a national roll out, will replace conventional cytology products.

Additionally, there is a national framework for gynaecological sundries, which include consumables, which are used in cervical screening such as speculum and a cervical smear. This contract runs until September 2005 and the process of renewal will be starting shortly.

Other surgical instruments are used during the taking of cervical samples. These products will remain in use following conversion and there is currently a national framework agreement in place for the purchase of reusable surgical instruments. This agreement started on 11 February 2002 and will continue until 10 February 2005, at which time a replacement agreement will commence.

Chiropody and Podiatry

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his Answer of 6 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 617W, on podiatry, what the whole time equivalent is of the number of chiropodists and podiatrists employed by the NHS in each year since 1997. [188610]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Qualified chiropodists and podiatrists employed in the national health service in England as at 30 September each year

	Whole-time equivalents
1997	2,730
1998	2,750
1999	2,770
2000	2,847
2001	2,894
2002	2,916
2003	3,027

Source:
Department of Health non-medical workforce census.

Between 1997 and 2003, the number of whole-time equivalents chiropodists and podiatrists employed in the NHS increased by 297, or 11 per cent.

Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will break down the costs of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters by main budget heading; [184000]

(2) whether the Final Report of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters was unanimous; and if he will make a statement; [184001]

(3) on what dates the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters has met; [184002]

(4) what steps he is taking to appoint a successor chairman of the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment; [184008]

(5) what changes he plans to the terms of reference of the chairman of the *(a)* Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment and *(b)* Small Area Health Statistics Unit. [184009]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not yet received the final version of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters (CERRIE) report. We understand it is expected to be published in October this year. It would not be appropriate to comment at this time.

The CERRIE secretariat has informed me that the Committee held 16 meetings on the following dates—4 December 2001; 7 February 2002; 20 March 2002; 6 June 2002; 8 August 2002; 1 October 2002; 11 December 2002; 27 February 2003; 30 April 2003; 26 June 2003; 22 October 2003; 16 December 2003; 24 February 2004; 31 March 2004; 19 May 2004; and 24 June 2004. The Committee also convened a workshop on 21, 22 and 23 July 2003, which all members attended.

The position of chairman to the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE) was advertised. Any appointment will be made in strict adherence to the published guidance of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

I have no plans to change the terms of reference of either COMARE or the small area health statistic unit.

The committee is expected to conclude its work in October 2004. The total cost of this work will be approximately £445,000. This includes the costs of the secretariat, meeting expenses, including a three day workshop and Committee members' travel and subsistence.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters has commissioned written transcriptions of the audio-recorded proceedings of its meetings; [184003]

(2) what access members of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters have had to written transcriptions of the audio-recorded proceedings of the Committee's meetings; [184012]

(3) for what reasons the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters cancelled its planned study of cancer incidence in north Essex. [184013]

Miss Melanie Johnson: These are matters that should be addressed in writing to the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters.

Correspondence

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will reply to the letter dated 20 July, from the hon. Member for North Shropshire, regarding the ESBL outbreak at the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford and the Royal Shrewsbury hospital. [188262]

Dr. Ladyman: A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 9 September 2004.

Deaf Patients (Missed Appointments)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost to the NHS of missed appointments of deaf or hard of hearing patients was in the latest year for which figures are available. [178427]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the costs of missed appointments in audiology is not collected centrally.

Modernising hearing aid services has improved the quality of life of those people who have received digital hearing aids. It has modernised services to make sure that deaf people receive the most advanced hearing aids available, rather than rely on outdated technology from the 1970s.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187171]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department operates a no-smoking policy within its buildings. There are therefore no smoking rooms in the Department's headquarters buildings.

On the Departmental estate, there are six rooms specifically set aside for worship and are available for use by members of any religion. In other buildings, meeting rooms can be reserved for this purpose.

The Department has no rooms specifically set aside for nursing mothers or pregnant women.

Drug Prescriptions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many instances there have been in the last three years of drugs being prescribed on the NHS for non-medical purposes. [187521]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No information is available on the reasons why a medical practitioner prescribes a particular drug.

Health Public Bodies

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the savings from the Departmental Review of Arm's Length bodies will be spent. [187876]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Decisions on the allocation of health and social care resources in future years will be taken as part of the normal budget allocation process in the light of the 2004 spending review settlement.

Home Deliveries

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the NHS will provide *(a)* a midwife and *(b)* medical attendance at a home birth. [186114]

Dr. Ladyman: We expect the national health service to provide a range of maternity services that includes the provision of home births. It is however for local decision makers to decide if a home birth service can be delivered safely and, if they do so decide, then the service might be withdrawn by a NHS trust on a temporary basis if a short term staff shortage means that such a service cannot be delivered safely or would jeopardise patient safety elsewhere in the trust.

If a NHS trust provides a home birth service, it should ensure that suitably skilled midwives are available to attend the woman and to provide care and support throughout the labour and birth. Appropriate transfer arrangements should also be in place in case the woman or baby needs specialist medical care.

MRSA

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many incidences of *(a)* hospital-acquired infection and *(b)* methicillin resistent staphylococcus aureus at Derriford hospital, Plymouth have been notified to his Department in each of the last five years. [188446]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of hospital acquired infections for individual trusts is not collected centrally. The Department introduced mandatory reporting of methicillin resistent staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) bacteraemias (blood stream infections) for national health service acute trusts from 1 April 2001. The number of MRSA reports for the three years for which figures are available is shown in the table.

Plymouth hospitals NHS trust

	Number of MRSA bacteraemia reports
2001-02	99
2002-03	81
2003-04	98

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which hospitals stock antibiotics against strains of MRSA; and if he will make a statement; [184422]

(2) which antibiotics are effective against strains of MRSA; and if he will make a statement. [184423]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The use of the description methicillin resistant in methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) implies resistance to all penicillin and cephalosporin type antibiotics (beta lactam group of antibiotics). Resistance to other classes of antibiotics is extremely variable.

Most MRSA that occur in the United Kingdom are still sensitive to and may be treated with vancomycin, teicoplanin, linezolid, or quinupristin/dalfopristin. They may also be sensitive to rifampicin, fluoroquinolone antibiotics (such as ciprofloxacin), chloramphenicol and variably to other antibiotics including tetracyclines macrolides (such as erythromycin) and aminoglycosides (such as gentamicin). Trusts have stocks of these antibiotics. Decisions on the antibiotic(s) appropriate for the treatment of any one patient must, therefore, depend on microbiological laboratory testing of the individual strain of bacterium isolated.

MRSA resistant to all available antibiotics have not as yet been isolated in the United Kingdom.

Private Sector Capital Grants

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* budget and *(b)* spending outcome on private sector capital grants was in each of the last 10 years in (i) England, (ii) Somerset and (iii) Dorset. [188006]

Mr. Hutton: Information on capital grants solely to the private sector is not available centrally.

Vulnerable Adults

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what problems have been identified with implementing the Protection of Vulnerable Adults list in healthcare settings. [187064]

Dr. Ladyman: Unless changes are made to the Care Standards Act 2000, a protection of vulnerable adults check would be required each time a junior doctor or healthcare trainee moved to a new training post. In view of the numbers involved, this would cause difficulties for the national health service and potentially jeopardise the supply of trained staff to the NHS workforce.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to cross refer between the Protection of Children Act list and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults list. [187111]

Dr. Ladyman: Section 92 of the Care Standards Act 2000 allows the Secretary of State for Health to consider any referral to the Protection of Children Act list for possible inclusion on the protection of vulnerable adults list. This would be in circumstances where it appears that the nature of the misconduct against a child is such that the individual would also be unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults.

Waiting Lists

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were waiting for an operation in an NHS hospital in the London borough of Havering in *(a)* July 1997 and *(b)* July 2004; and what the figures are for all other London boroughs. [187729]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected by borough. However, the table shows the number of people waiting by strategic health authority (SHA) area.

In-patient waiting list in June 1997–98 and 2004–05

SHA code	Name	1997–98	2004–05
Q04	North West London	44,199	27,516
Q05	North Central London	43,523	30,483
Q06	North East London	41,538	26,913
Q07	South East London	41,632	27,088
Q08	South West London	31,892	20,523

Source:
Department of Health form KH07.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the changes have been to waiting lists at Warrington hospital in each of the last seven years for which information is available. [183658]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Outpatient commissioner waiting list information for the primary care trusts (PCT) and health authority (HA) covering the Warrington area all specialties

Quarter ending March	Code	Name	General practitioner written referrals not yet seen, who have been waiting (weeks) 13 to < 26	26 plus
1998	QCV	North Cheshire HA	1,176	217
1999	QCV	North Cheshire HA	1,871	339
2000	QCV	North Cheshire HA	1,267	538
2001	QCV	North Cheshire HA	789	379
2002	QCV	North Cheshire HA	592	19

Quarter ending March	Code	Name	General practitioner written referrals not yet seen, who have been waiting (weeks) 13 to < 17	17 to < 21	21 to < 26	26 plus
2003	5J2	Warrington PCT	232	91	0	0
2004	5J2	Warrington PCT	80	0	0	0

Note:
Data for North Cheshire HA and Warrington PCT is not directly comparable. PCTs only came into existence in April 2002.
Source:
Department of Health QM08R.

Inpatient commissioner waiting list information for the primary care trust (PCT) and health authority (HA) covering the Warrington area

Month ending March	Year	Quarter	Name	Specialty name	Total waiting	Patients waiting for admission by month waiting 0–2	3–5	6–8	9–11
Health authority									
1997	1996–97	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	8,923	4,858	2,082	1,109	798
1998	1997–98	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	10,484	4,889	2,371	1,447	1,140
1999	1998–99	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	9,426	4,281	2,119	1,377	993
2000	1999–2000	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	8,602	3,574	1,857	1,383	936
2001	2000–01	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	8,911	3,907	1,928	1,395	902
2002	2001–02	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	8,546	3,831	1,991	1,366	965
Primary care trust									
2003	2002–03	4	Warrington PCT	All specialties	4,803	2,098	1,348	902	455
2004	2003–04	4	Warrington PCT	All specialties	4,221	2,509	1,277	435	0

Month ending March	Year	Quarter	Name	Specialty name	Patients waiting for admission by month waiting 12–14	15–17	18–20	21–23
Health authority								
1997	1996–97	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	75	0	0	1
1998	1997–98	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	484	153	0	0
1999	1998–99	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	512	144	0	0
2000	1999–2000	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	639	213	0	0
2001	2000–01	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	573	206	0	0
2002	2001–02	4	North Cheshire HA	All specialties	393	0	0	0
Primary care trust								
2003	2002–03	4	Warrington PCT	All specialties	0	0	0	0
2004	2003–04	4	Warrington PCT	All specialties	0	0	0	0

Note:
PCT's were not formed until April 2002
Source:
Department of Health QF01

NORTHERN IRELAND

Acute Hospitals

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the population level required to maintain an acute hospital in the Province as viable. [187804]

Angela Smith: "Developing Better Services" concluded that a minimum population of between 100,000 and 150,000 is needed to provide the volume of patients necessary to sustain a modern acute hospital and to support advances in treatment, medical technology and specialist skills.

The establishment of managed clinical networks is essential to the delivery of safe, effective and sustainable services at smaller acute hospitals. A number of

networks are already in place in Northern Ireland; there are plans for existing networks to be further developed and others introduced as part of the implementation of "Developing Better Services".

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether there are specific targets regarding early diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders in the Province. [187773]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's Priorities for Action 2004–05 includes the following action:

"By 31 March 2005, Boards and Trusts should establish multidisciplinary diagnostic, assessment and early intervention teams to provide for improved life outcomes for around 200 children and young people with autism per year."

This target is in addition to the numbers of children already being referred for diagnosis where an autistic spectrum disorder is suspected.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been allocated to improving awareness and education about autistic spectrum disorders in the Province in each of the last five years. [187775]

Angela Smith: The funding allocated by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), health and social services boards and trusts and the Department of Education (DE) for improving awareness and education about autistic spectrum disorders for healthcare staff, education staff and parents is outlined in the following table:

£

	DHSSPS	*HSS boards and trusts*	*DE*	*Total*
1999–2000	24,800	24,600	—	49,400
2000–01	25,400	30,800	—	56,200
2001–02	26,000	62,800	—	88,800
2002–03	50,000	141,700	49,000	240,700
2003–04	50,000	251,300	842,000	1,143,300

Care Homes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on insurance costs for independent care homes. [187762]

Angela Smith: The cost of insurance for independent care homes is a business matter between home owners and their insurers.

Civic Forum

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* set-up costs and *(b)* most recent annual running costs were of the civic forum. [187806]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Set-up costs for the civic forum were approximately £75,000. The running costs of the civic forum for the financial year 2002–03 were £328,000.

Clinical Negligence

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was awarded in *(a)* legal costs and *(b)* damages for clinical negligence cases in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [187810]

Angela Smith: The information in respect of the cost of clinical negligence cases in Northern Ireland in relation to each of the previous six years is as follows.

Amounts paid in settlements for clinical negligence claims from 1998–99 to 2003–04

	£000
1998–99	12,286
1999–2000	4,859
2000–01	9,409
2001–02	7,415
2002–03	13,550
2003–04	15,194

The information relating to the previous four years is not readily available in the form requested and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Information on the split of the above figures between damages and legal costs is not readily available in the form requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Cocaine

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what information he has collected on the extent of cocaine use in the Province; and if he will make a statement. [187809]

Angela Smith: In 2003, there were 25 registered cocaine addicts on the Drug Addicts Register while the Drug Misuse Database shows that in 2002–03, 68 persons presented for treatment citing cocaine as their main drug of misuse. In the All Ireland Drug Prevalence Survey 2002–03 1.6 per cent. of 15–64 year olds reported that they had ever used cocaine.

There is growing anecdotal evidence of an increase in the use of cocaine in the club and pub setting among young adults. In light of these reports the Government have set up a small group to consider more closely the level of cocaine use in Northern Ireland with a view to informing future policy and strategy development in terms of prevention and treatment.

Counterfeit Goods Seizures

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on counterfeit goods seized in the Province in the last year. [187450]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Service of Northern Ireland have had significant success in disrupting and frustrating criminals networks involved in intellectual property crime and in 2003–04 seized £7.6 million of counterfeit goods. Enforcement work is continuing, and under the umbrella of the Organised Crime Task Force the PSNI is working in partnership with industry and brand holders to identify illicit products, improve

understanding of the scope of trademark and copyright law, and raise public awareness of the risks associated with the purchase of counterfeit goods.

Crime (Elderly People)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the mortality rate of elderly people who have been the victims of crime was in the last five years for which figures are available. [178382]

Mr. Pearson: The medical cause of death certificate contains no specific information as to whether the person had previously been the victim of a crime. Information can be provided only on cases where the cause of death is assault. The following table provides figures on the number of people of pensionable age (aged 60 or over for females, 65 or over for males) who died as a result of assault[1] over the period 1999 to 2003.

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes X85-Y09 and Y87.1 (2001–03) and the Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes E960-E969 (1999–2000).

Number of deaths resulting from assault of people of pensionable age registered in Northern Ireland, 1999–2003

	Deaths
1999	1
2000	2
2001	0
2002	0
2003 (data for 2003 are provisional)	2

Dementia

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the annual cost of providing nursing and personal care for dementia sufferers in Northern Ireland. [187797]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available centrally.

Disability Benefits

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what rationale underlies the differing periods of time which must elapse from the commencement of an illness before a claim can be made for *(a)* attendance allowance and *(b)* disability living allowance; and if he will review the rationale. [187824]

Mr. Spellar: The qualifying periods for attendance allowance and disability living allowance help ensure that they are not paid to people with short term, transient disabilities. The differences in the qualifying periods for the two benefits reflect the differing characteristics of the people they are designed to help. Disability living allowance focuses help with the extra costs of disability on people who have the very considerable disadvantage of being severely disabled early, or relatively early, in life. Hence, it has a shorter qualifying period than attendance allowance which provides help with the disability-related extra costs of people who do not experience the onset of severe disability until later in life when they are aged 65 or over. There are no plans to change these arrangements.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to review the legislation that places an age restriction on eligibility for disability living allowance. [187825]

Mr. Spellar: There are no plans to review the legislation in relation to the age bands for either the care or mobility components of disability living allowance.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will lower the rate of the care component for attendance allowance in order to provide elderly claimants with assistance towards their care costs. [187826]

Mr. Spellar: Attendance allowance is paid at two rates. The higher rate is for people who need help with personal care and/or supervision or watching over to avoid substantial danger to themselves or others by day and at night. The lower rate is for people who have those needs either during the day or at night. As at May 2004, attendance allowance was providing help towards the disability-related extra costs of over 65,000 people aged 65 or over in Northern Ireland. We believe that the allowance is properly directed towards the needs of older disabled people and there are no plans to introduce a third rate.

Doctors' Working Hours

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of *(a)* junior house officers, *(b)* senior house officers and *(c)* specialist registrars are compliant with the European Working Time Directive at each health trust in the Province. [187802]

Angela Smith: The information detailed in the table below was obtained from each of the HPSS Trusts during May and June of this year as an assessment of how the junior doctors they employ would measure in terms of compliance against the European Working Time Directive (EWTD) requirements as to be introduced at 1 August 2004.

Percentage

Trust	*Junior House Officer Compliance*	*Senior House Officer Compliance*	*Specialist Registrar Compliance*
Altnagelvin Hospital Trust	100	63	26
Armagh and Dungannon Trust	n/a	100	n/a
Belfast City Hospital	67	57	82
Causeway Hospital Trust	100	100	33
Craigavon Area Hospital Trust	100	69	74
Craigavon and Banbridge Community Trust	n/a	100	n/a
Down Lisburn Trust	10	100	100
Foyle Trust	n/a	100	n/a
Greenpark Hospital Trust[1]	n/a	50	25
Homefirst Community Trust	n/a	100	100
Mater Hospital Trust	100	78	45
Newry and Mourne Trust	100	41	25
North and West Belfast Trust	n/a	100	100
Royal Group of Hospitals	60	36	45

Percentage

Trust	Junior House Officer Compliance	Senior House Officer Compliance	Specialist Registrar Compliance
South and East Belfast Trust	n/a	100	100
Sperrin Lakeland Trust	100	77	67
Ulster Community Hospital Trust	54	57	37
United Hospitals Trust	11	37	31

Note: n/a = not available

Based on this information, the overall HPSS compliance position was that, approximately 60 per cent. of the total junior doctor workforce was expected to meet the August 2004 EWTD requirements.

However the situation has moved on since this information was gathered, in that a further 75 new junior doctor positions have been created within the HPSS, and that the addition of these new posts are expected to bring the overall compliance figure up to nearer 70 per cent.

The Department is currently engaged in gathering more up to date information from all HSS organisations in relation to the junior doctors' EWTD compliance position, and will be analysing the information gathered with a view to making a more definitive assessment of the overall current HPSS compliance position.

We continue to work closely with all HSS organisations to ensure the objective of achieving full EWTD compliance for all junior doctors is achieved as soon as possible, while ensuring services to patients are not adversely affected.

Drug Overdose Mortality

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* intentional and *(b)* accidental deaths there were from drug overdoses in each health board area in each of the last five years. [187799]

Mr. Pearson: The following table gives the number of drug-related deaths registered by Health and Social Services Boards in Northern Ireland for each year between 1999 and 2003.

Number of drug-related deaths by registration year and Health and Social Services Board area in Northern Ireland

		Cause of death		
Health and Social Services Board	Registration year	Intentional self-poisoning by drugs[1]	Accidental poisoning by drugs[2]	Undetermined and other poisoning by drugs[3]
Eastern	1999	9	11	6
	2000	19	7	5
	2001	15	5	2
	2002	21	8	6
	[4]2003	6	11	2
Northern	1999	3	7	1
	2000	7	3	2
	2001	2	4	2
	2002	8	1	5
	[4]2003	6	8	3
Southern	1999	1	1	3
	2000	2	1	2
	2001	1	0	2
	2002	1	3	3
	[4]2003	3	1	3
Western	1999	4	1	3
	2000	1	1	3
	2001	2	0	0
	2002	2	7	3
	[4]2003	2	6	1

[1] Intentional self-poisoning by drugs: This comprises intentional death due to prescription drugs, illegal drugs and/or where a combination of alcohol and drugs was involved. It does not include intentional alcohol self-poisoning alone.

[2] Accidental poisoning by drugs: This comprises accidental death due to prescription drugs, illegal drugs and/or where a combination of alcohol and drugs was involved. It does not include accidental alcohol poisoning alone.

[3] Undetermined and other poisoning by drugs: This comprises death of undetermined intent due to prescription drugs, illegal drugs and/or deaths where a combination of alcohol and drugs were involved, but not intentional or accidental alcohol poisoning alone. This category also includes death due to mental and behavioural disorders related to drug (prescription and/or illegal drugs) use, excluding alcohol and tobacco.

[4] Data for 2003 are provisional.

Ear, Nose and Throat Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will make a statement on long-term plans for otorhinolaryngology services at Tyrone County Hospital; [187800]

(2) if he will make a statement on otorhinolaryngology services in Fermanagh and Tyrone. [187801]

Angela Smith: The Otorhinolaryngology Service provided by Sperrin Lakeland Trust includes ENT services and is currently based at Tyrone County Hospital. Inpatient and day case services are delivered from the Tyrone County Hospital; outpatient services are delivered from both the Erne and Tyrone County Hospitals. The service also provides cover to Cavan and Monaghan Hospitals.

The Western Area Programme Board for the implementation of Developing Better Services has established a multidisciplinary Working Group to determine the future service outline for the provision of otorhinolaryngology services across the Western Board area including Tyrone County Hospital. The Group is expected to report in October 2004.

Endoscope Decontamination Review

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the independent external review into endoscope decontamination will report. [187777]

Angela Smith: The independent review of endoscopes is due to report at the end of November 2004.

Farm Payments

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many payments due to farmers in Northern Ireland by 30 June have not yet been paid,

broken down by category of farm payment; and what the total value of such outstanding claims for payment is. [188244]

Mr. Pearson: In Northern Ireland the number and potential value, if paid in full, of farm subsidy claims due to have been paid by 30 June 2004 but which had not been paid by 8 September 2004, are broken down as follows:

	Applications unpaid	*Value (£ million)*
Beef Special Premium	4,071	1.6
Slaughter Premium	1,849	0.8
Suckler Cow Premium	539	1.4
Extensification Payment	2,074	4.2

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his target date is for paying to farmers in Northern Ireland all payments due to them by 30 June. [188245]

Mr. Pearson: To date 94.9 per cent. of potential total expenditure has been paid. It is expected that the European Commission's regulatory requirement for 96.14 per cent. of total scheme expenditure to be paid by 30 June 2004 will be achieved by 30 September 2004.

Fertility Treatment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to prioritise on sub-fertility waiting lists females who are approaching the cut-off point for age-related treatment options. [187793]

Angela Smith: There are no plans at present to prioritise on sub-fertility waiting lists females who are approaching the cut off point for age-related treatment options. A consultation and equality impact assessment on the future provision of sub-fertility services in Northern Ireland have now been undertaken and I hope to be able to announce my proposals in this regard in the very near future.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many couples are awaiting *(a)* initial outpatient assessment and *(b)* treatment for sub-fertility in the Province. [187794]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the latest figure is for the average waiting time from GP referral to consultant assessment for sub-fertility treatments in the Province. [187795]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to bring the criteria for NHS-funded sub-fertility treatments in Northern Ireland into line with the rest of the United Kingdom. [187796]

Angela Smith: Publicly funded IVF treatment has been available in Northern Ireland since the establishment of the interim fertility service in December 2001. Access to the interim service is regulated by criteria recommended in the advisory report submitted in February 2001 by the Regional Medical Services Consortium.

To inform decisions on the longer term provision of fertility services in Northern Ireland, including the access criteria which may be applied, I issued the document, "From People to Parents" for public consultation in October 2003. The consultation process has now closed and I hope to be in a position to announce my proposals for the future development of fertility services in Northern Ireland in the very near future. In making my decision I will of course wish to take account of criteria for NHS funded fertility treatment used in GB.

Flooding

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on floods in the Province in August. [187791]

Mr. Spellar: During the latter part of August 2004, several areas in Northern Ireland were affected by severe localised rainfall conditions that proved to be beyond the capacity of local drainage systems. The Londonderry area was particularly affected. Localised flooding also occurred at a number of locations in Greater Belfast, North Down, East Down and East Antrim, which resulted in some road closures for short periods of time.

Staff from Rivers Agency, Water Service and Roads Service along with other responders worked to minimise damage to property and disruption to the community. During each of the flood events an inter-agency flood team was formed, comprising representatives from Rivers Agency, Water Service and Roads Service to co-ordinate the response. The team, along with other agencies—13 in total in the Londonderry incident—worked together to provide assistance and advice to those affected.

In the Londonderry incident, Water Service, Roads Service and Rivers Agency deployed some 75 staff, working late into the evening and next morning, to minimise damage to property and aid recovery. I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of those staff and the staff of other agencies. The Central Claims Unit had its loss adjusters on the ground on 18 August. Notwithstanding these efforts, a number of householders and businesses suffered significant flood-related damage. Derry city council organised a "help shop", to provide advice and information, on 20 August, and all the relevant statutory agencies participated in this event. My ministerial colleague, Ian Pearson, visited Londonderry on 18 August to survey the damage and to ensure that remedial measures were in train.

The circumstances of the flooding incidents are being fully investigated to identify any opportunities to reduce the risk of further events and improve the standard of the inter-agency response. As with all such incidents, it is essential that any lessons are learned and applied.

Water Service is implementing a programme of flood relief schemes at 50 locations at risk of flooding. £6 million has been invested on such schemes in the last four years and a further £5 million will be invested over the next three years. Moreover work on the £100 million Belfast sewer project is already underway and a further £59 million will be invested in upgrading the sewerage network across the region in the three year period to 2006. Major upgrades of the sewerage system planned will also help to reduce flooding risks. In addition, Rivers Agency has an ongoing works programme to protect property from flooding from watercourses and the sea, amounting to approximately £7 million per annum.

However, it must be recognised that, although modern drainage standards will provide better protection, it is impossible to guarantee that flooding will not occur, when unusually severe weather conditions are experienced.

General Practitioners

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assistance is available to locum general practitioners on *(a)* sick leave and *(b)* maternity leave. [187765]

Angela Smith: A locum general practitioner who is on sick leave or maternity leave is entitled to the same range of social security benefits as any self employed person who pays class 2 national insurance contributions. This includes incapacity benefit and maternity benefit.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the *(a)* number of missed general practitioner appointments and *(b)* resultant costs in the Province in the latest year for which figures are available. [187769]

Angela Smith: This information is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* contacts to and *(b)* domiciliary visits from each general practice out-of-hours service there were in the Province in each of the last five years. [187811]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Hospital Hygiene

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to improve hygiene in local hospitals; and if he will make a statement. [187815]

Angela Smith: All health and social services trusts in Northern Ireland have a duty to ensure that high standards of hygiene in hospitals are being met and maintained. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is placing a renewed emphasis on clean hospitals with the planned establishment of standards for cleanliness against which performance will be measured and improvements delivered.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate has been made of the cost of hospital-acquired infections in the Province in the last year for which figures are available. [187443]

Angela Smith: There are no figures or estimates available on the cost of hospital-acquired infections in Northern Ireland.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many vancomycin-resistant enterococcus cases there were in the Province in each of the last five years. [187445]

Angela Smith: The information requested is set out in the following table.

Reports of glycopeptide resistant enterococci (GRE), 2000-04, Northern Ireland

	Number of reports
2000	0
2001	1
2002	6
2003	3
2004 (up to 31 August)	1

Housing

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether discussions took place between representatives of the Housing Executive and local political parties over the future of the Protestant families who moved from the Torrens area of North Belfast in August. [188142]

Mr. Spellar: Yes. In the light of recent events the Housing Executive has continued to have discussions with the Democratic Unionist Party and the Progressive Unionist Party. The Housing Executive has also met with Sinn Fein (at its request) and briefed the Social Democratic and Labour Party. In recent years the residents of Torrens have been largely represented by the Democratic Unionist Party or Progressive Unionist Party. The Ulster Unionist Party has not initiated any discussions and has had no involvement with the Housing Executive in relation to Torrens for some time. The Housing Executive will continue to engage with local politicians over the future of the Torrens area.

Learning Disability Provision

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what improvements have been made in enhancing educational provision for those aged 16 years and over with moderate learning disability in the Province. [187776]

Mr. Gardiner: Pupils with moderate learning difficulties, whether placed in an ordinary school, a special unit or a special school, generally leave school at the statutory school leaving age. In a small number of cases and depending on their special educational needs, they may remain in school beyond statutory school leaving age. Parents have a general right of appeal to the SEN Tribunal if they disagree with the boards decision to cease to maintain a statement at any time.

Education and library boards (ELBs) are required, in conjunction with other relevant agencies, to draw up a transition plan for all pupils with statements of special educational needs (SENs) to set out appropriate post-school opportunities, including further education.

The Department of Education chairs an Inter-Departmental Working Group (IDG) that is looking at the transition of all young people with statements of special educational needs to adult life. The remit of this group does not extend to include consideration of post 16 educational provision in schools for MLD children, but rather to consider how to make strategic improvements in the transition process for young people with SENs on leaving school. The IDG is in the process of finalising an action plan, which will be produced in autumn 2004.

The educational and library boards' Regional Strategy Group for Special Education Needs has established a working party to look at the equality of provision post 16 for pupils in MLD schools across the five education and library boards. The group is considering a number of options and is working with the Department of Employment and Learning, who have responsibility for colleges of further education.

In addition the Department for Employment and Learning has put in place a range of initiatives and funding streams designed to promote access to post 16 provision by students with disabilities including those with moderate learning disabilities

Maternity Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which health trusts have expressed an interest in developing midwife-led maternity facilities. [187768]

Angela Smith: There is already a midwife-led unit adjacent to the consultant obstetric unit at Craigavon hospital. Similar midwife-led units are planned for a number of other hospital sites including the Altnagelvin, Ulster and Royal sites and the new hospital for the south-west.

In addition, on 29 July I announced my decision to allow the development of Community Midwifery Units (stand-alone midwife-led units) in Northern Ireland. My announcement has opened the way for Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts to consider the potential for establishing Community Midwifery Units as part of the wider implementation of Developing Better Services and the associated reconfiguration of hospital and other health services.

Mental Health

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent on mental health *(a)* assertive outreach and *(b)* crisis response services in each of the last five years in the Province. [187771]

Angela Smith: No funds were specifically allocated by health and social services boards for assertive outreach or crisis response services prior to 2001–02. Recent funding by health and social services board area is as follows:

Southern Health and Social Services Board

In 2002–03, the southern board allocated £220,000 to assertive outreach and £220,000 to crisis response services. This increased to £225,000 in 2003–04.

Northern Health and Social Services Board

In 2002–03, the northern board allocated £142,000 for assertive outreach services. In 2003–04, it allocated £759,000 for assertive outreach and £1,052,000 for crisis response. A further £612,000 was allocated non-specifically to develop both services.

Eastern Health and Social Services Board

No funds were specifically allocated for assertive outreach or crisis response services prior to 2003–04. In 2003–04, it allocated £112,000 to assertive outreach and £1,390,000 to crisis response services.

Western Health and Social Services Board

No funds were allocated prior to 2003–04. In 2003–04, the western board allocated £196,000 to crisis response services.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to develop *(a)* assertive outreach and *(b)* crisis response mental health services in the Province. [187772]

Angela Smith: Health and social services boards are currently developing both assertive outreach and crisis response mental services throughout Northern Ireland. An additional £3 million has been made available by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in 2004–05 to further develop these and other community services.

NHS Staff

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full-time *(a)* nurses and *(b)* administrators are employed by the NHS in Northern Ireland. [187805]

Angela Smith: The information requested is as follows.

Number of full-time nurses employed within all NI HPSS[1] organisations as at 30 June 2004

Nursing staff group	*Headcount*
Qualified Nurses	8,544
Unqualified Nurses	2,513
Total	11,057

[1] Health and Personal Social Services.

Note:

Bank staff who cover for staffing shortfalls and fluctuating workloads in order to maintain service delivery have been removed from these figures. Student nurses have also been removed.

Number of full-time administration and clerical staff employed within all NI HPSS[1] organisations as at 30 June 2004

Administration and Clerical staff group	*Headcount*
Clerical and Admin	6,806
Manager	728
Senior Manager	1,011
Senior Executives	166
Board Member	151
Total	8,862

[1] Health and Personal Social Services.

Note:
Bank staff who cover for staffing shortfalls and fluctuating workloads in order to maintain service delivery have been removed from these figures.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many nursing vacancies there are at each health trust in the Province. [187779]

Angela Smith: The number of vacancies as at 30 June 2004 are as follows.

Number of nursing midwifery and health visiting vacancies within all trusts as at 30 June 2004

Trust	*Headcount vacancies*	*WTE[1] vacancies*
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	69	68.7
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	10	8.3
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	78	76.1
Causeway HSS Trust	8	7.1
Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust	13	11.0
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	9	7.7
Down Lisbum HSS Trust	22	21.3
Foyle Community HSS Trust	8	8.0
Greenpark Healthcare HSS Trust	45	44.3
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	24	n/a
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	111	108.4
Newry and Moume HSS Trust	13	13.0
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	21	13.4
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	219	191.8
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	86	85.3
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	28	28.0
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	48	42.2
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	38	38.0
Total	850	[2]772.7

[1] Whole time equivalent.
[2] Total WTE figure does not include Homefirst.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many overseas nurses are working at each health trust in the Province. [187780]

Angela Smith: As at 31 August 2004, the total number of overseas nurses employed within health and social services trusts in Northern Ireland was 815. Figures are detailed by trust as follows.

HSS[1] trust	*Number*
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	37
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	0
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	53
Causeway HSS Trust	13
Craigavon and Banbridge Comm. HSS Trust	2
Craigavon Area Hospital HSS Trust	50
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	56
Foyle Community HSS Trust	1
Greenpark Healthcare HSS Trust	58
Homefirst Community HSS Trust	36
Mater Infirmorum Hospital HSS Trust	51
Newry and Moume HSS Trust	3
North and West Belfast HSS Trust	0
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	226
South and East Belfast HSS Trust	0
Sperrin Lakeland HSS Trust	41
Ulster Community and Hospitals Group HSS Trust	114
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust	74
Total	815

[1] Health and social services.

PFI/PPP Contracts

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many contracts have been let by his Department in each financial year since 2001-02 to *(a)* PriceWaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte and Touche, *(c)* KPMG and *(d)* Ernst and Young for advising his Department on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts; and what fees were paid in each case. [182269]

Mr. Pearson: The following table sets out the number of contacts awarded by the eleven Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office in each year from 2001 to date:

	Year contract awarded		
	2001-02	*2002-03*	*2003-04*
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	4	11	6
Deloitte and Touche	—	1	2
KPMG	1	1	1
Ernst and Young	—	—	1

The following table sets out the total fees paid in respect of these contracts:

£

	Year contract awarded		
	2001-02	*2002-03*	*2003-04*
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	1,984,445	608,852	1,282,934
Deloitte and Touche	—	34,738	22,060
KPMG	88,800	22,555	332,513
Ernst and Young	—	—	99,845

Both tables cover contracts where the company identified was either the sole contractor or the lead partner in a consortium. Where the company was the lead partner in a consortium the figures quoted for fees paid include payments it would have been contractually obliged to make to the other partners in the consortium. In these circumstances the contracting authority is not in a position to identify payments to consortium members.

It should also be noted that a number of public services to which these contracts relate are the responsibility of local authorities or private companies in England and Wales, but are fully funded through central Government in Northern Ireland.

Prosthetic Limbs

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals in the Province have prosthetic limbs; and what the causes of the disability are in each case. [187781]

Angela Smith: As at March 2004, the number of people who have prosthetic limbs in Northern Ireland is 1,716. The causes of the disability in each case are as follows.

Cause	*Number*
Trauma	589
Arterial	563
Congenital	223
Civil disturbance	128
Malignancy	99
Other	68
Neurological condition	26
Re-amputation—through non-healing	11
Venous	9
Northern Ireland total	1,716

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are employed in the Province specifically to treat those with prosthetic limbs, broken down by profession. [187782]

Angela Smith: Information requested is provided in the following table.

Number of people employed in the Province to treat specifically those with prosthetic limbs, broken down by profession

Profession	*Headcount*	*WTE*
Physiotherapists	4	2.01
Prosthetists	5	5.00
Consultant in rehabilitation medicine	1	1.00
Occupational therapists	1	1.00
Nurses	27	20.83
Total	38	29.84

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made on improving the cosmetic appearance, with particular reference to colour synergy, of prosthetic limbs provided in Northern Ireland. [187783]

Angela Smith: There is a range of silicone coverings (cosmeses) that may be provided to prosthetic users. These vary in cost from around £200 for a single colour covering to £5,000 for a high definition silicone covering. The latter are not provided routinely as part of prosthetic provision. Where the consultant and prosthetist consider there is a clinical need for a person to be supplied with a high definition cover, a case is made to the relevant Health and Social Services Board for funding.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Green Park Healthcare Trust and Health and Social Services Boards are in discussion on the implications of widening provision of high definition coverings.

Racism

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many racially-motivated attacks were reported in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [187411]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Service of Northern Ireland record incidents which are perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be racial. They have supplied the following figures:

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Verbal abuse threat	132	67	77	50	66	109
Written material	1	4	1	4	3	10
Graffiti	5	7	6	2	4	7
Physical assault	15	54	58	37	50	103
Attack on home	13	53	49	38	59	148
Attack on property	20	37	45	33	39	57
Other	7	15	24	21	15	19
Total	93	237	260	185	226	453

The number of incidents reported for 2003–04 increased 100 per cent. from the same period the previous year. This increase is believed to reflect the considerable effort made by the Police Service to build confidence within Minority Ethnic Communities and encourage the reporting of such incidents.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were convicted of racially motivated offences in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [187415]

Mr. Pearson: Accurate information in respect of conviction rates is not currently available. The Police Service of Northern Ireland have recently introduced new recording and monitoring systems in respect of racially motivated crimes which will assist police in identifying crimes of this type. A detailed analysis of incidents reported during 2003–04 is presently being undertaken and this information will be available in due course.

Rail Services

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answers of 7 September 2004, references 185114 and 185115, on rail services, whether the totals for *(a)* infrastructure maintenance: cross-border line and *(b)* upgrading the cross-border line include money spent on maintaining and improving the Enterprise rail service between Belfast and Dublin. [188273]

Mr. Spellar: Translink has confirmed that the costs detailed in my answer of 7 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1136W, number 185114 for *(a)* infrastructure maintenance of the cross-border line and *(b)* upgrading the cross-border line do not include the costs of maintenance and improving the Enterprise rail service between Belfast and Dublin. These costs are detailed separately in my answer of 7 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1136W, number 185115.

Railways

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money from Northern Ireland departments has been spent on *(a)* maintaining and *(b)* improving the rail service between Belfast and Londonderry in each of the past five years. [188274]

Mr. Spellar: Public money spent on *(a)* maintaining and *(b)* improving the rail service between Belfast and Londonderry in the past five years is as follows:

	£
Infrastructure maintenance	
1999–2000	912,000
2000–01	939,000
2001–02	[1]1.088
2002–03	[1]1.199
2003–04	[1]2.179
Improvements	
1999–2000	100,000
2000–01	350,000
2001–02	200,000
2002–03	100,000
2003–04	28,000

[1] Million

Regional Disablement Service

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the merits of providing funding directly to the Regional Disablement Service rather than through health boards. [187786]

Angela Smith: Funding for the Regional Disablement Service is provided by the four Health and Social Services Boards from the Physical and Sensory Disability Programme of Care budget via Service Level Agreements with Green Park Trust for the provision of services. The agreements are subject to regular monitoring and performance management to ensure that the best possible care is provided. As each Board has a statutory responsibility for the commissioning of services for its resident population, and the current arrangements provide a robust accountability regime, there are no plans to change them.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether it is planned that the Regional Disablement Service should provide satellite clinics in the Province. [187787]

Angela Smith: The contract for provision of prosthetic and technician services is currently being tendered. The new contract provides for the establishment of satellite clinics during its term, which commences 1 April 2005 and runs for a period of seven years. A detailed specification for a satellite service and its funding would have to be developed in collaboration with Health and Social Services Boards ahead of its actual establishment.

Respite Beds

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many respite beds there are in each *(a)* council and *(b)* health board area; and how many of these beds are (i) solely for the use of patients with particular conditions and (ii) restricted to use by individuals within a certain age range. [187763]

Angela Smith: Information on the number of beds which may be used to provide respite care is not collected centrally. Health and social services boards do not have a specified number of residential or nursing home beds dedicated solely to respite care, as beds may be used to accommodate either permanent residents or persons requiring respite according to demand.

Ulster Hospital

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the *(a)* number and *(b)* workload of plumbers at the Ulster Hospital (i) in 1994 and (ii) on the most recent date for which figures are available. [187814]

Angela Smith: In 1994 the Ulster Hospital employed four whole-time equivalent plumbing staff to provide a service to the Ulster Hospital and community facilities in the East Belfast and Castlereagh areas.

The Ulster Hospital and Community HSS Trust currently employs four whole-time equivalent plumbing staff to provide a service to the Ulster Hospital and health and social care facilities in Newtownards and Bangor.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the state of *(a)* plumbing and *(b)* sewers at the Ulster Hospital. [187817]

Angela Smith: The condition of plumbing services and sewage systems in the Ulster Hospital is considered to be in a condition consistent with the age of the buildings.

The redevelopment programme that has commenced at the Ulster Hospital includes the replacement of the existing sewage system and renewal of internal plumbing services.

Universities

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* Protestant, *(b)* Roman Catholic and *(c)* other students domiciled in Northern Ireland commenced university courses in (i) Northern Ireland and (ii) Great Britain in each of the last 10 years. [187812]

Mr. Gardiner: Information on students enrolled at higher education institutions is collected and provided to the Department for Employment and Learning by the Higher Education Statistics Agency. Religion is only recorded for NI domiciled students enrolled at NI higher education institutions. The religion of students enrolled at higher education institutions in GB is not collected.

Religion was first collected in the 1995/96 academic year and the latest information available relates to the 2002/03 academic year. The breakdown of religion for the NI institutions is shown in the table.

NI domiciled first-year students enrolled on courses at Northern Ireland higher education institutions by religion 1994/95 to 2002/03

Academic year	*Protestant*	*Roman Catholic*	*Other*	*Not known/ unavailable*	*Total*
1995/96	995	1,155	73	11,537	13,760
1996/97	925	1,124	54	9,984	12,087
1997/98	3,389	4,528	315	6,497	14,729
1998/99	3,563	4,774	399	6,650	15,386
1999/2000	3,724	5,241	412	5,708	15,085
2000/01	4,627	6,634	509	5,608	17,378
2001/02	4,564	6,148	470	7,116	18,298
2002/03	5,720	7,564	663	4,806	18,753

Figures for 1995/96 to 1999/2000 relate to a snapshot of enrolments at 1 December in the relevant academic year and figures for 2000/01 to 2002/03 relate to a full-year count.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 14 September 2004

HEALTH

Health Service Finance

13. **Mr. Gray:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the debt of *(a)* the Royal United hospital, Bath and *(b)* Kennet and North Wiltshire primary care trust is. [188513]

Ms Rosie Winterton: At the end of the financial year 2003-04, the total owed by Royal United hospitals, Bath as a result of previous years overspends was £24.7 million.

The comparable figure for Kennet and North Wiltshire Primary Care Trust was £3.9 million.

Doctors (North Yorkshire)

14. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of out-of-hours provision by doctors in North Yorkshire since 1 April. [188514]

Mr. Hutton: It is the legal responsibility of primary care trusts to ensure that patients have access to high quality out-of-hours services which are delivered to nationally set quality requirements. The four PCTs North Yorkshire will be entering into an agreement with North Yorkshire Emergency Doctors, an established provider of general practitioner home visiting services for out-of-hours services, later this year.

Obesity

15. **Mr. Amess:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received on the Government's efforts to tackle obesity. [188515]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Representations have been received as part of the Choosing Health, Choosing a Better Diet and Choosing Activity consultations. These responses and the Health Select Committee report on obesity will inform the development of the White Paper on improving health, due to be published later this year.

Primary Care (Out-of-hours Services)

17. **Mr. Swayne:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of arrangements put in place by primary care trusts for out-of-hours services. [188517]

Mr. Hutton: Primary Care Trusts are responsible for commissioning out-of-hours services which are delivered to nationally set quality requirements. Strategic Health Authorities are responsible for performance managing Primary Care Trusts in the delivery of these services.

Diagnostic Equipment

19. **Sir Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to reduce waiting and delivery times for diagnostic equipment. [188519]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service is committed to reducing the length of time that people wait before their treatment starts. By 2008 patients will wait no longer than 18 weeks from general practitioner referral to the start of treatment and this includes access to diagnostics.

Alcohol Strategy

20. **Sue Doughty:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the implementation of his Department's alcohol strategy. [188520]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government's Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy was published on 15 March 2004, meeting the Government's commitment to publish and implement the strategy from 2004. The Sensible-drinking message will be revised by spring next year and an audit of demand for provision of alcohol treatment will be completed by 31 January 2005

Children's Hospices

21. **Mr. Reed:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the guidance he issues to Primary Care Trusts on the funding of children's hospices. [188521]

Dr. Ladyman: Standards for the provision of services for children with life limiting or life threatening illnesses who need palliative care will be issued shortly under the National Service Framework for children and maternity services. Decisions on funding are the responsibility of Primary Care Trusts in line with their assessment of local priorities.

Accident and Emergency Services

22. **Andrew George:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of the demand on accident and emergency services. [188522]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A&E attendance numbers are collected and published quarterly. The latest figures were made available on 27 August. There were a total of 4,502,578 new and follow up attendances at major A&Es, minor injury units and walk-in centres between April and June 2004.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact of the changes introduced by the new general medical services contract on accident and emergency admissions in the out-of-hours period. [186512]

Mr. Hutton: No information has been put forward to date to the Department suggesting the established pattern of when patients arrive at accident and emergency during each day has generally altered following the changes to the general medical services contract. We are, however, monitoring any possible impact of the changes to the contract on A&E closely and will continue to do so.

NHS Administrative Staff

23. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of staff in the national health service is engaged in administration; and what the percentage was 10 years ago. [188523]

Mr. Hutton: Current non-medical workforce figures are not directly comparable with pre-1995 figures. As at September 2003, 19 per cent. of the total NHS workforce were managers and clerical and administrative staff compared with 17 per cent. in 1995. Many administrative and clerical staff work directly to health professionals freeing them up to do their job, such as health care support workers and medical secretaries.

Health and Social Care Act

24. **Dr. Evan Harris:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice he has issued to the NHS about public consultations under sections 7 and 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 in respect of election periods. [188524]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Sections 7 and 11 guidance does not refer specifically to public consultations during election periods. The guidance supporting section 7 makes it clear that the NHS organisation consulting overview and scrutiny committees should agree with them how long the consultation period should last.

Pharmacists

25. **Dr. Starkey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the role of pharmacists in preventive health programmes. [188525]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Pharmacists already contribute to health improvement, including through stopping smoking services, emergency hormonal contraception (EHC) and needle exchange schemes. We will significantly expand this role through the proposed new contractual framework for community pharmacy, underpinned by a pharmaceutical public health strategy due in 2005.

Age-related Macular Degeneration

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on making magnifying equipment more easily available to people who are registered visually impaired with age related macular degeneration; and if he will make a statement. [189038]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have received representation from hon. and right hon. Members and the Royal National Institute of the Blind regarding the provision of closed circuit television (CCTV) readers to help visually impaired people with certain tasks.

The provision of CCTVs and other non-optical aids is a decision that lies with social services departments as they are considered to be aids to daily living. Being registered as visually impaired is not a pre-requisite to receiving services. Social services departments are responsible for assessing an individual's needs and for arranging services to meet those needs; this could include the provision of CCTV. However, hand-held, stand and spectacle-mounted magnifiers are easier to use, more widely available, more accessible and more cost effective.

Encouragement is being given to hospital and social service departments to work more closely together, and perhaps operate a joint budget to allow more flexibility in funding equipment, and provide a wider range of services and equipment than has hitherto been available. The overall level of funding for aids to vision will, however, rest with primary care trusts and local councils.

Community Health Councils

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual running costs for community health councils were in each year from 1997 onwards. [187759]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

	Community health council running costs (£ million)
1997–98	22.561
1998–99	22.561
1999–2000	23
2000–01	23
2001–02	23
2002–03	23
2003–04	15

Eating Disorders

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will estimate the prevalence of eating disorders among *(a)* women and *(b)* men in England; [187867]

(2) how many *(a)* children, *(b)* adolescents and *(c)* adults suffered from eating disorders in each year since 1997, broken down by gender. [187873]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information about the prevalence of eating disorders in adults is not collected centrally.

"The mental health of children and adolescents in Great Britain", a survey carried out by the Office for National Statistics in 1999, found that the prevalence of eating disorders among all children aged five to 15 was 0.1 per cent., and the rate for girls aged five to 15 was 0.2 per cent.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the maximum travelling distance is for patients with eating disorders to specialist health care services. [187872]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not collected centrally about the travelling distances that may be involved when patients are referred for treatment for specialist treatment.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what provision there is for specialist treatment for eating disorders in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [187874]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not centrally available.

People with eating disorders can access mental health services in and through primary care. Details of services available locally can be obtained from strategic health authorities.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum waiting time for (i) outpatient and (ii) inpatient treatment for eating disorders has been in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [187875]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the requested format.

Foundation Trusts Regulator

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total expenditure was on the rebranding of the Independent Regulator for Foundation Trusts as Monitor. [187856]

Mr. Hutton: I understand from the chairman of Monitor that the total costs of the design work for the development and implementation of the Monitor brand was £24,465, excluding VAT.

The total costs includes £8,200 on re-branding and enhancing the website and £3,000 on the application of the new design to letterhead business cards and presentation material. Monitor timed the introduction of its new name to coincide with its relocation to new offices thereby minimising the additional expenditure required.

General Practitioners

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners there were in the London Borough of Havering in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004; and what the figures are for all other London boroughs. [187730]

Mr. Hutton: The number of general practitioners broken down by boroughs is not collected centrally. However, the tables show the number of GPs broken down by strategic health authority and primary care trust.

General medical practitioners (excluding retainers, registrars and locums) for London by strategic health authority (SHA)

Numbers (headcount)

		1997	*March 2004*
London SHA		4,324	4,676
North West London	Q04	1,164	1157
North Central London	Q05	744	795
North East London	Q06	849	926
South East London	Q07	833	974
South West London	Q08	734	824

Note:
All practitioners (excluding retainers, registrars and locums) include general medical service (QMS) unrestricted principals, personal medical service (PMS) contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other and flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners. Data as at 1 October 1997 and 31 March 2004.

Source:
Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

General medical practitioners (excluding retainers, registrars and locums) for London by strategic health authority (SHA) and primary care trust (PCT)

Numbers (headcount)

London, as at 31 March 2004		*General medical practitioners (excluding retainers, registrars and locums)* [1]
London		4,676
Q05	North Central London	795
5A9	Barnet PCT	234
5K7	Camden PCT	139
5C1	Enfield PCT	151
5C9	Haringey PCT	143
5K8	Islington PCT	128
Q06	North East London	926
5C2	Barking and Dagenham PCT	80
5C3	City and Hackney PCT	156
5A4	Havering PCT	124
5C5	Newham PCT	171
5NA	Redbridge PCT	121
5C4	Tower Hamlets PCT	135
5NC	Waltham Forest PCT	139
Q04	North West London	1,157
5K5	Brent PCT	194
5HX	Ealing PCT	193
5H1	Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	96
5K6	Harrow PCT	140
5AT	Hillingdon PCT	140
5HY	Hounslow PCT	129
5LA	Kensington and Chelsea PCT	113
5LC	Westminster PCT	152
Q07	South East London	974
5AX	Bexley Ct	120
5A7	Bromley PCT	193
5A8	Greenwich PCT	131
5LD	Lambeth PCT	203
5LF	Lewisham PCT	164
5LE	Southwark PCT	163
Q08	South West London	824
5K9	Croydon PCT	197
5A5	Kingston PCT	103
5M6	Richmond and Twickenham PCT	114
5M7	Sutton and Merton PCT	211
5LG	Wandsworth PCT	199

[1] All practitioners (excluding retainers, registrars and locums) include general medical service (QMS) unrestricted principals, personal medical service (PMS) contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other and flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

Source:
Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he proposes to make a draft order on the Regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture: Proposals for statutory regulation for consultation; and when he proposes to lay the draft order before Parliament; [187484]

(2) how many responses he has received to the Regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture: Proposals for statutory regulation; and how many were *(a)* in favour of and *(b)* against his Department's proposals for collaborative regulation; [187485]

(3) if he will publish the results of the consultation on the Regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture: Proposals for statutory regulation. [187486]

Mr. Hutton: On 2 March, I published proposals for the statutory regulation of herbal medicine and acupuncture practitioners. The consultation period closed on 7 June. An analysis of the responses to the consultation will be published in the autumn. I plan to publish draft legislation for further consultation in 2005.

In all, about 700 responses have been received, of which 255 expressed a view about the proposals for collaborative regulation. Of these responses, 93 agreed with the proposals in the consultative document and 162 disagreed. In addition I received over 200 letters as part of a write-in campaign specifically expressing concern about the proposals for collaborative regulation.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to set a target for reducing MRSA infections. [188516]

Mr. Hutton: Yes. We published details of this target on 21 July 2004.

King's College Hospital

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes have been introduced to improve the *(a)* hygiene of wards, *(b)* speed of response of staff when called by patients, *(c)* provision of cold water, *(d)* availability of ice cubes, *(e)* regularity with which bedding is changed, *(f)* cleanliness of toilets, *(g)* availability of plain food for patients and *(h)* prevention of acquisition and spread of MRSA in King's College Hospital, London, since 29 June. [187816]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not held centrally.

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on hospital waiting times for patients diagnosed with myasthenia gravis. [188629]

Mr. Hutton: Waiting times data are collected by consultant specialty and not for specific conditions. Specialty level data would include various conditions as well as myasthenia gravis disorders. Therefore it is not possible to determine the waits for myasthenia gravis.

NHS Dentistry

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in the London borough of Wandsworth provide NHS treatment; what the number was in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [187607]

Mr. Hutton: The number of practices providing general dental service in Wandsworth Primary Care Trust (PCT) area between 1999 and 2004 is shown in the following table.

Number of general dental practices in Wandsworth PCT area at 30 September 1999 to 2003 and 30 June 2004

	Number
1999	70
2000	69
2001	68
2002	67
2003	61
2004	59

Notes:
1. The number of practices in the PCT area have been estimated from practice postcodes information.
2. Some patients in the Wandsworth PCT area will attend dentists in other areas.

Source:
Dental Practice Board.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints he received regarding the availability of NHS dentistry in the London Borough of Havering for *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004; and what the figures are for all other London boroughs. [187727]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally. Local trusts, in partnership with their health community, have responsibility for local services and the support systems which they have put in place and a corresponding responsibility to improve upon these. It is, therefore, appropriate that they investigate complaints and respond accordingly.

However, Ministers received a total of 19 letters on dental access from the London area in the period from 1 January 2004 to the present.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists were operating in the London Borough of Havering in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004; and what the figures are for all other London boroughs. [187731]

Mr. Hutton: The numbers of general and personal dental service dentists in Havering Primary Care Trust (PCT) area and for all other London PCTs at June 1997 and June 2004 are shown in the table.

National health service: Number of dentists in London PCTs at June 1997 and June 2004

PCT	1997	2004
Havering	87	111
Barking and Dagenham	50	57
Barnet	181	208
Bexley Care Trust	94	95
Brent	157	169
Bromley	147	177
Camden	147	165
City and Hackney	99	94
Croydon	170	189
Ealing	200	191
Enfield	117	154
Greenwich	95	114
Hammersmith and Fulham	121	150
Haringey	124	144
Harrow	106	128
Hillingdon	105	127
Hounslow	139	149
Islington	92	119

National health service: Number of dentists in London PCTs at June 1997 and June 2004

PCT	1997	2004
Kensington and Chelsea	83	82
Kingston	68	81
Lambeth	130	141
Lewisham	116	127
Newham	82	97
Redbridge	105	144
Richmond and Twickenham	98	112
Southwark	110	99
Sutton and Merton	174	190
Tower Hamlets	72	93
Waltham Forest	80	99
Wandsworth	150	159
Westminster	204	193

Source:
Dental Practice Board.

Dentists are counted in each PCT in which they practice.

NHS Information Technology

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 29 July 2004, ref.185963, on NHS IT, if he will publish a summary of the recommendations of the Gateway review. [187890]

Mr. Hutton: I have no current plans to do so. The considerations of confidentiality attaching to Gateway reviews apply equally to any recommendations they may contain.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what reviews his Department has undertaken into the financial viability of *(a)* contractors and *(b)* sub-contractors of companies working on the NHS National Programme for Information Technology; [187360]

(2) if the Department will ask Accenture to report on the *(a)* financial standing and *(b)* accounting treatment of revenues and profits at iSoft. [187361]

Mr. Hutton: It is a standard precautionary business practice to commission financial and market assessments of prospective business partners. In addition to the financial evaluation of companies as pare of the Official Journal of the European Union competitive process, all organisations tendering to become prime contractors of the national programme for information technology, and relevant sub-contractors, were subjected to financial and market assessments before contractual arrangement were entered into. This was undertaken by specialist advisers; themselves and selected by competitive process.

The Department has no current plans separately to ask Accenture for a report specifically on the financial standing of its subcontractor iSoft, or on the accounting treatment of revenues and profits by the company. These are matters between iSoft and its auditors.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Department has inquired as to why iSoft has suspended one of its executive directors. [187359]

Mr. Hutton: We are aware from press reports that iSoft has recently suspended one of its executive directors and anticipate that a further announcement will be made by the company following the completion of its internal investigations. We do not regard it as the business of the Department to inquire into the circumstances of the suspension. This is a matter for the company to resolve with the director concerned.

NHS Pension Scheme

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes are proposed to the NHS pension scheme; and how many existing contributing members to the scheme there are in each *(a)* region and *(b)* county. [188719]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Confederation is leading a review of the National Health Service Pension Scheme, in partnership with the NHS Pensions Agency, the National Assembly for Wales, the Department of Health and the NHS Trade Unions. The review has made good progress but formal proposals have not yet been finalised. The aim is to have proposals ready for consultation by the end of autumn.

The NHS Pension Scheme currently has over 1.1 million contributing members. Unfortunately, it is not possible, due to the way in which the NHS Pensions Agency holds its data, to identify the geographical profile of the membership.

NHS Register of Interests

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to initiate a register of interests for NHS medical practitioners to declare *(a)* shares in, *(b)* gifts from and *(c)* other interests in pharmaceutical companies. [187519]

Mr. Hutton: All national health service staff are already required to declare interests, gifts and sponsorship which might be seen to compromise their position on local registers. The Department last reviewed this in 2002 and considers the current arrangements to be adequate.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what systems are in place to monitor the amount of drugs prescribed to NHS patients which have been donated by pharmaceutical companies as promotional material. [187520]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The supply of samples by pharmaceutical companies is regulated under the Medicines (Advertising) Regulations 1994. These stipulate that a free sample must be of the smallest pack of a medicine available for sale, that it may only be provided to a prescriber in response to a written request and that it should be clearly labelled as a promotional sample not for resale. We expect primary care trusts to act on any local evidence that promotional material is being misused.

Non-clinical NHS Jobs

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many new non-clinical jobs have been created within the NHS since 1997; [186870]

(2) if he will make a statement on the role of NHS staff in non-clinical posts in improving the health of NHS patients. [186871]

Mr. Hutton: Non-clinical staff perform vital functions within the national health service and make an important contribution to the delivery of healthcare and will continue to do so as the clinical NHS workforce increases. Many of them work directly to support clinicians, leaving them free to work with patients. Others working in NHS infrastructure support perform essential and unavoidable tasks, such as cleaning, paying staff, ordering supplies and recruitment.

Between 1997 and 2003, the number of clinical staff and staff working in direct support to clinical staff has increased by 195,059 and the number of staff working in infrastructure support has increased by 29,185.

Nurse Consultants

Dame Marion Roe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has met the NHS Plan target of 1,000 nurse consultants employed in the NHS. [186962]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 7 September 2004]:* Latest figures indicate that, as at December 2003, 870 nurse consultant posts had been approved in the national health service. Responsibility for monitoring progress against this target has now passed to strategic health authorities.

Oldchurch Hospital

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints he received regarding Oldchurch Hospital in the London Borough of Havering for *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004; and what the figures are for all other London hospitals. [187728]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Local trusts, in partnership with their health community, have responsibility for local services and the support systems, which they have put in place, and a corresponding responsibility to improve upon these. It is therefore appropriate that they investigate complaints and respond accordingly.

Osteoporosis Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what studies he has received of osteoporosis services in other EU countries. [186143]

Dr. Ladyman: No such studies have been received. However, we understand that "Osteoporosis in the European—Members States Policy Progress Report and Action Plan" is due to be posted on the European Commission website for access to all member states.

Passive Smoking

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the Government's public health priorities in relation to passive smoking. [188518]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We have completed a major national public consultation on the best ways to improve people's health, including what can be done to tackle secondhand smoke.

We are considering the many responses we have received. These will inform the White Paper on improving health that will be published later this year.

Patient Environment and Assessment Teams

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the months in which Patient Environment and Assessment Team inspections have taken place in each year since inspections began. [187408]

Mr. Hutton: Since its inception in 2000, there have been five rounds of patient environment action team assessments, with additional visits to some hospitals in the summer of 2001. Details of when those visits took place are shown in the table.

Patient environment action team assessments

	From	*To*
2000	August	October
2001	January	March
2001	August	September
2002	January	May
2002	November	May 2003
2003	December	May 2004

Postgraduate Medical Students

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assistance is available to postgraduate medical trainees for expenses on *(a)* text books, *(b)* medical equipment and *(c)* examination fees; and if he will make a statement. [187764]

Mr. Hutton: Postgraduate medical trainees are usually salaried employees of the national health service. As such, they do not receive specific help with their textbooks, equipment and examination fees. They do have access to postgraduate centres and libraries. They also have access to funded study leave, which enables postgraduate trainees to access specific courses and programmes, which enhance the training they receive through the NHS. Much of the equipment they will use is of course available through their employers. Trainees should have access either to standard texts and/or to the internet within the workplace.

St. Helens and Knowsley Hospital Trust

Mr Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for accident and emergency department services in St Helens and Knowsley Hospital Trust was for each year from 1997 to 2004. [184619]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected; information is collected for the percentage of patients spending four hours or less in accident and emergency departments from arrival to discharge, admission or transfer. The latest information available is shown in the table.

Total time spent in A&E from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge. National Health Service organisations in England, 2003–04, January to March (quarter 4)

					Major A&E (type 1 only)		All A&E (All WiC (Type 1,2,3)	
Year	Quarter	Strategic health authority	Organisation identifier	Name	Total attendances	Percentage of patients who spent less than four hours in A&E	Total attendances	Percentage of patients who spent less than four hours in A&E
2003–04	4			England	3,059,698	90.6	4,009,142	92.7
2003–04	4	Q15	RBN	St. Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust	21,140	88.0	25,680	90

Source:
Department of Health dataset QMAE
Status: Published 16 July 2004

Working Time Directive

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action can be taken in the domestic courts against NHS Trusts that fail to comply with the Working Time Directive. [187407]

Mr. Hutton: Individuals may take a case to an employment tribunal where the employer has failed to let them exercise their entitlement to daily and weekly rest, including compensatory rest.

Complaints can also be raised with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in relation to individuals having to work in excess of the maximum working week. As a result of investigating the trust, the Health and Safety Executive is likely to serve improvement notices where claims are upheld. Further action beyond this, including possible criminal proceedings in the lower or magistrate's court, depends on actions taken by the employer in response to the notice served.

In addition, individuals may take a case to a county court in instances where there has been a breach of contract, for example, where they have been made to work over the averaged hours limit or where an employer has failed in his/her duty of care.

TREASURY

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188210]

(2) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188211]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Foreign Secretary dated 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1451W.

Crown Estate

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value of applications made to the Crown Estate's Research Committee for research proposals has been for the financial year 2004–05; how many applications have been made for funding; what the total value of research funding allocated is for the financial year 2004–05; and how many applications for research funding in 2004–05 have been successful.[185971]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 22 July 2004]*: Since September 2003, The Crown Estate Fish Farming Research Committee has become part of the independent Scottish Aquaculture Research Forum (SARF). The Crown Estate has committed £100,000 per annum to SARF for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Additional marine based research funding is also available from The Crown Estate. This includes other aquaculture funding, the offshore research fund, the marine stewardship fund, and the renewables and communities fund. The Crown Estate expects to spend around £650,000 on these projects for the year 2004–05.

For the financial year 2004–05, 32 applications (17 of which were not costed) have been received for the marine stewardship fund. Three have been successful and a further seven are still under consideration. Two applications have been made for aquaculture projects, of which one has been successful and the other is under consideration. Three applications have been made for marine aggregate research projects, of which one has been successful and the other two are under consideration. Finally, two applications have been made to the renewables and community fund and are still under consideration.

Day Memberships

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) when he will announce the results of the consultation on his plans to amend the gift aid rules on day memberships; [187948]

(2) pursuant to his answer of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1350–351W, on gift aid, for what reasons an announcement on the results of the consultation on his plans to amend the gift aid rules on day memberships was not made at around the time of the 2004 Spending Review. [188253]

John Healey: The consultation period ended on 11 June. We are evaluating the responses to that consultation and will announce the results in due course.

Departmental Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if he will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188687]

Mr. Timms: It is the policy of the Treasury to recycle all waste paper and card. The figures for the period 1 September 2003 to 31 August 2004 were 160,820 kg of paper, and 10,420 kg of cardboard.

Eating Disorders

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths there were of patients suffering from eating disorders, broken down by *(a)* age and *(b)* gender, in each year since 1997. [187870]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Paul Burstow, dated 14 September 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths there were of patients suffering from eating disorders, broken down by *(a)* age and *(b)* gender, in each year since 1997. (187870)

Information is not available in the exact form requested. However, figures are available on:

(1) hospital admissions for patients diagnosed with eating disorders (not necessarily as the primary diagnosis) and where the discharge method was death;

(2) deaths where an eating disorder was mentioned on the death certificate.

This information is given in the attached tables for the years 1997 to 2002.

Table 1: Finished Consultant Episodes (FCE's)[1, 2] with death as method of discharge and eating disorders[3] mentioned as a diagnosis, by sex and broad age group, 1997–98 to 2002–03, NHS Hospitals in, England[4]

Group	1997–98	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Male						
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0	0
15–44	*	*	*	0	*	*
45–64	*	*	*	0	*	*
65+	10	10	11	15	9	14
Male Total	14	13	18	15	12	16
Female						
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0	0
15–44	20	*	*	7	15	21
45–64	9	*	*	12	7	12
65+	37	22	28	30	34	32
Female Total	66	34	43	49	56	65

* Small number (Figures between 1 and 5, with secondary suppression to avoid disclosure by differencing) have been suppressed to protect patient confidentiality.

[1] An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. The figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within a year.

[2] These figures represent a count of all FCEs where the diagnosis was mentioned in any of the 14 (7 prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in a Hospital Episodes Statistics record.

[3] International Classification of Diseases Tenth Revision (ICD-10) code F50

[4] Figures are grossed for coverage, except for 2002/03 which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, Department of Health

Table 2: Number of deaths where an eating disorder[1] was mentioned on the death certificate, by sex and broad age group, England and Wales, 1997–2002[2]

Age group	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Male						
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0	0
15–44	2	2	5	4	1	0
45–64	1	2	4	1	1	1
65 plus	5	6	6	2	7	1
Male total	8	10	15	7	9	2
Female						
Under 15	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2: Number of deaths where an eating disorder[1] was mentioned on the death certificate, by sex and broad age group, England and Wales, 1997–2002[2]

Age group	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
15–44	23	10	19	13	17	26
45–64	11	4	5	15	8	9
65 plus	11	17	17	24	18	17
Female total	45	31	41	52	43	52

[1] Cause of death was defined using ICD-9 codes 307.1 and 307.5 for 1997–2000, and ICD-10 code F50 for 2001–2002. Figures coded to different revisions of the ICD are not completely comparable.
[2] Figures are based on deaths occurring in 1997–2002.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Endowment Mortgage Mis-selling

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of people who are eligible to claim compensation for the mis-selling of endowment mortgages; and what proportion of those who have claimed have been successful. [188662]

Mr. Timms: Given the passage of time since the majority of endowment policies were sold and the lack of contemporaneous records of the advice given at the time, it is difficult to be certain of the number of consumers who may have been mis-sold their policy. The Government supports moves by the FSA to take forward a programme of research to form a better understanding of the numbers of endowment policies facing shortfalls. The FSA had received a total of 452,201 complaints on this subject by 31 March 2004. Information provided by the FSA indicates that the proportion of consumer complaints upheld by firms is now approximately 60 per cent. in favour of consumers, and from those complaints reaching the Financial Ombudsman Service, the figure for cases decided in favour of the consumer is 42 per cent.

Environmentally Sustainable Economic Activity

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the growth rate has been in environmentally sustainable economic activity in each year since 1997; [188164]

(2) if he will make a statement on *(a)* the performance of environmental investments funds as an indicator of the strength of environmentally sustainable economic activity and *(b)* the success of Government policies for promoting environmentally sustainable economic activity. [188165]

John Healey: The Government are committed to developing and implementing policies that will simultaneously deliver social, economic and environmental progress. We do not separately measure the growth rate in 'environmentally sustainable economic activity' but in 1999 we established a set of 15 headline indicators and a wider set of core indicators to provide a baseline against which progress on sustainable development could be measured. Economic, social and environmental indicators are included and are reported on in the "Achieving A Better Quality of Life" annual reports. The indicators are being reviewed as part of the review of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Government welcome innovation in investment products to meet the needs of their clients' preferences, of which environmental investment funds are one option.

EU Budget

Ann Winterton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his projection is of the percentage of gross domestic product the UK will pay to the European Union budget under the post-2006 financial settlement. [188798]

Mr. Timms: The new Financial Perspective for the period from January 2007 will not be agreed by member states before next year. The Government's latest forecast of UK net contributions to the EC Budget, which covers the period to 2007–08, was included in a footnote to Table A1 of the Statistical Annex to the 2004 Spending Review (Cm 6237) published on 12 July 2004. This forecast is used for public expenditure planning purposes and assumes an appropriately uprated roll forward of the status quo. It is without prejudice to the Government's assessment of the likely outcome of the negotiations on the new financial perspective.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made towards an IMF programme for Iraq. [188347]

John Healey: The Iraqi authorities are currently engaged in regular and ongoing discussions with the IMF on a possible programme for Iraq.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to assist economic reform in Iraq. [188348]

John Healey: The UK aims to support economic reform in Iraq in the short term by working towards rapid agreement on an IMF programme, and by securing agreement in the Paris Club to write off the vast majority of Iraq's foreign debt by the end of the year. The UK will continue to support the efforts of the Iraqi authorities to develop a sustainable, stable and appropriate fiscal and monetary framework for Iraq, and to develop and implement policies to achieve and sustain rapid growth, high employment and poverty reduction.

Leasehold Property Sales

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to permit Muslims to buy

leasehold property on the same or similar basis to freehold within the provisions in the Budget to prevent double stamp duty and allow purchases without payment of interest as a consequence. [188013]

Mr. Timms: The Government want to see consumers benefit from a wide choice and innovation in the financial services market. The Finance Act 2003 introduced two reliefs (s72 and s73) for purchases funded by "alternative property financing", which enables individuals to finance a property without paying interest. The combined effect of these reliefs is to place the amount of stamp duty land tax due when purchasing property using these arrangements on a level footing with the amount due on the purchase of property when using 'conventional' mortgage products. This will remove a significant barrier to the development of alternative property financing, thus benefiting a range of consumers with increased choice in the mortgage market.

The legislation does not discriminate between freehold and leasehold properties, so both can be purchased using alternative property financing without a greater quantity of stamp duty being incurred than under a conventional mortgage.

National Debt

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* the value and *(b)* the interest paid on the national debt has been in each year since 1990. [188953]

Mr. Timms: The measure used in this Government's sustainable' investment rule and in international comparisons of debt is Public Sector Net Debt as a percentage of GDP.

Figures for public sector net debt and central Government debt interest payments in current prices are available on the Office for National Statistics website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/tsdtables1.asp?vlnk=fsf. Table 1.1A: Public Sector Finances (series RUTN and RUTO) shows figures for public sector net debt in £ billion and as a percentage of GDP. Table 1.1C: Central Government (series NMFX) shows debt interest payments in £ billions. No data is available for debt interest payments by local authorities or public corporations.

Staff Recruitment

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* set retirement age applying to all or most personnel and *(b)* maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered is in (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies. [186372]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is available in the following table:

Department/Agency	*(a) Set retirement age*	*(a) Maximum retirement age*	*(b) Maximum age employment applications considered*
HM Treasury	Age 60	Age 60	Age 59
Valuation Office	Age 60	Age 65	Age 64
Royal Mint	Age 60	Age 65	Permanent application up to age 59, Casual applications up to age 64
Debt Management Office	Age 60	Age 70	Age 60 unless there is a business justification for an older person
National Savings and Investments	Age 60	None	None—Age, like other diversity data is not considered as part of NSI's selection criteria which is purely role related.
Office National Statistics	Age 65	Age 65	Age 64 right up until 65th Birthday
Government Actuaries Dept.	Age 60	None	GAD currently does not operate a maximum age limit requirement.
Inland Revenue	Age 60	Age 65	None up to Age 65
Office of Government Commerce	[1]Age 60	[1]None	None up to retirement age
HM Customs and Excise	[2]—	[2]—	Age 65.

[1] OGC buying solutions retirement age is currently 65 for Ban 1 (Administrative Officer equivalent) staff and 60 for all other staff. However as with OGC normal staff, consideration would be given to staff working beyond this, subject to business needs.
[2] In HM Customs and Excise the set (maximum) retirement age is:
60 for staff at Bands 7 (HEO equivalent) and above, of which there were 7,877 in post (on 1 July 2004);
62 for staff at Bands 5 and 6 (EO equivalent), of which there were 8,143 in post and in post; and
65 for staff at Band 4 (AO equivalent) and below, of which there were 7,182 in post.

Stamp Duty

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue implication of restructuring stamp duty on residential property sales to charge marginal rates of *(a)* 0 per cent. on property sales of £120,000 or less, 3 per cent. on sales between £120,000 and £249,999, 4 per cent. on sales between £250,000 and £499,999 and 8 per cent. on sales of £500,000 and above, *(b)* 0 per cent. on property sales up to £100,000, 3 per cent. on sales between £100,000 and £249,999, 5 per cent. on sales between £250,000 and £499,999 and 8 per cent. on sales of £500,000 and above, *(c)* 0 per cent. on property sales up to £100,000, 2 per cent. on sales between £100,000 and £249,999, 5 per cent. on sales between £250,000 and £499,999 and 8 per cent. on sales of £500,000 or above, *(d)* 0 per cent. on property sales up to £110,000, 3 per cent. on sales between £110,000 and £249,999, 5 per cent. on sales between £250,000 and £499,999 and 8 per cent. on sales of £500,000 and *(e)* 0 per cent. sales up to £110,000, 2 per cent. on sales between £110,000 and £249,999, 5 per cent. on sales between £249,999 and £499,999, 8 per cent. on sales of £500,000 or above. [188011]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: The estimated revenue cost, in 2005–06, of restructuring stamp duty on residential property sales according to the five schemes described in the question is given in the following tables:

	Tax regime 1 Marginal rates
Price of residential property	
£0-£119,999 (percentage)	0
£120,000-£249,999 (percentage)	3
£250,000-£499,999 (percentage)	4
£500,000 and above (percentage)	8
Revenue cost (£ million)	690

	Tax regime 2 Marginal rates	*Tax regime 3 Marginal rates*
Price of residential property		
£0-£99,999 (percentage)	0	0
£100,000-£249,999 (percentage)	3	2%
£250,000-£499,999 (percentage)	5	5
£500,000 and above (percentage)	8	8
Revenue cost (£ million)	-60	690

	Tax regime 4 Marginal rates	*Tax regime 5 Marginal rates*
Price of residential property		
£0-£109,999 (percentage)	0	0
£110,000-£249,993 (percentage)	3	2
£250,000-£499,999 (percentage)	5	5
£500,000 above (percentage)	8	8
Revenue cost (£ million)	190	860

This does not include any allowance for behavioural changes.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in which neighbourhoods in Newcastle exemptions and remissions of stamp duty apply; what the value of the exemptions and remissions so far granted has been; and whether the boundaries of the neighbourhoods will be revised in the light of the new index of multiple deprivation. [188711]

Mr. Timms: The list of wards in Newcastle which qualify for deprived areas relief are Walker, Monkchester, Elswick, West City, Byker, Scotswood, Benwell, Woolsington, Moorside, Fawdon, Blakelaw, Kenton, Wingroye, Fenham, Newburn, Walkergate and Denton.

The value of relief given in the listed Newcastle wards between inception of the relief at the end of November 2001, and the end of March 2004, is estimated at around £4 million.

There will be no changes to the qualifying areas before December 2006.

Tax Credits

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* the current financial year to date have been overpaid tax credits; what proportion of the cases of overpayment were due to error by the Inland Revenue; and in what proportion of the cases the Inland Revenue has attempted to recover overpayments. [188243]

Dawn Primarolo: The total number of *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* current financial year awards that are overpaid will be available only when all the awards for the years in question are finalised.

Unoccupied Young People

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in the Tamworth constituency aged between 16 and 24 years were both economically inactive and not in further or higher education *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* in the latest year available. [188096]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Brian Jenkins, dated 14 September 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about economic inactivity in the Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency. I am replying in his absence. (188096)

Estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the twelve months periods ending February 2003 show that there were over 12 thousand residents aged 16–24 in private households in the Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency. Of these, around 10 thousand were not in full-time education and of that figure, fewer than 2 thousand were economically inactive.

The corresponding figures for the 12 months ending February 1997 showed that out of a total of just under 11 thousand 16–24 year olds, nearly 9 thousand were not in full-time education and, of these, less than 2 thousand were economically inactive.

These estimates are based on small sample sizes and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in the Bridgwater constituency aged between 16 and 24 years are both economically inactive and not in further or higher education. [186501]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Ian Liddell-Grainger, dated 14 September 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about economic inactivity. (186501)

Estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the twelve months ending May 2003 show that there were 9,000 residents in private households aged 16 to 24 in the Bridgwater Parliamentary Constituency. Of these, 6,000 were not in full-time education and, among those, fewer than 1,000 were economically inactive.

These estimates are based on small sample sizes and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Worker:Pensioner Ratio

Denzil Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the ratio of workers to pensioners in the *(a)* United Kingdom, *(b)* each region of England, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Wales. [188129]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Denzil Davies, dated 14 September 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the ratio of workers to pensioners in *(a)* the United Kingdom, *(b)* each region of England, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Wales. I am replying in his absence. (188129)

The attached table gives the estimated ratios of people in employment to the population estimates above pension age by gender and region for the three months ending August 2003.

These ratios have been calculated by dividing the estimated employed population aged 16 and over, obtained from the ONS Labour Force Survey (LFS), by the estimated populations of men aged 65 and over and of women aged 60 and over.

Ratio of people in employment to estimates of population above pension age[1] by gender and Government office regions: summer (June to August) 2003 not seasonally adjusted

	Total	*Male*	*Female*
England	2.6	3.8	1.9
North East	2.2	3.2	1.6
North West (inc Merseyside)	2.4	3.6	1.8
Yorkshire and Humberside	2.5	3.7	1.8
East Midlands	2.5	3.7	1.9
West Midlands	2.5	3.6	1.8
Eastern	2.5	3.7	1.9
London	3.3	5.1	2.3
South-East	2.6	3.8	1.9
South West	2.2	3.2	1.7
Wales	2.2	3.2	1.7
Scotland	2.5	3.8	1.8
Northern Ireland	2.7	4.3	1.8
United Kingdom	2.5	3.7	1.8

[1] Pension age is defined as women aged 60 plus and men aged 65 plus. Ratio was calculated as people in employment divided by number of people above pension age.

Source:
ONS—Labour Force Survey
ONS—Population Estimates

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AIDS/HIV

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to ensure that AIDS/HIV prevention is given a high priority during the UK presidency of the *(a)* G8 and *(b)* EU. [187465]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Government's strategy on AIDS "Taking Action: The UK's strategy for tackling HIV and AIDS in the developing world", published in July, signals that HIV and AIDS, with a special focus on Africa, will be a centrepiece for our Presidencies of both the G8 and of the EU in 2005. DFID is currently developing ideas about how best to use our G8 and EU Presidencies to promote accelerated international action on HIV and AIDS.

DFID is working closely with the other countries that hold the EU Presidency during this period (including Ireland, who hosted an important meeting on new HIV prevention technologies during their Presidency) and the European Commission to ensure that the European contribution to preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS is as effective as possible.

Chechnya

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial and *(b)* humanitarian assistance Russia has received from the UK in relation to the recent terrorist atrocities in Beslan. [188296]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Following a crisis, DFID assesses whether needs can be met within a country before deciding to respond. To date there has been no specific funding request to DFID relating to the terrible events in Beslan, largely because needs seem to have been adequately met by resources within the country. Indeed, agencies such as the World Food Programme, the World Health Organisation, the United Nations Children Fund and the Red Cross who responded to needs in Beslan, have recently received support from DFID for their programme in the region.

DFID has a long-standing programme of humanitarian assistance in the North Caucasus. Last year DFID channelled approximately £3.5 million largely through United Nations agencies and the International Confederation of the Red Cross to meet immediate humanitarian and protection needs.

Burma

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with the International Labour Organisation about breaches of its standards by the Government of Burma. [188339]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The UK plays an active part in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and fully supports its efforts to end the use of forced labour in Burma. DFID's embassy in Rangoon maintains regular contact with the ILO liaison office there. The EU has repeatedly condemned Burma's lack of progress on forced labour, most recently on 5 June, at the International Labour Conference in Geneva. The EU issued a statement at the ILO's Governing Body in March. The ILO will consider what progress Burma has made at its Governing Body meeting in November.

CDC/Actis Capital

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether CDC investments qualify as bilateral aid. [189061]

Hilary Benn: I confirm that CDC investments still qualify as bilateral aid and full details of these investments are set out in Table 7 of Statistics on International Development, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Departmental Buildings (Lost and Stolen Property)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the items that his Department has reported to the police as lost or stolen from his Department's buildings or property in the United Kingdom and overseas since 1997. [188319]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The number of items reported lost or stolen to the police in the UK and overseas is as set out. Information for 1997 is not readily available and could not be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

	Item	*Quantity*
1998	Laptop	1
1998	Computers	10
1998	Laptop	1
2000	Vehicle	1
2001	Telephones	3
2001	Colour printer	1
2001	Laser printers	2
2001	Scanners	2
2001	Fax machine	1
2001	Laptop	1
2001	Vehicle	1
2002	Video camera	1
2002	Vehicle	1
2002	Vehicle	1
2002	Laptop	1
2002	Laptops	2
2002	Vehicle	1
2002	Laptop	1
2002	Laptop	1
2002	Digital camera	1
2002	Laptop and projector	1
2002	Building materials	1
2002	Laptop and projector	1
2003	Laptop	3
2003	Laptops	1
2003	Laptop	1
2003	Laptop	1
2004	Laptop	1
2004	Laptop	1
2004	Digital camera	1

Departmental Costs

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on replacing light bulbs in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement on energy efficiency in his Department's buildings in the UK and overseas. [188330]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID spent £4,311 in its London offices on replacement light bulbs during 2003–04. No information is available for our East Kilbride offices, as it is currently being refurbished and the lighting system is therefore being replaced. Information on expenditure on light bulbs in our overseas offices is not centrally available and could not be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

DFID is committed to implementing the standards set out in the Government's Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. The recent refurbishments of our UK offices have given us the opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of our buildings, for instance with installation of Building Management Systems which allow us to monitor and manage energy usage to a much greater extent than in the past.

The design for the refurbishment of our East Kilbride office has received an "excellent" rating under the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM); for instance, DFID has installed energy efficient heating systems, and also lighting systems which are movement sensitive and take account of natural lighting levels. Through our green awareness programme DFID is encouraging overseas offices to consider the implementation of similar energy efficiency measures wherever appropriate.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money his Department has spent on *(a)* opinion polling and *(b)* focus groups in each year since 1997. [188332]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In 1998, DFID commissioned Opinion Leader Research (OLR) to undertake baseline focus group research among the UK public. In 2003, DFID commissioned OLR to undertake further focus group research to explore ways of increasing understanding and support for international development in the UK. DFID also commissions two annual opinion polls on public attitudes to development. One poll, undertaken by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), monitors the opinion of the UK adult population, and the second, undertaken by Market and Opinion Research International (MORI), monitors the opinion of schoolchildren. In 1999, we also undertook a readership survey of "Developments" magazine, in order to test its impact and reach. The results of the focus group research and the opinion polls are used to inform, and monitor the impact of, our work on development awareness and education.

The annual cost of focus group research and opinion polls is detailed in the following table:

Year	*Focus groups*	*Cost (£)*	*Opinion polls*	*Cost (£)*	*Total (£)*
1997–98	OLR Baseline Study	43,000	—	—	43,000
1998–99	—	—	—	—	—
1999–2000	—	—	ONS Poll	28,200	44,704
	—	—	MORI Poll	14,700	
	—	—	Developments Survey	1,804	
2000–01	—	—	ONS Poll	33,000	47,629
	—	—	MORI Poll	14,629	

Year	Focus groups	Cost (£)	Opinion polls	Cost (£)	Total (£)
2001-02	—	—	ONS Poll	34,300	45,815
			MORI Poll	11,515	
2002-03	—	—	ONS Poll	31,880	43,395
			MORI Poll	11,515	
2003-04	OLR Research	50,309	ONS Poll	32,990	95,519
			MORI Poll	12,220	
2004-05	OLR Research	—	ONS Poll	36,120	To be confirmed
			MORI Poll	To be agreed	To be confirmed

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the equivalent monetary cost of theft from his Department was in each year since 1997, broken down by (*a*) United Kingdom locations and (*b*) overseas offices. [188333]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The cost to DFID, in pounds, of items reported stolen is as set out. Information for 1997 is not readily available and could not be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

£

	United Kingdom	Overseas
1998	3,111	16,357
1999	0	0
2000	111	24,319
2001	203	6,472
2002	10,595	29,797
2003	10	2,674
2004	0	2,192

Departmental Mobile Phones

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many mobile phones owned by his Department have been reported lost or stolen since 1997. [188331]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Within the Department for International Development, 28 mobile phones have been reported lost or stolen since 1997.

Departmental Satellite and Cable Subscriptions

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost was of satellite and cable subscriptions in his Department's buildings in the UK and overseas in each year since 1997; and if he will list the premium channels to which his Department subscribes. [188328]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID subscribes to the Parliamentary TV System to allow access to the Parliamentary Annunciator System, the Division Bell and Commons and Lords TV channels in the UK. Other services and channels are included in the package: these are selected by the Information Committee of the Houses of Parliament. The annual costs of the subscription since 1997 are given in the table.

£

	Amount
1997	[1]
1998	19,770
1999	19,770
2000	[2]20,500
2001	[2]20,500
2002	20,500
2003	23,099

[1] No figures are available.

[2] Estimated figure.

DFID has no other cable and satellite subscriptions in the UK and there is no central provision of cable and satellite services to overseas offices. Information about any local purchases overseas could not be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Infant Mortality Rate

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of global infant mortality he estimates results from unsafe water and sanitation; and how this is taken into account in the design of the programmes funded by his Department in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goal to reduce the under-five mortality rate. [188053]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: UN data on infant mortality are not routinely disaggregated by cause of death. It is estimated, however, that diarrhoea causes more than 1.5 million child deaths each year, constituting about 15 per cent. of under-five deaths. Childhood diarrhoea is closely associated with insufficient water, inadequate sanitation, contaminated water and poor hygiene practices.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are strongly inter-dependent and DFID programme interventions include strict controls over appraisal and design to reflect this. DFID's Water Action Plan, published in March 2004, sets out DFID's priorities for the integrated provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene promotion at national, regional and international levels. Significant progress to reduce childhood deaths from diarrhoea requires increased coverage of both preventative interventions and curative, such as the provision of effective health care (including oral re-hydration therapy and drug treatments).

Iraq

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on responsibility for the management of the Development Fund for Iraq. [188343]

Hilary Benn: Under the United Nations Security Council resolution 1546 (8 June 2004) resources in the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) are managed and disbursed solely at the discretion of the Interim Iraqi Government. The International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB) continues its work as an audit oversight body for the DFI. The IAMB oversees audits conducted by international accounting firms of (i) oil export sales, (ii) the accounting for the proceeds from oil export sales, (iii) the DFI financial statements, and (iv) the disbursement procedures for DFI resources.

In March 2004 the IAMB approved the Coalition Provisional Authority's appointment of KPMG to conduct audits in two stages: first for DFI activities up to the end of December 2003, which reported on 15 July; and second for the six months to 28 June 2004, on which KPMG expects to report in early October 2004. As with the first stage audit reports, the IAMB will make the reports of the second stage available on its website (http://www.iamb.info).

Oil export sales and DFI operations after 28 June 2004 will be examined by external auditors to be appointed by the Government of Iraq. The IAMB will work with the Government of Iraq to ensure the early appointment of appropriately qualified external auditors.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the current levels of *(a)* water and *(b)* electricity provision in Iraq are; and what the targets for improvement in the next 12 months are. [188351]

Hilary Benn: Estimates suggest that immediately after the 2003 conflict, 60 per cent. of urban and 30 per cent. of rural populations had access to safe water. In October 2003, the United Nations and World Bank's Needs Assessment of Iraq proposed a 2007 target of increasing water access in urban areas by 30 per cent., and in rural areas by 45 per cent., from immediate post-conflict levels. Considerable work has taken place since May 2003 to improve the quantity, quality and reliability of water supplies.

In Basra the water supply situation remains difficult but is now better than before the 2003 conflict. Informal estimates by the former Coalition Provisional Authority (South) indicated that, in the south, coverage increased by 10 per cent. to 15 per cent. from May 2003 to July 2004. Major infrastructure work which is mainly US funded is planned over the next year. United Nations agencies are providing up to 800,000 litres of drinking water per day to vulnerable groups and inhabitants of rural areas. Drinking water is also sold by bottle or tanker. The restoration of 14 Basra Governorate water treatment plants is on schedule for completion by the end of October 2004.

In Baghdad, civil engineering work has now been completed at three wastewater treatment plants. The UN is operating water tankers and supplying water purification tablets to meet shortfalls. Water specialists from the USA are working with local government officials in Baghdad Municipality's water department to improve water treatment throughout the city.

The supply of electricity in Iraq has improved since May 2003. Production now averages 4,750 MW, compared with the pre-conflict level of 4,400 MW. Most of Iraq is now receiving between nine and 15 hours of electricity daily.

Significant programmes of long-term rehabilitation of electrical infrastructure are being undertaken alongside planning for the expansion of generating capacity with new plants. However, security problems continue to slow the progress of reconstruction and make precise forecasting difficult. The Interim Iraqi Government has set a target of 6,000 MW by the end of 2004. The United Nations and World Bank's Needs Assessment proposed a target of 8,760 MW by 2007.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has allocated to the Adam Smith Institute for work in relation to the reconstruction of Iraq; what the nature of the work is; and if he will make a statement. [188428]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not allocated any funding to the Adam Smith Institute for work in relation to the reconstruction of Iraq.

DFID has contracted the consultants Adam Smith International Ltd. (ASIL) to provide services to assist with reconstruction in Iraq as follows:

Programme	*Contract cost (£)*	*Programme details*
Emergency Public Administration Programme (EPAP)	3,181,205	This programme provides capacity building support to the Iraq public administration. Activities include the provision of long and short-term technical advice, support and training to key central ministries, to enable them to begin the process of re-establishing effective and accountable government in Iraq
Technical Support to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) South	491,406	Provision of technical experts to the former Coalition Provisional Authority in southern Iraq in the areas of economic reform and justice. This work completed on 28 June following the handover of sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government
Total	3,672,611	

Pakistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department is providing to Pakistan for the reform of its education system. [188364]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has made a significant contribution to the reform of Pakistan's education system. During 2003–04, DFID spent £2.2 million on a number of initiatives, including support to the National Education Assessment System, a programme that assessed children's performance nationally and informed education policy. DFID also supported the North West Frontier Province Education Programme, the Northern Areas Education Programme, Sindh Primary Education Project and the Punjab Middle Schooling Project. These programmes have supported the Government of Pakistan to improve the decentralised management of human and financial resources for education, as well as strengthening teacher training for primary education, with particular emphasis on education for girls.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Housing

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households were living in temporary accommodation in the Tamworth constituency in each year since 1997; and how many of those households included dependent children. [188125]

Keith Hill: Information is not collected at constituency level, only at local authority level. A summary of information reported by Tamworth district council about the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation as at 31 March of each year since 1997 is tabled as follows. The number of households in temporary accommodation containing dependent children or expectant mothers has been collected only since March 2002.

Households in temporary accommodation[1] arranged by Tamworth district council, as at 31 March

	Total households	*Of which: with dependent children[2]*
1997	109	n/a
1998	83	n/a
1999	88	n/a
2000	92	n/a
2001	105	n/a
2002	94	90
2003	83	75
2004	not reported	not reported

[1] Households in temporary accommodation arranged by the local authority pending inquiries, or after being accepted, under homelessness legislation.
[2] Includes expectant mothers. Data collected only since March 2002.
Source:
ODPM P1E homelessness returns (quarterly).

Indices of Deprivation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the electoral wards under which each Super Output Area in the Indices of Deprivation 2004 falls. [188272]

Phil Hope: There are 32,000 Super Output Areas and this is too large to send in this format. I have contacted the Office for National Statistics and it will arrange for the hon. Member to receive a copy of these on CD format.

Local Government

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many ballots there have been to set up *(a)* parish and *(b)* town councils in each of the last three years; and what the result was in each case. [188310]

Mr. Raynsford: In accordance with the provisions set out in the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister may by Order create parish and town councils following petitions from electors in the area of the proposed parish which are presented to principal local authorities. Where parishes are created, they come into existence on the 1 April of the year following the Order being made. The following table shows for each year since 1 April 2000 the outcome of petitions received from principal local authorities in that year or before.

Principal authority	*Area(s) which petitioned for parish status*	*Outcome*
2000–01		
Ashfield	Hucknall	Declined
Bromsgrove	Lickey End	One new parish created
Harlow	Church Langley	Declined
Newcastle upon Tyne	Blakelaw and North Fenham	One new parish created
Nottingham	Wollaton	Declined
Restormel	St. Austell	Declined
St. Edmundsbury	Brackland	Considered by district review but declined
Wyre Forest	Kidderminster	Declined
Total	Two parishes created	
2001–02		
Basildon	Noak Bridge	One new parish created
Bradford	Keighley	One new parish created
Bradford	Oakworth	Declined
Burnley	Padiham	One new parish created
Brentwood	West Hornden Herongate and Ingrave	Two new parishes created
Dudley	Stourbridge	Invalid petition
Leeds MBC	Shadwell	One new parish created
Newcastle-under-Lyme	Silverdale	One new parish created

Principal authority	*Area(s) which petitioned for parish status*	*Outcome*
North West Leicestershire District Council	Ellistown and Battleflat	One new parish created
Stockport MBC	Offerton Estate	One new parish created
Warwick	Royal Leamington Spa	One new parish created
Total	10 parishes created	
2002-03		
North East Lincolnshire	Great Coates	One new parish created
Wear Valley	West Auckland	One new parish created
Total	Two parishes created	
2003-04		
Bedford	Brickhill	One new parish created
Bradford	Clayton	Four new parishes created
	Sandy Lane	
	Wilsden	
	Wrose	
Leeds	Drighlington	Three new parishes created
	Gildersome	
	Kippax	
Sefton	Formby	One new parish created
Shepway	Folkestone	Two new parishes created
	Sandgate	
Total	11 parishes created	
2004-05		
Fylde	Saint Anne's on the Sea	One new parish created
Total so far	1 parish created	

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what opportunities there will be for parish and town councils in his 10-year vision for local government. [188316]

Mr. Raynsford: The vision for local government sees an important role for citizen engagement and participation so that they have greater influence over the delivery of public services. There are a variety of possible models to give communities a stronger voice at local level, one of which is through parish and town councils. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to issue a discussion document looking at the issue of citizen engagement, including the role of parish and town councils, later this year.

Local Government Pensions

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proposals he has *(a)* to protect the interests of staff over the age of 40 and *(b)* for a transitional scheme, in changes to the local government pension scheme. [188722]

Phil Hope: The proposals to amend the Local Government Pension Scheme, on which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister consulted earlier this year, are planned to come into effect in April 2005. They fully protect all members rights accrued up to that time. Those members who reach 60 years or over by 31 March 2013, and whose age and membership of the Scheme when added total 85, will also continue to accrue membership to that date on the same basis as they did prior to April 2005. In these circumstances, further transitional arrangements are not required.

Park Homes (Fire Safety)

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will make it his policy to require all park home sites to provide individual fire protection for each residence rather than communal fire points; [188728]

(2) what regulations there are regarding fire protection on park home sites; and what plans he has to amend these. [188729]

Keith Hill: The relevant statute for the licensing and control of residential park homes is the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. Section 5 of the 1960 Act provides local authorities with the power to regulate fire precautions on park home sites, by enabling the local authority to impose conditions on the site licences issued to site owners. The Act enables the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister to issue model standards. My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has exercised this power most recently in 1989, in Circular 14/89: "Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960—Model Standards". The model standards represent the standards that are normally expected as a matter of good practice on sites for residential mobile homes or static holiday caravans, or both. The local authority must have regard to the model standards in issuing or reviewing the conditions of a site licence. In addition, the Act provides that a local authority is required to consult with the fire authority for the park as to the extent to which the model standards relating to the fire precautions are appropriate to the land. Ultimately, it is up to the local authority on what conditions they apply to site licences. As part of the on-going park home reform, the model standards are currently being revised and an informal consultation is

taking place with stakeholders and a formal consultation paper will be published in the summer of 2005.

Currently it is not expected that this revision will require individual fire protection for each residence.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the councils and fire authorities which require individual fire extinguishers for park home residences rather than fire points within 30 metres of each residence; and if he will make a statement. [188730]

Keith Hill: This information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. There are no powers for the Fire Safety Service to require the information.

Section 5 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 gives local authorities the responsibility for the regulation of fire precautions on park home sites, by enabling the local authority to impose conditions on the park homes site licences the authority issues. The local authority must have regard to Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's model standards in issuing or reviewing the conditions of a site licence. In addition, the Act provides that a local authority is required to consult with the fire authority for the park as to the extent to which the model standards relating to the fire precautions are appropriate to the land, and if the conditions (if any) are found to be unsuitable, the local authority must consult with the fire authority about the conditions that ought to be attached to the licence instead. Ultimately though, it is matter for the local authority to decide upon the appropriate conditions to apply to site licences and there is no requirement that information about a site licence is provided to central Government.

A local authority has the power to enter a site and monitor the upkeep of site licensing conditions.

Regional Observatories

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 1 September 2004, *Official Report*, columns 742-44W, from the Deputy Prime Minister, which Government Department has responsibility for overseeing the expenditure of the regional observatories. [188269]

Phil Hope: Regional observatories are voluntary partnerships formed in the regions. Central Government does not oversee their expenditure.

Supporting People Programme

Derek Conway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the level of Supporting People programme grants are for each London borough. [188589]

Keith Hill: The Supporting People programme grant for each of the London boroughs for 2004-05 was:

London borough	*Supporting People programme grant 2004-05 (£)*
Barking and Dagenham	4,997,640
Barnet	7,490,089
Bexley	2,777,648
Brent	13,723,511
Bromley	5,645,494
Camden	39,696,525
City of London	741,115
Croydon	8,881,039
Ealing	11,643,789
Enfield	11,849,724
Greenwich	9,505,899
Hackney	24,114,767
Hammersmith and Fulham	13,932,752
Haringey	23,323,001
Harrow	3,624,556
Havering	2,550,490
Hillingdon	6,239,503
Hounslow	5,614,200
Islington	16,551,521
Kensington and Chelsea	12,205,258
Kingston-upon-Thames	4,720,995
Lambeth	22,112,120
Lewisham	18,452,195
Merton	3,523,216
Newham	11,272,635
Redbridge	4,394,844
Richmond-upon-Thames	3,015,294
Southwark	20,108,613
Sutton	3,833,837
Tower Hamlets	15,732,633
Waltham Forest	7,967,877
Wandsworth	11,860,631
Westminster	18,250,145

Telecommunications Masts

Derek Conway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will implement the recommendations of the Stewart Report, section 1:36 within planning policy guidance note 8. [188588]

Keith Hill: Section 1:36 of the Stewart Report recommends that telecommunication development should be subject to the normal planning process. The Stewart Report made this recommendation in order to improve local consultation. The arrangements the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister put in place following the Stewart Report provide for the same consultation on mobile phone masts up to 15 m in height as is required by full planning permission.

Derek Conway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received from local planning authorities on the recommendations of the Stewart Report on permitted development of masts at 15 metres or below. [188591]

Keith Hill: Since the publication of the revised Planning Policy Guidance Note 8: Telecommunications in August 2001 10 local planning authorities have made representations about the Government's response to the recommendation of the Stewart Report on permitted development of masts up to 15 metres in height.

Mr. Shepherd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether, in the light of the recent statement by Sir William Stewart, Chairman of the Health Protection Agency and the National Radiation Protection Board on whether Tetra had any harmful effects, he plans to remove the permitted development rights granted to licensed

telecommunications operators under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (Part 24 of Schedule 2). [188819]

Keith Hill: The Government currently have no plans to remove the permitted development rights granted to licensed telecommunications operators under Part 24 of the "Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995".

The National Radiological Protection Board's (NRPB) independent Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation (AGNIR) published a report on "Possible Health Effects from Terrestrial Trunked Radio (TETRA)" in 2001. The report noted that the signals from TETRA base stations, like their mobile phone counterparts, are not pulsed. NRPB advise that there is no reason to believe that signals from TETRA base stations should be treated differently from other base stations.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Renewable Energy

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on subsidies available for companies working to find and develop renewable energy sources. [187296]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Renewables Obligation is the key policy mechanism by which the Government are encouraging the growth necessary to reach the UK's renewable energy targets. It requires all licensed electricity suppliers in England and Wales to supply a specified and growing proportion of their electricity from renewables. Renewable energy is also exempt from the Climate Change Levy, a tax on commercial energy use.

In addition the Government also provides a range of other support for industry-led research and development and demonstration projects for longer term renewables and low carbon energy generation technologies, through the DTI and the Carbon Trust. Further details can be found at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/renewables/index.shtml and http://www.thecarbontnist.co.uk/

Age Discrimination

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to introduce legislation against age discrimination in the work place following the judgment in the case of Rutherford and Bentley *v.* Towncircle Ltd.; and if she will make a statement. [188254]

Jacqui Smith: The Rutherford and Bentley case is not about age discrimination—it is about sex discrimination, and the Government welcomes the Court of Appeal judgment that UK legislation is not unlawful. The Government have undertaken public consultation on forthcoming age legislation, which will come into force in 2006, including proposals on upper age limits for unfair dismissal and statutory redundancy payments.

British Nuclear Group

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she received from BNFL its first near term work plans and its lifecycle baseline analysis for British Nuclear Group sites; and what procedure is in place for amendment to these planning documents. [187502]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The first lifecycle baselines for British Nuclear Group sites were received on 30 September 2003. The first near term work plans for BNFL sites were received on 15 March 2004. Updating lifecycle baselines and near term work plans will be an annual process.

British Telecom (Service Obligations)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what powers she has to instruct BT to meet its obligations to customers who have a medical priority in the event of breakdown or disruption due to planned maintenance. [188391]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as independent regulator. Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Business Link

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the estimated administrative cost is of devolving Business Link services to the regions. [186347]

Nigel Griffiths: The combined estimated administrative cost to the Department of Trade and Industry and the Regional Development Agencies, of devolving the management of Business Link Operators to the Regional Development Agencies is less than £650,000.

Business Support Agencies

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how her Department measures the success of its business support agencies. [186318]

Nigel Griffiths: The common monitoring framework for all DTI business support product provision measures immediate benefits to assisted businesses, quality of service they receive and the process required to deliver a good service.

All business support products will also be included in an annual Business Support Cross Product Monitoring Survey. The monitoring survey aims to measure the client experience and subsequent impact and effectiveness of each scheme.

In addition DTI undertakes regular evaluations of the economic benefits of each its products and services and these are published on the DTI website.

Combined Heat and Power

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what discussions the

Sustainable Energy Policy Group ministerial committee has had in relation to the Combined Heat and Power Strategy; [187581]

(2) what discussions *(a)* the Sustainable Energy Policy Network (SEPN) Advisory Board, *(b)* the SEPN Programme Board and *(c)* the SEPN Strategy Group have had in relation to the Combined Heat and Power Strategy. [187582]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Sustainable Energy Policy Network (SEPN) Ministerial Committee, the SEPN programme board and SEPN strategy group regularly have wide ranging discussions on energy policy issues, including the contribution of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) to the objectives set out in the Energy White Paper.

Minutes of the Sustainable Energy Policy Advisory Board's discussions can be found on the SEPN website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/structure.shtml#advisory. The CHP Strategy was not on the Board's agenda at the three meetings held since its creation in December 2003.

Corporate Venturing UK

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total funding is that has been given by her Department to support Corporate Venturing UK since it was launched. [186343]

Nigel Griffiths: The total funding provided by this Department to Corporate Venturing UK since its inception is £1,465,415.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on her Department's proposed funding arrangements for Corporate Venturing UK. [186344]

Nigel Griffiths: The Department has no plans to provide further funding for Corporate Venturing UK.

Cybersquatting

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what statistics the Government collate on *(a)* incidences and *(b)* the cost to British business of cybersquatting on British companies and individuals. [187952]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government do not run the internet and we do not have responsibility for internet domain names. Statistics for Top Level Domain names are held on the WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation) Arbitration and Mediation Center website (www.arbiter.wipo.int/.domains/index.html). Since 1999 WIPO has recorded 554 instances of disputes for generic top level domain names (.int .com etc.) in which the complainant was domiciled in the UK.

Nominet UK is responsible for .uk internet domain name registration. As of 31 August there were over 3.6 million .uk registrations in Nominet's register database. To date, Nominet has received 1,813 disputes into its Dispute Resolution Procedure since September 2001.

Nominet's Dispute Resolution Procedure is free of charge and Nominet provides it's administrative and mediation services free. The domain name registry responsible for .com, .net etc. offer similar dispute resolution procedures; where they are administered by WIPO they are subject to fees as set out at (www.arbiter.wipo.int/domains/fees/index.html).

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the Government's policy towards the practice of cybersquatting; and what steps the Government are taking to reduce cybersquatting. [187957]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: WIPO defines cybersquatting as the pre-emptive, bad faith registration of trademarks as domain names by third parties who do not possess rights in such names. Cyber squatters exploit the first come first served nature of the domain name registration system to register as domain names third parties' trademarks or business names of famous people as well as variations thereof. A common motive for cybersquatting is the intention to sell the domain name back to the trademark owner or to attract web traffic to unrelated commercial offers.

The Government support the development of affordable alternative dispute resolution procedures by domain name registries.

It is ICANN's (Internet Corporation For Assigned Names and Numbers) responsibility to co-ordinate, at a global level, the internet domain name system. ICANN's board have adopted a Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy for all registrars serving the .com, .net, and .org domains.

Nominet UK manages the database of .uk domain name registrations. Nominet have a Dispute Resolution Procedure developed in close consultation with UK stakeholders.

Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) Contract

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the consequences for *(a)* employment opportunities and *(b)* skills in the north-west of the award of the Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) contract to each of the current bidders. [188263]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* No assessment by DTI has been made of the UK employment implications related to either of the bidders for the MoD's Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) procurement.

European Directives (Environment)

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list each environment-related European Directive the implementation of which involves her Department; and what steps her Department is taking towards implementation in each case. [187213]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: This Department is involved in the implementation of all environment-related European Directives, because of their implications for business, but takes the lead on the following current measures:

(a) The End-of-Live Vehicles (ELY) Directive (2000/53/EC). Implementation has been partially effected by the ELV Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/2635), and will be completed by the forthcoming ELV (Producer Responsibility) Regulations, on which public consultation took place earlier this year.

(b) The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (2002/96/EC) and The Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (2202/95/EC). Draft Regulations to transpose these Directives were published for consultation on 30 July 2004.

(c) The Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (1994/62/EC). DTI has introduced Regulations (SI 2003/1941, amended by SI 2004/1188) relating to the essential requirements (composition and definition) of packaging and packaging waste.

(d) The proposed Directive on Batteries and Accumulators and Spent Batteries and Accumulators (COM(2003)723 final). A first consultation, seeking stakeholder views on the proposed measure, has recently closed, and responses are being assessed.

(e) The proposed Directive to amend the Whole Vehicle Type Approval Directive, specifying reusability, recyclability and recoverability standards for vehicle design (COM(2004) 162 final). Negotiations have not yet began on this proposal.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many full-time equivalent staff have been assigned to work on each environment-related European Directive, the implementation of which involves her Department. [187214]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The equivalent of 13 full-time executive, administrative economic, and legal staff have been assigned to work on all the range of environment-related European Directives on which DTI takes the lead in implementation.

Gas and Electricity Supply

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has had of increases imposed by Centrica gas suppliers on prices to domestic customers; what action she is taking to ensure greater diversity in generating electricity with greater use of coal; and if she will make a statement. [188097]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: While gas retail prices are a commercial matter for the companies concerned, consumers are normally free to seek a better deal and can switch energy supplier. Although some gas suppliers have announced gas prices recently, even after these price rises the real price of domestic gas will be significantly lower than that seen over most of the last 30 years

We are continuing to monitor developments regarding diversity in the electricity generation market e.g. through the Joint Energy Security of Supply Working Group (JESS) which consists of officials from Government, Ofgem and National Grid Transco.

We recognise the value of coal fired generation, especially its ability to meet peaks in demand and cover supply intermittency. We believe it will have a continuing role in a diverse energy balance provided that its associated carbon emissions can be reduced through clean coal technologies. We plan to publish around the end of the year a Carbon Abatement Technologies Strategy aimed at supporting the development of low carbon technologies from fossil fuels such as coal.

MOX Plant (Sellafield)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much public money has been given to the MOX Plant at Sellafield in each year since 1990; what the projected sums are for future years; and if she will make a statement. [187524]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The construction and operation of the Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP) has been funded by BNFL from income from the company's commercial operations. No publicly voted money has been provided to the company.

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), which will become operational from 1 April 2005, will assume full financial responsibility for the UK's civil public sector nuclear assets and liabilities.

A number of BNFL's assets will transfer to the NDA in April 2005, including SMP. Money voted by Parliament intended for the clean up programme will not be used to subsidise commercial operations such as SMP.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much revenue was forecast to be generated by the MOX Plant at Sellafield at its inception in each year to 2004; what the outturn has been; what the projections are for future years; and if she will make a statement. [187525]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government commissioned an independent review of the Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP) economic case by Arthur D. Little in 2001. The consultants analysis in the report, stated that: "there is a robust economic case for proceeding with SMP" and that "the expected Net Present Value (NPV) of the national economic interest case for SMP is £216 million".

Details of SMP annual revenues are commercially confidential. The recently published audited 2004 Annual Accounts for BNFL noted that the most recent financial forecasts for SMP, which are used both for economic appraisal and accounting for SMP contracts, has shown some deterioration from last year. This reflects recent difficulties in achieving production ramp up and BNFL's current best estimate of the future production profile.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which countries were expected to place orders with the MOX Plant at Sellafield at its inception; and how many have done so to date. [187526]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The economic case for the Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP) presented to the Environment Agency in 1997 was based on MOX business from Japanese, German, Swiss and Swedish customers. To date, SMP has secured contracts from German, Swiss and Swedish customers plus commitments from Japanese customers. I understand from BNFL that the company is hopeful of securing Japanese MOX contracts in the future.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much profit the MOX plant at Sellafield is expected to make in its lifetime. [187527]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: This is a commercially confidential figure under Exemption 13—Third Party Commercial Confidences of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information and the Government are working with BNFL to ensure that the best value for money is achieved for the taxpayer with respect to the operations of this plant.

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made since December 2003 in respect of the consideration by the European Commission of details provided by the Government on the proposed financing of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. [187604]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The European Commission is still considering the matter. We hope for a decision soon.

Nuclear Waste

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what response has been received from the European Commission following the plan presented by the United Kingdom on 1 June in respect of the nuclear waste storage silo B30 at Sellafield. [187503]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: As of 7 September, UK authorities had received no formal or substantive response from the Commission to the plan presented on 1 June in respect of B30 at Sellafield. The Commission has however issued a press release dated 3 September in which it states that it will refer the UK to the European Court of Justice. The UK remains keen to engage in a full and co-operative dialogue with the Commission aimed at satisfactorily resolving the remaining Euratom Treaty safeguards issues at the B30 plant.

Overhead Power Lines

Mr. Charles Kennedy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to evaluate the impact of new overhead power lines on the economy of communities reliant on tourism. [187491]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: This is one of a number of issues for Government to take into account when considering an individual application for consent to a particular proposal for a new overhead line. In Scotland it is for Scottish Ministers to take that decision.

Renewable Energy

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many householders have taken advantage of the Clear Skies renewable energy grants scheme since the scheme started operating; and how much has been awarded in grants. [188171]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since the start of Clear Skies 4,204 household applications have been made with a total value of £2,489,050. Of these 3,939 have been accepted and 2,347 have been paid, with a total value of £1,297,050.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on future plans for the Clear Skies renewable energy grants scheme. [188172]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department is currently considering how best to allocate the recent Spending Review Settlement for sustainable energy. While the settlement was a good one in the context of a tight spending review, it unfortunately will not allow us to do everything.

We are currently considering the case made by the industry to make a further extension to Clear Skies in the context of the overall funding made available for renewables and low carbon generation in SR2004.

An announcement about continued funding will be made shortly.

Renewables Obligation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the timescale for the consultation on the renewables obligation. [188419]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: There are two separate consultations on the Renewables Operation under way at present.

First, the Government launched a consultation on the terms of reference for the Review of the Renewables Obligation which will take place in 2005/06. The review will address the effectiveness of the Obligation to date, the future profile of the Obligation, its working arrangements and the transition to market over time for renewables technologies including taking account of support under the Obligation and the Emissions Trading Scheme. The consultation period on the terms of reference ends on 30 September. A preliminary consultation is planned for early next year followed by a statutory consultation of all stakeholders later in 2005 with a view to any necessary changes that can be made by secondary legislation taking effect from 1 April 2006.

In addition, on 8 September the Government published a separate consultation paper on a number of limited changes to the Renewables Obligation to strengthen the development of electricity generation capacity using renewable energy sources in the UK. This is a more limited consultation concerning measures to:

- extend the profile of the Obligation to 2015/16;
- allow tradability between Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation Certificates (NIROCs) and GB ROCs;
- introduce measures that will further secure the buy-out fund in the event of a shortfall occurring;
- consider the introduction of a single recycling mechanism for the separate buy-out funds;
- introduce more flexibility for small generators.

The period for this consultation ends on 1 December, and the Government plans to make any necessary changes to take effect from 1 April 2005.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the calculation of the effectiveness of renewable obligations will include the operation of renewable obligation certificates. [188420]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Yes. The operation of Renewables Obligation Certificates (ROCs) are an important element of the Renewables Obligation. The forthcoming review of the Renewables Obligation in 2005/06 will include, among other things, an assessment of the effectiveness of the operation of the ROCs market.

State Aid

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate her Department has made of the levels of state aid to industry in other EU member states relative to the UK and of whether this results in unfair competition. [186419]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The European Commission publishes regular reports on levels of state aid spending in member states, based on information which member states are required to provide, and the results are available on the Commission's website at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/competition/state_aid/scoreboard/

EU rules on state aid provide a safeguard against any member state funding businesses in a way that will distort competition and trade within the single market. The Government sees this regime as essential in ensuring a level playing field for businesses across the EU, and we are committed to the objectives agreed at Lisbon and other European Councils of less and better targeted state aid.

Telephone Billing

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will require British Telecom to allow its competitors to offer a single telephone bill for its customers. [186331]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as independent regulator. Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Tidal Energy

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to promote tidal energy; and what plans she has to increase investment in its further development. [187041]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The main form of support for all renewable technologies is the Renewables Obligation (RO) which provides a stable and long term market for renewable electricity. Electricity generation from both wave and tidal stream technologies is eligible for the RO.

However, these technologies are still at the developmental stage. Therefore the principal form of support to date has been through the DTI's Technology Programme that since 1997 has committed around £15 million towards the development of these technologies.

On 2 August the Government announced a further £50 million funding primarily focused on supporting the UK's marine renewables industry through the next phase of development of these technologies, which includes small scale demonstration and pre-commercial stages.

The Department is now working closely with the Carbon Trust, Scottish Executive and other stakeholders looking at mechanisms for applying the funding, subject to State Aid approval.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the potential contribution to the UK's energy needs of tidal power. [187042]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: A study has been commissioned to provide a spatial quantification of renewable sources of energy—wave, tidal and offshore wind across the waters of the UK continental shelf. In addition to the spatial variation of these resources, temporal variations will also be assessed. This study (ATLAS) will assist in deciding which areas of the sea will next be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The first stage of the study which has just been completed provides information on the energy levels with a resolution of about 12 km. The second stage will involve the conversion of the raw energy potential into the amount of energy presently available. It will also allow higher resolution in specific areas such as through main channels. The study is expected in the autumn and we intend to publish it.

Additionally, there have been two previous studies[1,2] which examined the potential tidal stream power resource in the UK. The later of those studies completed in 1996 under the EC JOULE-II energy research programme identified a total of 42 potential sites in UK waters with a combined annual output totalling some 31 TWh/yr which represents 8 per cent. of UK annual electricity demand in 2003.

[1] Tidal Stream Energy Review ETSU T/05/00155, 1993

[2] Marine Currents Energy Extraction: Resource Assessment, Final Report, EU-Joule contract JOU2-CT93-00355, 1995

Wind Farms

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimates have been made of the costs of steel production in the construction of wind farms. [186600]

Mr. Timms: A typical 2 MW wind turbine weighs around 260 tonnes and approximately 95 per cent. of that by weight is steel. Installed costs of onshore wind turbines are around £700,000 per MW, of which the turbines can account for around 75 per cent., although this will depend on factors such as the cost of the foundations and grid connection etc. One a per tonne basis, steel costs even at current market prices would account for less than 10 per cent. of the cost of the turbine.

However, the cost of the steel itself is not necessarily the driving cost fact in all components of the turbine. For example, the tower section of the turbine is a relatively simple structure and in this case the amount of steel used will be the primary cost factor. However, other sections such as the nacelle, which contain complex components such as the turbine generator etc, might account for 25–40 per cent. of weight and 25 per cent. of the cost of the turbine. Although steel is still the primary component by weight, other raw materials and the processes involved in making these complex components account for a more significant proportion to total costs.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the 50 MW threshold, above which she determines planning applications for wind farms, is based on the wind farm's theoretical maximum output, or its actual projected output. [187039]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: When looking at the capacity of a power station for the purposes of applications made under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989, it is the rated capacity which counts. That is the capacity which can be generated by the station and fed through the alternators without causing damage to the alternators.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what constitutes a single wind farm for the purposes of planning applications; and whether there is a maximum distance between two clusters of turbines, beyond which they would be regarded as two wind farms. [187040]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department is of the view that a wind farm could be considered as one where it used the same common services such as transmission cables, electricity sub-station and control room. If separate services were to be used then it would be two stand alone proposals and fall to be determined as two separate applications. While there is no maximum distance between each turbine the Department would expect the turbines to be spaced in such a manner that the distance between each turbine is the optimum for generation and satisfying environmental concerns.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimates have been made of levels of carbon dioxide production as a result of building wind farms. [187570]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: A number of studies have estimated the overall environmental cost of building wind power generation based on energy payback or life cycle analysis. These calculations project the energy output as a ratio of energy required to build, maintain and decommission the power station.

The average wind farm in the UK will pay back the energy used in its manufacture within three to five months, and over its lifetime a wind turbine will produce over 30 times more energy than was used in building, maintenance and decommissioning according to a study commissioned by the British Wind Energy Association.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on *(a)* the number of fighters serving with the militias in Afghanistan and *(b)* the arms available to them. [188362]

Mr. Ingram: It is difficult to estimate accurately the number of fighters serving with militias in Afghanistan accurately, due to the difficulty of obtaining reliable intelligence reporting and the precise definition of what constitutes a militia fighter. Nevertheless, we estimate there to be around 50–60,000. They are predominantly armed with Soviet-era small arms and heavy weapons from the 1950s-1980s period.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with other members of NATO on the need for additional resources for the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. [188363]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom strongly supports the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as an essential part of the international community's efforts to stabilize and rebuild Afghanistan. Our leadership of Stage 1 of ISAF expansion and our deployment of Harrier GR7 aircraft to support both ISAF and coalition operations are examples of this commitment. In this context, we routinely engage with our NATO allies to discuss what additional resources are needed to facilitate ISAF expansion.

Coastal Protection (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many coastal protection vessels have been deployed in Northern Ireland waters by the Royal Navy in each year since 1997; and which the vessels were. [187417]

Mr. Ingram: During the period in question, four Royal Navy vessels were initially assigned to Northern Ireland patrol duties: HMS Itchen, HMS Blackwater, HMS Spey and HMS Arun. These ships were progressively withdrawn during 1998 and replaced by the current patrol ships HMS Cottesmore, HMS Dulverton and HMS Brecon which, as announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Hoon) on 21 July 2004, will be paid off by April 2007.

Departmental Budget

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when his Department is planning to release its budget. [187128]

Mr. Ingram: Details of the 2004–05 budget can be found at Table 1 of the current edition of the Ministry of Defence's 'Government Expenditure Plans 2004–05–2005–06' (Cm 6212).

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British service personnel worked as part of the team of the US military judge advocate in Iraq, Colonel Mark Warren. [185908]

Mr. Ingram: One United Kingdom officer worked with Colonel Warren.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 19 July, 2004 *Official Report*, column 245W, on Iraq, how many enquiries by *(a)* civilian authorities and *(b)* military police resulted from these incidents; what the conclusions were; and if he will make a statement. [186420]

Mr. Ingram: Eight incidents that led to allegations against United Kingdom forces and compensation being paid to Iraqi people have been investigated by the Royal Military Police. Three concluded that no crime could be established and five have been referred to the relevant prosecuting service.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Iraqi detainees and prisoners of war were held by British forces in Iraq on 29 June. [188320]

Mr. Ingram: There were no prisoners of war or detainees held by British forces in Iraq on 29 June. However, 49 internees were held.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether a British officer was responsible for supervising Lieutenant-Colonel Steven Jordan during his time at Abu Ghraib in 2003 and 2004. [188302]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* No. At no time have United Kingdom officers had direct responsibility for supervising any of the US personnel posted to Abu Ghraib.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Colonels Campbell James and Chris Terrington were part of a joint reporting or command chain with the US army during their time in Iraq. [188303]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* Colonel Terrington and his successor, Colonel Campbell-James were embedded within the C2 (Intelligence) Division of the US Combined Joint Task Force 7.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what rules govern *(a)* the handling of captured firearms and ammunition in Iraq, *(b)* the personal retention of captured weaponry and *(c)* selling such weapons; how many (i) officers and (ii) soldiers have been found in breach of such rules; how many have been subject to disciplinary action; and what sanctions have been applied. [176025]

Mr. Ingram: In Iraq, all captured enemy ammunition is handled by qualified Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel, in accordance with the Ammunition and Explosive regulations and Joint Service Publication 482. Captured weapons are transferred to a central facility for destruction, repair, re-distribution to the Iraqi Security Forces, or when given approval, returned to owners. Personal retention of captured weapons is not permitted. In some cases, operational memorabilia is cleared for return to the UK for retention by the capturing units. Service Police conduct anti-smuggling checks on equipment, vehicles, containers and baggage transported back to the UK and service flights are subject to checks by HM Customs and Excise.

As at 31 August 2004, a total of three service personnel had been reported by the Royal Military Police for possession of captured firearms from Iraq.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what instructions were made available to interrogators and other soldiers involved in the handling of prisoners in Iraq from March 2003 onwards in order to prevent European Convention on Human Rights violations under Article 3 occurring through each of the five techniques identified by the Court in 1978. [174551]

Mr. Ingram: All UK armed forces personnel are instructed that Iraqi prisoners should be treated in accordance with the Geneva Conventions, which include the prohibition of torture. Each major unit also has a number of personnel trained to a greater degree in prisoner handling.

All UK interrogators must successfully complete a stringent course prior to undertaking any operational interrogations. During the course they are specifically instructed that individuals being questioned must, again, be treated at all times in accordance with the Geneva Conventions.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence further to his statement of 7 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 139WH, on the case of Baha Musa, when he expects the investigation to be completed; whether its outcome will be placed in the public domain; and if he will make a statement. [171623]

Mr. Ingram: The investigation into the death of Baha Musa has concluded and the case is now being considered by the Army Prosecuting Authority. Any ensuing trial would be held in public.

Porton Down

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made on the relocation of Defence Science and Technology Laboratories facilities and personnel to Porton Down; and if he will make a statement. [186357]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* Work to relocate Dstl facilities and personnel to Porton Down, has focused on the selection of a strategic partner who will provide the new facilities at Porton Down, and become the facilities management supplier to Dstl for 15 years from 2006.

Four companies have now been short-listed to receive the invitation to tender (ITT), which is expected to be released towards the end of 2004. We hope that a preferred bidder will be appointed in autumn 2005.

RAF Croughton

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons UK forces at RAF Croughton, are not allowed access to Commissary and BX services run by the US. [188752]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* In accordance with the terms of the NATO Status of Forces Agreement the US Visiting Force is permitted to "import free of duty the equipment for the force and reasonable quantities of provisions, supplies and other goods for the exclusive use of the force" (Article XI (4)).
These provisions, supplies and other goods are made available through Army Air Force Exchange Services (Base Exchange—BX) and Defense Commissary Agency stores.

Her Majesty's Customs and Excise regulations require the United States Visiting Force to refrain from selling goods imported or purchased tax and/or duty free to any persons other than members of the US Force, its civilian component and their dependants.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provision comparable to the Commissary and BX service available to US forces at RAF Croughton, exists for UK forces. [188753]

Mr. Ingram *[holding 13 September 2004]:* RAF Croughton is made available to the United States Visiting Force under the terms of the NATO Status of

Forces Agreement 1951. The United Kingdom forces are not stationed at RAF Croughton and there is, therefore, no need to provide facilities comparable to the US Commissary and BX service.

Warrior

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the propensity of the Warrior to engage in *(a)* undemanded firing of weapons and *(b)* other actions attributable to design faults in the electrical and safety systems. [186641]

Mr. Ingram: Technical investigations have been carried out since 1999, following a small number of reported incidents involving the undemanded firing of the Warrior chain gun. The investigations concluded that there is a very low risk of the undemanded firing of the chain gun or main armament. A Post Design Service task is currently in progress with the Design Authority to explore whether any design changes may be justified. In addition, a safety notice has been issued to the Warrior user community informing them of the problem, to ensure the continued safe operation of the vehicle.

Two other technical investigations into the undemanded power traverse of the turret and undemanded operation of the rear door have also been carried out. Solutions to address both these problems are also being pursued by the Design Authorities. A modification programme to prevent the undemanded power traverse of the turret is due to commence this month.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bangladesh

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent attempt to assassinate Sheikh Hasina, the parliamentary opposition leader in Bangladesh. [188313]

Mr. Alexander: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said in his press statement of 22 August, we were shocked to hear of the bombings in Dhaka on 21 August and the many deaths and injuries they caused. A copy of the statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/news/policy/press-releases. We extend our sympathies to all those injured, and to the families of the victims. We condemn these bombings and call on all concerned to refrain from further violence, and to exercise restraint. We welcome the Bangladeshi Prime Minister's public expression of determination to see those responsible brought to justice, and hope that this can be done through an investigation process in which all parties, and the public, can have confidence.

Departmental Pamphlets

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost was of printing his Department's pamphlet, "Inclusive Government: mainstreaming gender into foreign policy"; and how many pamphlets were printed. [188457]

Mr. Straw: The printing cost of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's booklet "Inclusive Government: mainstreaming gender into foreign policy" was £2,730. We printed 3,000 copies.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187318]

Mr. Rammell: On the Foreign and Commonwealth Office UK estate, there are:

No rooms are set aside specifically for the use of smokers; there are, however, licensed bars at the Main Building in London and at Hanslope Park in which smoking is permitted in designated areas.

Two rooms are set aside for worship, one in the FCO Main Building in Whitehall and the second at Hanslope Park—both rooms are designated as Multi-Faith. In the Old Admiralty Building (OAB) there are no rooms set aside solely for worship although two meeting rooms have been identified which may be used for multi-faith worship if not being used for their primary purpose.

No rooms are specifically set aside for nursing mothers and pregnant women, although First Aid Rooms in the Main Building, OAB and Hanslope Park may be used if desired.

European Union (Cost-Benefit Analysis)

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date the Government last undertook a cost-benefit analysis of United Kingdom membership of the European Union, including *(a)* indirect costs and benefits and *(b)* direct costs and benefits. [188781]

Mr. MacShane: UK membership of the European Union is vital for British jobs and prosperity. There is broad consensus among academics that UK membership of the European Union promotes growth, competitiveness and employment through the operation of the internal market. Our trade with Europe accounts for 3 million British jobs. 53 per cent. of our total imports of goods and services are from Europe. 50 per cent. of our total exports of goods and services go to Europe. And 65 per cent. of our investment overseas now goes to Europe.

The Government continually consider the direct and indirect costs and benefits of specific EU legislative proposals, in the context of ongoing European policy development.

Ewa Jasiewicz

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government regarding the detention of Ewa Jasiewicz; and if he will make a statement. [188068]

Mr. Mullin: We were informed of Ms Jasiewicz's detention on 12 August when she called our embassy in Tel Aviv to report that she had been refused entry. Following legal appeals and counter-appeals by Ms Jasiewicz and the Israeli authorities, we understand that Ms Jasiewicz returned to the UK on 1 September. The issue of entry and exit to Israel is a matter for the Israeli authorities. However, our ambassador in Tel Aviv has recently written to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to raise our concerns over the treatment of British journalists and representatives of British media organisations.

Iran

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on negotiations with Iran regarding its nuclear weapons programme. [186868]

Mr. MacShane: Discussions between senior officials have taken place during the summer. A further report on Iran's nuclear programme by the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will be discussed at the meeting of the Agency's Board of Governors, which began on 13 September.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Iran about the Bushehr nuclear plant. [188368]

Mr. MacShane: Discussions with Iran, relating to its' nuclear programme, have taken place between senior officials during the summer. There has been no recent ministerial discussion with the Iranian Government on this subject.

Iraq

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the political parties registered for elections in Iraq; and if he will break them down by *(a)* religious and *(b)* ethnic affiliations. [187616]

Mr. Rammell: The timetable for the organisation of the elections has not yet reached the stage of registration. The Independent Electoral Commission for Iraq timetable foresees registration taking place in November. We anticipate that a broad range of political forces and independent candidates will take part in the elections.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department is giving to the preparation of women candidates for parliamentary elections in Iraq. [187619]

Mr. Rammell: This Government will make every effort to assist the holding of representative elections in Iraq in January next year, including helping implement the provision in the Transitional Administrative Law that calls for a target of 25 per cent. representation in the Transitional National Assembly by women. The stipulation in the electoral law that every third candidate on election lists should be female bodes well in this regard.

The Department for International Development, through its Political Participation Programme which is being administered by the British Council, is spending £5 million on helping Iraqi women's organisations participate in the elections.

Laos

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations he has made to the Government of Laos concerning the arrest of four Christians in Kasy District in Vientiane province on 2 August; [187838]

(2) what representations he has made to the Government of Laos concerning the intimidation of Christians by the authorities in parts of Laos in recent months, including in Nam Thuam village, Vieng Samay village and Hua Muang village; and if he will make a statement; [187839]

(3) by what methods the British Government monitor abuses of religious freedom in Laos; and if he will make a statement. [187840]

Mr. Alexander: We are aware of reports of the mistreatment of Christians in Laos. Our embassy in Bangkok (which is accredited to Laos) monitors the situation. Although Lao people are officially free to worship, they may not preach in public. The Lao authorities themselves acknowledge incidents where officials have not permitted freedom of worship for Christians. We understand, however, there has been some limited progress, with a number of churches being allowed to re-open and an overall drop in the number of believers detained.

Our contacts with the Laos authorities are very limited. We are not therefore able to confirm individual reports, nor to raise individual cases on a regular basis. Ministers and officials have, however, raised our concerns over freedom of religion on a number of occasions, both in bilateral contacts and through the European Union. Most recently, on 18 June, our ambassador to Thailand raised the persecution of Christians with Deputy Foreign Minister Phongsavath Boupha.

We will continue to raise our concerns with the Lao Government when opportunities arise; and to encourage it to implement recent reforms on religious freedom.

Maldives

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the treatment of political prisoners in the Maldives. [188340]

Mr. Alexander: We remain concerned about prisoners detained without charge in the Maldives, and raise this regularly with the Maldivian authorities. Our Acting High Commissioner recently discussed this issue with

the Maldivian Attorney General, and on 6 September was part of an EU delegation which met the Maldivian Minister of Foreign Affairs. The EU delegation called upon the Maldivian government to immediately repeal the state of emergency and restore all fundamental rights to the detainees. We welcome the steps taken by the Maldivian Government to enter into an agreement with the International Committee of the Red Cross on prison monitoring, and look forward to the early conclusion of such an agreement.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the human rights situation in the Maldives. [188341]

Mr. Alexander: In December 2003, the Maldives established a Human Rights Commission (HRC) to protect, promote and preserve human rights. However the bill that would give the HRC the necessary legal power has not been passed, and we continue to have concerns, including about freedom of expression and association, and detention without charge. Following the arrests of nearly 200 people, including Special Majlis MPs, during and after the demonstrations of 12 and 13 August, we and EU partners called on the Maldivian authorities to repeal the state of emergency and restore fundamental rights to those detained. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Rammell) reiterated our support for the President's reform proposals, and stressed the importance of ensuring that the Special Majlis, and the people of the Maldives are free to discuss constitutional change, during a meeting on 25 August with the Maldivian Special Envoy.

NATO Russia Council

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to develop the NATO-Russia Council as a tool in the war against terrorism. [188367]

Mr. MacShane: The struggle against terrorism was one of the drivers behind the foundation of the NATO-Russia Council in 2002. On 7 September the NATO-Russia Council issued a statement condemning the recent atrocities in Russia and undertaking to intensify common efforts against this shared threat, including working on measures to allow Russian naval forces to join allied units in NATO's maritime interdiction force in the Mediterranean.

Nicholas Baker

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1656W, on Nicholas Baker, what progress has been made in the case of Mr. Nicholas Baker; what discussions on the case the Department has had with the Japanese Government over the last four months; and what further steps have been taken. [188337]

Mr. Mullin: Mr. Baker's appeal is currently ongoing in the Japanese Courts.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has discussed Mr. Baker's case with the Japanese authorities on a number of occasions over the last four months, at both ministerial and official level, most recently in August.

We will continue to raise Mr. Baker's case with the Japanese authorities at every appropriate opportunity. We remain in touch with Mr. Baker and his family about his case and will inform them immediately of any developments.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make it his policy to publish annually the number of interceptions of communications he approves under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. [188052]

Mr. Straw: No. The Annual Reports of the independent Interception of Communications Commissioner publish the numbers of interception warrants issued by my right hon. Friends the Home Secretary and the First Minister in Scotland. In line with longstanding policy, endorsed by successive Interception Commissioners, the figures for warrants issued by the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland are not published. The reasons are explained in the latest Annual Report published on 22 July 2004 (HC883).

Sudan

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he first received reports of Janjaweed activity in Darfur; when he first raised the question of Janjaweed activities in Darfur with his counterpart in Khartoum; what assurances were then sought; and if he will make a statement. [187273]

Mr. Mullin: Attempts by the Government of Sudan to recruit militias, as part of their response to the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) uprising, was first reported on 12 May 2003. The term "Janjaweed" was first used by the British Government on 8 September 2003, following its use at negotiations in Abeche. However, different groups use the term rather loosely to mean different things. The Government of Sudan understand it to mean "bandits"; whereas displaced persons will use it for almost any armed Arab on horseback.

We have been raising with the Government of Sudan their response to the SLA since May 2003. In May of this year the Sudanese Minister of Foreign Affairs visited London. During his visit my right hon. Friends the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for International Development and I all raised the need for the Sudanese Government to disarm the militias and protect their civilians from the human rights atrocities that have been taking place. When the Foreign Secretary travelled to Khartoum and Darfur at the end of August he re-iterated this need to both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Sudanese President.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions concerning the situation in Darfur his Department has had with officials from *(a)* the Sudanese embassy in London and *(b)* Sudanese Government officials in Khartoum between 22 July and 7 September; and on what dates, and where, these discussions took place. [188486]

Mr. Straw: We are in regular touch with the Sudanese authorities, both through our embassy in Khartoum and the joint Department for International Development/Foreign and Commonwealth Office Sudan Unit in London. During the period specified, the main contacts included:

26 July—the British ambassador in Khartoum met Naguib El Kheir, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

29 July—the UK Special Representative for Sudan met the Sudanese ambassador in London.

2–3 August—the UK Special Representative for Sudan visited Sudan. Those he met included Saddiq al Mahdi (Umma Party), Yahya Hussein (Minister at the Presidency), Mohamed Yousef (Minister of Humanitarian Affairs), Qutbi Al Mahdi (Presidential Political Adviser), Mustafa Ismail (Foreign Minister).

6 August—the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Africa Director met the Sudanese ambassador in London.

12 August—the UK Charge d'Affaires in Khartoum attended the UN/Government of Sudan Joint Implementation Mechanism with Jan Pronk, UN Secretary General's Special Representative (UNSR) and EU ambassadors and Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismael, the Sudanese Foreign Minister and his team.

16 August—the UK Charge d'Affaires in Khartoum met Dr. Awad El Jaz, the Sudanese Minister of Energy and Mining

18 August—the UK Charge d'Affaires in Khartoum attended a meeting at the Foreign Ministry with the International Organisation for Migration Mission

19 August—the UK Charge d'Affaires in Khartoum attended the Joint Implementation Mechanism at the Foreign Ministry with Jan Pronk, UNSR and EU ambassadors and Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismael, Sudanese Foreign Minister and his team

23–24 August—I visited Sudan. I called on Mustafa Ismail and President Bashir. I met other members of the Government at a lunch.

2 September—the British ambassador in Khartoum called on Salah Ghosh (Director General National Security)

6 September—the British ambassador in Khartoum called on Yahya Hussein (Minister at the Presidency)

7 September—the UK Special Representative for Sudan met the Sudanese ambassador in London.

Ann Clwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on *(a)* the Government's assessment of whether the atrocities committed in Darfur constitute genocide and *(b)* the implications of Secretary of State Powell's comments on genocide in Darfur to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 9 September. [188995]

Mr. Mullin: There is no doubt that grave crimes against humanity have been committed in Darfur. These may amount to genocide. What Colin Powell said to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee underlines the need for all the evidence to be examined by an international commission of inquiry, which we would like the Security Council to set up.

The evidence currently available further underlines the need for sustained international action to press the Government of Sudan to carry out its responsibilities. That is what we are seeking through the Security Council.

During my own visit to Sudan this week, I will also be making clear to the Government of Sudan its prime responsibility to protect its own citizens and to bring to justice all those responsible for human rights abuses.

UK Presidency

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what preparations the Government are making for the forthcoming UK Presidency of the EU. [188297]

Mr. MacShane: Each Government Department and devolved Administration has established its own structure for preparing for the Presidency, including teams within the European Union Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the UK Permanent Representation to the EU. The Cabinet Office European Secretariat has an overall co-ordinating role.

During our Presidency we will hold two European Councils in Brussels. Other formal Ministerial Councils and meetings of officials will take place in Brussels and Luxembourg.

Some informal ministerial meetings will take place in the UK during the UK Presidency. Planning for these and other official level events is under way.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the main themes for the forthcoming UK Presidency of the EU will be. [188298]

Mr. MacShane: The Government's main priority for the UK Presidency of the EU in 2005 will be to take forward the EU policy agenda in an efficient, effective and impartial way, with a strong emphasis on the agenda which we will inherit from the preceding Dutch and Luxembourg Presidencies. That agenda is set out in detail in the Council's Multi-Annual Strategic Programme, covering the three year period from 2004–06, copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether a logotype for the UK Presidency of the EU has been agreed. [188299]

Mr. MacShane: The logo and a number of related issues are under discussion between Government Departments. It is not the usual practice for a future Presidency to publish its logo before the preceding Presidency has done so: the Luxembourg Presidency logo has only recently been unveiled.

Zimbabwe

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Zimbabwean Government on its raid on the MDC offices in Bulawayo. [188877]

Mr. Mullin: Our embassy in Harare is monitoring the situation carefully. We condemn the intimidation and harassment of the Government of Zimbabwe's opponents, and will continue to make this clear.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make urgent representations to the Zimbabwean Government on the arrest of MDC member Mr. Nelson Chamisa. [188878]

Mr. Mullin: Mr. Chamisa was released without charge on the afternoon of 10 September. The British embassy in Harare was in contact with Mr. Chamisa after his arrest and will continue to monitor the situation.

We regularly raise human rights issues with the Government of Zimbabwe.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Access Management Grant Scheme

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the take-up of the Access Improvement Grant Scheme by local authorities has been; what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Scheme in meeting its stated objectives; and what will become of the Scheme as a result of Rural Strategy 2004. [186987]

Alun Michael: Take-up of the Access Management Grant Scheme has been very good. 24 access authorities, covering 96 per cent. of mapped access land in mapping areas 1 to 5, have bid for funding to support their preparatory planning work. Five local authorities have, so far, submitted bids for infrastructure work. Most authorities are still at the planning and consultation stage and we expect them to submit infrastructure bids during the autumn.

The Scheme has been running for five months and it is therefore too early to assess how well it will meet all the objectives set for its first year. The Countryside Agency has reported on progress in the first three months, during which period the Scheme has proved successful and popular with local authorities. The Agency will be carrying out a more detailed assessment of the Scheme's overall performance in October. This will inform decisions on the level of funding and priorities for next year.

I have extended funding for a further two years, to provide the necessary support to enable local authorities to complete access planning and on-site infrastructure work by March 2007.

This work is an important early step in delivering the Rural Strategy 2004 objective of making the countryside more accessible for all. As the scheme currently runs only until March 2007, it will not be incorporated into the streamlined funding arrangements announced in the Strategy, which we plan to complete by March 2007. If a requirement for funding is identified beyond March 2007, we will review how best to meet it within the context of the new arrangements.

Biofuels

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the latest figures are that she has collated on the sale of biofuels. [186570]

Mr. Morley: Currently, around two million litres of biodiesel are sold each month in the UK. We are not aware of any sales of bioethanol. Biodiesel sales have been stimulated by the existing 20p per litre duty rate cut. A similar incentive for bioethanol will come into force in January 2005.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of biofuels sold were produced from imported vegetable oil in the last year for which figures are available. [186571]

Mr. Morley: Currently, around half of the two million litres of biodiesel sold each month in the UK comes from imported biodiesel and this is mainly produced from virgin rape seed oil. It is known that some palm oil is used in the production of biodiesel. Total imports of palm oil in 2001, the latest year for which figures are available, amounted to 1.28 million tonnes but information is not collected on the use of the oil. A further one million litres of biodiesel a month comes from recycled waste vegetable oil produced in the UK.

Cattle Passports

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate how many cattle have been killed because the British Cattle Movement Service has rejected a passport application or notification in each of the last five years for which records are available. [189082]

Alun Michael: Figures are not held for the number of calves that have been killed as a consequence of being refused passports. There is no compulsion for these calves to be destroyed, heifer calves refused passports may live out full and productive lives on the farm where they were born and any calves born to them may be registered in the normal way.

The British Cattle Movement Service merged with the Rural Payments Agency on 1 April 2003.

TRANSPORT

A120

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to announce proposals for the improvement of the A120 road east of Braintree. [188557]

Mr. Jamieson: Following the outcome of the recent Spending Review, we are currently considering funding allocations across departmental programmes, including the Targeted Programme of Trunk Road Improvements. Subject to the outcome of this exercise the Highways Agency intend to present at Public Consultation this autumn, proposals for delivering the dualling of the A120 between Braintree and Marks Tey. I shall review the findings of this exercise, together with the outputs of the work currently being undertaken by the Highways Agency, with the intention of being able to take a position on this proposal by Spring 2005.

Disabled Parking

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the entitlement of those diagnosed with myasthenia gravis to disabled parking provision. [188627]

Mr. McNulty: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 9 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1327W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Putney (Mr. Colman).

Safety Cameras

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who is responsible for auditing safety camera partnerships; and to which bodies the partnerships are answerable. [188336]

Mr. Jamieson: A partnerships' accounts and its operation in line with the Department for Transport 'Handbook of rules and guidelines for the operation of the national road safety camera programme for England and Wales' is audited by the auditor appointed by the Audit Commission for the partner with lead responsibility for financial matters, most often one of the local authorities within the partnership.

The rules and guidance (a copy of which is in the Library) require a partnership to submit its proposed programme to the Department for Transport for approval. Partnerships include one or more police authorities and local highway authorities. Partnership staff are employed and managed by them, and each partnership is answerable to them for its operation in line with the rules and guidance for the programme.

HOME DEPARTMENT

People Smuggling

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are taken to co-ordinate Government resources in monitoring non-commercial aircraft movements to detect people smuggling; and if he will make a statement. [183225]

Mr. Browne: The Government monitors the movement of non-commercial aircraft through the Border Agencies Working Group, a forum that brings together representatives from the control authorities, the Civil Aviation Authority and Transec. The Group co-ordinates an on-going series of multi-agency operations at small ports and airfields, which assess levels of risk, and provides a forum for the control authorities to develop shared intelligence.

Additionally the Immigration Service regularly assesses the risks to the UK immigration control and will be monitoring whether the recent disruption by the police of an alleged facilitation attempt using light aircraft in Kent was a "one-off" or is part of a trend to target small airfields. The border agencies and law enforcement are actively engaged in a series of joint working initiatives to identify and combat external risks and organised criminal activity targeting the UK borders at small ports and airfields.

Antisocial Behaviour

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how his Department's TOGETHER campaign attempts to tackle antisocial behaviour in Leyton and Wanstead. [187741]

Ms Blears: TOGETHER is a campaign for both practitioners and the public across all of England and Wales. The approach includes prioritising local concerns about antisocial behaviour, getting the right people from local agencies working with the community to tackle the problem and making effective use of available sanctions and providing feedback to the community on progress at all stages.

On the practitioner side, the campaign is an ambitious programme that is designed to provide help, resources and know-how to every practitioner across the country. It has three core aims; to make the use and application of tools and powers simple and effective, to take the best of what is developed locally and spread it nationally, and to create a change in culture so that action is taken. The TOGETHER Academy, ActionLine and Website—backed up by practical step-by step guides and antisocial behaviour ambassadors remove excuses for inaction and raise the level of practice across England and Wales.

On the public side it is for individual Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to decide how to take forward the campaign at a local level. The TOGETHER campaign pack gives the tools for local authorities, police and community groups to run a TOGETHER campaign in their area.

Burglary (Wandsworth)

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the results of the evaluation of the Reducing Burglary Initiative for the London borough of Wandsworth. [187828]

Ms Blears: My hon. Friend the Member for Slough (Fiona Mactaggart) said in reply to my hon. Friend's oral question about the Reducing Burglary Initiative on 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 515 that the report of the findings of the process evaluation of the initiative would be published in the summer, though this will not identify projects individually. However, because of delays in finalising the report for publication, it will now be published later this autumn.

Crime Trends

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made, using the Home Office Trends in Crime model, of the impact on crime rates of *(a)* economic and *(b)* demographic changes in each year since 1995. [187234]

Ms Blears: The Home Office Trends in Crime model is an empirical model which attempts to explain annual changes in recorded crime in England and Wales by reference to annual changes in a number of economic, demographic, and criminal justice variables. It has been developed by joint external and internal research effort with the purpose of providing the Home Office with a tool for identifying those determinants of crime that are both within and outside of its control.

The model is robust, but highly aggregated. As such it cannot account for all the factors that impact on crime rates. It has nonetheless demonstrated that economic and demographic factors have been important determinants of changes in crime over time.

The model has not been used to attribute annual changes in crime to each of the explanatory variables. However, the model predicts that, if other factors remain constant, a permanent 1 per cent. increase in the growth rate of consumption expenditure reduces the

growth rate of crime by about 1.7 per cent. On a similar basis, an increase of 1 per cent. in the growth rate of the proportion of young males in the population would increase the growth rate of crime by about 0.5 per cent.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will provide his Department's staffing levels for 1998–99, in the format set out in table 6.1 of his Department's Annual Report and Accounts 2003–04. [181494]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 29 June 2004]:* Since 1998–99, the Central Home Office has been re-organised to meet its Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and it not possible to make a direct staffing level comparison in the format set out in the Department's 2003/04 Annual Report. This comparison is further made more difficult as a result of the current Spending Review and Strategic Plan commitments to reduce staffing levels. The streamlining Department's headquarters resulting in a reduction of staff numbers by 30 per cent. to focus resources on the front-line will mean further format comparisons will be as difficult. There will also be similar reductions in the headquarters of Prison Service and Immigration and Nationality Directorate (reducing in total headquarter staff numbers by 2,700 full-time equivalents).

The following table provides the closest comparison. Staff that were recorded in Criminal Policy Directorate, Police Policy Directorate and Organised and International Crime Directorate are now organised within the Criminal Justice Group, Crime Reduction and Community Safety Group, Community Policy Group and Correctional Services.

Staff distribution—1998–99 Central Home Office (excluding agencies)	*Civil service full-time equivalents*	*Casuals*	*Secondments*	*Total*
Criminal Policy Directorate	457	0	0	457
Police Policy Directorate	682	17.5	414	1,113.5
Organised and International Crime Directorate	102	0	23	125
Immigration and Nationality Directorate	4,500	100	0	4,600
Fire and Emergency Planning Directorate	209	2	11	212
Constitutional and Community Policy Directorate	176	0	0	176
Research Development and Statistics Directorate	226	12	0	238
Planning and Finance Directorate	167	0	0	167
Corporate Resources Directorate (in 2003/04 called Human Resources, Corporate Development Services Directorate)	652	6	2	660
Legal Advisors	33	—	—	33
Communication Directorate	99	—	—	99
Ministerial and Central Secretariat	77	—	—	77
Prison Service Monitoring Unit	4	—	—	4
HM Inspectorate of Prisons	12	—	—	12
Prisons Ombudsman	15	—	—	15
Total Central Home Office (excluding Agencies)	7,411	1,37.5	450	7,998.5
Home Office agencies				
Prison Service	38,352	1,043	0	39,395.
United Kingdom Passport Agency	1,1185	315	0	1,500
Forensic Science Service	1,284	11	0	1,295
Fire Service College	185	0	0	185
Total Home Office	48,417	1,464.5	450	50,331.5

Immigration

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many extension of leave to remain applications had not been decided by the end of the original leave to remain period as at *(a)* 1 January 2003 and *(b)* 1 January 2004; and how many of those outstanding cases had been outstanding for (i) over six months and (ii) over 12 months on such dates. [186954]

Mr. Browne: The requested information on outstanding applications is not readily available and could only be obtained by examination of individual case records at disproportionate cost.

It is the aim of General Group in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to decide 70 per cent. of all new chargeable applications within three weeks and 100 per cent. within 13 weeks.

Name that Tag Campaign

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have been successfully prosecuted as a result of the "name that tag" campaign; and how much reward money has been paid out as a result. [187062]

Paul Goggins: No prosecutions have been brought as a direct result of "name that tag" as yet, but police investigations are well under way following information received.

Crimestoppers are not aware of any money at present having been paid out yet as a reward under the "name that tag" campaign.

Table 2e of the "Crime in England and Wales 2003–2004" Home Office Statistical Bulletin 10/04 shows that the proportion of people perceiving high

levels of vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property in their local area has decreased from 35 per cent. according to the 2002–03 British Crime Survey, to 28 per cent. according to the 2003/04 BCS.

Operation Scrap-It

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how Operation Scrap-It affects the residents of Leyton and Wanstead. [187743]

Ms Blears: Operation Scrap-It started in October 2003 and will run until March 2006. It entails building up the infrastructure (pound space, removal trucks, skills and knowledge) across all London boroughs to meet the agreed target that nuisance vehicles will be removed within 72 hours of reporting by October 2004. The rest of the country will then be able to learn from this good practice.

This scheme is already proving successful in my hon. Friend's constituency.

LB Redbridge only started the removal of untaxed vehicles on 7 September 2004, nine vehicles from Wanstead were removed on the first day.

Between the period 1 May 2004 to 31 August 2004, LB Waltham Forest (Leyton) have removed 45 vehicles. This has included six untaxed vehicles, 39 abandoned vehicles and 10 surrendered vehicles.

Operation Scrub-It

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how Operation Scrub-It has affected the residents of Leyton and Wanstead. [187746]

Ms Blears: Graffiti can lead to an area becoming more and more run-down, with a corresponding increase in crime and fear of crime. Untackled graffiti undermines faith in the services that authorities provide.

That is why Sections 48–52 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 enable a local authority to serve a "graffiti removal notice" on the owners of street furniture, statutory undertakers and educational institutions whose property is defaced with graffiti. If the owner does not remove the graffiti in compliance with the notice, the local authority may do so and recover its costs.

In response to concerns about the regulatory impact of these powers, we are currently piloting the new powers in 12 areas of the country. The pilots began on 31 March 2004 and we will consider further roll-out once these are completed. The 12 authorities piloting these powers are:

Barnsley metropolitan borough council
Bristol city council
Cambridge city council
Dartford borough council
Doncaster metropolitan borough council
Epping Forest district council
Kirklees metropolitan borough council
London borough of Merton
London borough of Westminster
Northampton borough council
Southampton city council
Wansbeck district council (with Northumberland county council)

Transsexual People

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents were reported to the police in which hatred of transsexual individuals is involved in the most recent period for which figures are available, broken down by police authority. [187390]

Ms Blears: Information concerning the number of incidents reported to the police in which hatred of transsexual individuals was involved is not recorded.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Art Galleries

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which art galleries, broken down by region, have received funding from arts councils in each of the last five financial years for which figures are available; and how much funding was granted in each case. [187978]

Estelle Morris: Over 1,300 arts organisations receive funding from Arts Council England on an on-going basis. The Arts Council has a funding agreement with these organisations which is reviewed regularly to ensure the funds invested are meeting the terms of the agreement. Regular funding to arts organisations is paid out of grant-in-aid.

In total, 245 Visual Arts organisations receive core funding from Arts Council England. The full list is too long to be printed in *Hansard*, but copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. A breakdown of funding by region is provided in the following table. Regularly funded organisations are awarded funding towards core costs for the period mirroring the Treasury's spending review cycle. The most recent announcement of allocations to Regularly Funded Organisations was made in March 2003, and provides funding up to 2005–06.

Visual Arts Organisations—total by region

Region	2003–04 (£)	2004–05 (£)	2005–06 (£)	Total number of organisations
East	1,077,076	1,214,727	1,349,332	13
East Midlands	604,850	809,688	952,036	17
London	10,973,477	12,392,161	13,809,144	60
National	395,570	392,000	526,382	5
North East	1,621,016	1,898,894	2,329,783	23
North West	2,025,674	2,618,336	3,008,199	24
South East	2,634,428	2,854,981	3,069,174	29
South West	1,644,667	1,895,411	2,191,050	22
West Midlands	2,330,717	2,825,232	2,892,737	30
Yorkshire	1,692,700	2,087,075	2,351,150	22

Source:
Arts Council England.

Ministerial Air Travel

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list for each year since 1997 the number of miles flown by each Minister in her Department on official departmental business. [181863]

Mr. Caborn: Records on this issue are not held centrally and to gather figures would be at disproportionate cost to the Department.

However, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for 2003–04 is currently being assembled and will be published shortly. All ministerial and civil service travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code, Travel by Ministers, and Civil Service Management Code, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Parks (London)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans there are for the refurbishment of parks in London. [184282]

Mr. Caborn: The only parks for which the Department is responsible are the eight Royal Parks. Plans for their upkeep and refurbishment are set out in the Royal Parks Corporate Plan 2004–05, copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses shortly.

Recruitment Costs

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the recruitment costs of *(a)* the chairman of the Film Council, *(b)* the chairman of Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries and *(c)* the chairman of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment were; and what (i) the salary of each chairman and (ii) the combined salary cost of each chairman's staff was in the latest year for which figures are available. [185877]

Estelle Morris: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for North-East Cambridgeshire (Mr. Moss) on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 303–04W. The chairs of the three bodies concerned do not have dedicated support staff.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Attendance Allowance

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have been in receipt of attendance allowance in the *(a)* Edinburgh, Central, *(b)* Edinburgh, North and Leith, *(c)* Edinburgh, West, *(d)* Edinburgh, Pentlands, *(e)* Edinburgh, South and *(f)* Edinburgh, East and Musselburgh parliamentary constituencies in each year since 1997. [187947]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table.

People in receipt of attendance allowance by parliamentary constituency as at February on a yearly basis since 1997

Thousand

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
All	8.9	8.9	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.5	9.8
Edinburgh, Central	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4
Edinburgh, East and Musselburgh	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.0	1.6	1.8
Edinburgh, North and Leigh	1.7	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6
Edinburgh, Pentlands	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.5
Edinburgh, South	1.9	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.7
Edinburgh, West	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.3	1.7	1.7

Note:
Figures taken from a 5 per cent. sample at February of each year. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported case load. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.
Source:
IAD Information Centre.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on what dates since 1 July the customer service computer was not working in the Cardiff Office of the Appeals Service for disability living allowance. [188820]

Maria Eagle: The administration of the Appeals Service is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Appeals Service, Christina Townsend. She will now write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Christina Townsend to Mr. Adrian Flook, dated 14 September 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to respond to your question regarding which days since 1 July the customer service computer was not working in the Cardiff office of the Appeals Service for Disability Living Allowance.

The computer system in Cardiff has been fully operational and available for use each day since 1 July. However, the issue as I understand it concerns the external customer contact email address for that office.

For a period between the end of June to the end of July, emails sent to the Cardiff office email address were not monitored or actioned due to an administrative reorganisation within the office. I can only apologise for this error but can confirm that during this period, all other channels of communication were functioning as normal.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Benefit Claimants

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in relation to applications for benefits from residents of *(a)* Aylesbury and *(b)* Milton Keynes in each year since 2000, how many applicants

were required to take a medical examination; what benefits were applied for that required a medical examination; and how many of those medical examinations were undertaken at (i) Luton, (ii) Aylesbury and (iii) Euston. [187566]

Maria Eagle: The available information is in the following tables.

The only benefit requiring a medical examination dealt with by Aylesbury and Milton Keynes district offices is incapacity benefit.

Incapacity benefit claimants, whose claims were administered by Aylesbury or Milton Keynes district offices and who had medical examinations.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Aylesbury	648	943	963	3057	2393
Milton Keynes	905	945	1268	779	0

Location of Medical Examination Centres carrying out examinations of incapacity benefit claimants from Aylesbury and Milton Keynes district offices.

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
District Office:	*Exam Centre:*					
Aylesbury	Aylesbury	594	827	876	1496	1331
Aylesbury	Euston	0	13	9	5	8
Aylesbury	Luton	21	62	59	70	52
Aylesbury	Other	33	41	19	1486	1002
	Total	648	943	963	3057	2393
Milton Keynes	Aylesbury	816	384	662	582	—
Milton Keynes	Euston	2	3	2	3	—
Milton Keynes	Luton	37	491	487	158	—
Milton Keynes	Other	50	67	117	36	—
	Total	905	945	1268	779	—

Notes:

1.The Department for Work and Pensions centralised work for Milton Keynes at Aylesbury from 1 July 2003. Medical Services are therefore unable to give specific figures relating to applicants of Milton Keynes in 2004 as all work is referred to Medical Services from Aylesbury.

2. The other category includes where a customer has had a Domiciliary visit or visited another Medical Examination Centre apart from Luton, Aylesbury or Milton Keynes.

3. The "other" category for Aylesbury district office cases in 2003 and 2004 is high as it contains 1447 (2003) and 954 (2004) customers who attended Oxford Medical Examination Centre. These customers attended Oxford as they live in Oxford but the referrals show as Aylesbury due to centralisation; the Department for Work and Pensions centralised work for Oxford at Aylesbury in 2003.

Source:

Medical Services data

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Clinical and Educational Negligence

Mr. Drew: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the consultation on removing eligibility from children and placing it on parents in the case of clinical and educational negligence cases; and what assessment has been made of the implications of using conditional fee agreements in such cases. [188408]

Mr. Lammy: We have no plans to remove the financial eligibility for legal aid from children and place it on their parents. In November 2002 we consulted on revising the guidance in relation to funding judicial review applications in the name of the child, which had particular relevance in education cases. The revised guidance was implemented from April 2003. The Legal Services Commission has issued a consultation paper, "A New Focus for Civil Legal Aid—encouraging early resolution; discouraging unnecessary litigation" which contains proposals on the use of conditional fee agreements generally, and the appropriate balance between private and public funding. The consultation closes on 15 October and we will announce the way forward thereafter.

District Judges

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many district judges are employed in the criminal jurisdiction of England and Wales; and how many there were in 1997. [188981]

Mr. Leslie: As at 1 September 2004 there were 126 district judges (magistrates courts) and 148 deputy district judges (magistrates courts) in post, in the Magistrates Courts of England and Wales. Prior to 2000, district judges and deputy district judges were formerly known as stipendiary magistrates and acting stipendiary magistrates. In 1997 there were 91 stipendiary magistrates and 85 acting stipendiary magistrates.

PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Visits

Sue Doughty: To ask the Prime Minister whether he sanctioned the visits of any members of his Government to *(a)* the Democrat and *(b)* the Republican conventions in the United States. [188110]

The Prime Minister: No member of the Government attended in an official Government capacity the Democratic or Republican conventions in the United States.

Peerages

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Prime Minister what the place of residence, at the time of their elevation, was of each peer created since 1 May 1997, broken down by *(a)* nation within the UK and *(b)* region of England, for peers resident in England at the time of elevation. [188266]

The Prime Minister: 323 people have been elevated to the peerage since 1 May 1997.

The place of residence at the time of their elevation is shown in the following table. Information for judicial peers is not held in the format requested.

Residence at time of elevation

	Number
England	
North West	19
North East	5
Yorkshire/Humberside	15
East Midlands	3
East of England	24
West Midlands	12
South East	38
South West	13
London	147
Scotland	19
Wales	9
Northern Ireland	9
Judicial (no home address)	10

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academic Performance

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to prevent isolation and lack of commitment among students who are not achieving as much as their peers. [188292]

Mr. Miliband: Ensuring the personalisation of teaching and learning is the effective response to difficulties of isolation and lack of commitment, the work of the Primary and Key Stage 3 National Strategies is central to this. Both Strategies help teachers give careful attention to pupils' learning needs, set challenging targets for them linked to high quality assessment, and offer tools to make lessons pacy, challenging and more enjoyable.

Citizenship Lessons

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment the Department has made of citizenship lessons within the national curriculum since their introduction; [188120]

(2) what *(a)* assistance and *(b)* guidance the Department gives on teaching the citizenship curriculum in secondary schools. [188124]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department has commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NfER) to conduct an eight year longitudinal study of the impact of the subject on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The study began in 2002 and reports of the first two years are available at www.nfer.ac.uk. Ofsted's section 10 inspections and QCA's monitoring reports provide effective progress reports on school practice and provision and have shown that good progress is being made. They are available from www.ofsted.gov.uk and www.qca.org.uk respectively.

The QCA has developed and sent to all schools a range of guidance to support the introduction of citizenship education, including schemes of work and guidance on assessment and curriculum planning. The Department published in June a self evaluation tool for schools to help them monitor progress in developing citizenship education. The Department has also put in place a package of support for continuing professional development of teachers in citizenship education.

Departmental Energy Efficiency

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on energy efficiency in his Department's buildings. [186680]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department remains committed to reducing energy usage in all its Department's buildings. A range of measures are in place and regularly reviewed and updated to ensure improved performance meets the requirements of the national policy "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate".

Non-classroom Learning

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on the role of out-of-classroom education and field trips in school education; [188166]

(2) what the Government's strategy is for ensuring *(a)* equality of access and *(b)* increased access for all schools and their pupils to out-of-classroom learning; [188167]

(3) what assessment he has made of the merits of including out-of-classroom learning in Ofsted school inspections. [188168]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Our "Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners" sets out our commitment to high standards for all within a broad and rich curriculum. Out of classroom learning is key to an enriched curriculum. It can take many forms, for example, through fieldwork, a statutory requirement of the Geography curriculum; through visits to farms and projects within school grounds, accessible to schools through our Growing Schools web service; through heritage and cultural visits, where high quality provision is provided through our Renaissance in the Regions programme; through music, where our Music Manifesto pledges access for every young person to a range of music experiences; through our PE and School

Sports Strategy where we are creating a national network of 400 Specialist Sports Colleges and School Sport Partnerships to increase and enhance school sport. Schools will decide which out of classroom opportunities best meet the needs of their pupils. The Ofsted school inspection framework covers, and will continue to cover, all aspects of a school's provision, including out-of-classroom learning. needs of their pupils. The Ofsted school inspection framework covers, and will continue to cover, all aspects of a school's provision, including out-of-classroom learning.

Secondary School Teachers

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action the Department is taking to increase the number of people training to enter the secondary school sector as teachers. [188123]

Mr. Miliband: Since September 2000, £6,000 training bursaries have been offered to postgraduate trainee teachers. An additional £4,000 Golden Hello is also available to those who train in and go on to teach priority subjects in a maintained secondary school. From September 2005, the value of the training bursary for those training in mathematics and science will increase to £7,000 and the Golden Hello payment for those subjects will rise to £5,000 for trainees entering Postgraduate Certificate in Education and equivalent courses at that time. These incentives have helped to increase recruitment to courses of initial teacher training for secondary school teachers by almost one-third between 1999–2000 and 2003–04.

The Teacher Training Agency's Use your head. Teach, advertisement campaign for 2004–05 will focus on the recruitment of teachers for secondary schools and priority subjects

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 15 September 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

International Competition

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to assist poor countries to protect their farmers and traders against unfair international competition; and if he will make a statement. [188556]

Hilary Benn: DFID supports the inclusion of 'Special Products' and the 'Special Safeguard Mechanism' in order to assist farmers and traders in poor countries.

Loosely defined, 'Special Products' are those that are of particular importance to the rural development, and food security, of the country in which they are grown. The farmers of these products should thus be subject to lesser liberalisation commitments.

The 'Special Safeguard Mechanism' would allow developing countries to temporarily protect agricultural products from sudden import surges, which threaten the viability of domestic producers.

Both concepts were included in general terms in the July 2004 World Trade Organisation Framework agreement, setting out the negotiating agenda for the ministerial meeting in Hong Kong in December 2005 and will be consolidated and refined as the negotiations progress.

DFID is currently funding a project involving developing country delegates, research institutes and NGOs to assist with this process, and to assist farmers and traders in poor countries.

TRANSPORT

Advertising/Public Relations

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent by his Department in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available on (i) advertising and (ii) public relations. [186453]

Charlotte Atkins: The Department for Transport was formed on 29 May 2002. It has spent £10.3 million on advertising primarily on the THINK road safety campaign.

For details of expenditure on public relations, I refer the hon. Member to my predecessor's reply to the hon. Member for South-West Bedfordshire (Andrew Selous) on 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 650W.

Airports

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received regarding the High Court ruling on a judicial review of airports in Britain; and what impact this will have on the Cliffe site in the Thames Estuary. [187968]

Charlotte Atkins: The Secretary of State has not received any representations regarding the High Court granting of permission for the three legal challenges to the Future of Air Transport White Paper to proceed to judicial review.

The Government's policy was set out in the White Paper, including their conclusions on the Cliffe option.

Airstrips

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is regarding proposals to license individual airstrips; and what measures he will put in place to help those airline charities which would be affected by increased charges. [188606]

Charlotte Atkins: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is responsible for the day-to-day regulation of airstrips and has no new proposals to license individual airstrips. Existing provisions for the licensing of aerodromes for the public transport of passengers and instruction in flying are contained in Article 101 of the Air Navigation Order 2000.

As regards flights in aid of charity, arrangements have been in place since 1988 for CAA permission to be given, for example so that a private individual can donate a flight as a prize in a charity draw. The conditions under which such flights may be conducted are set out in an Aeronautical Information Circular (AIC 76/2003 (White 88)). The CAA makes no charge in relation to this permission.

An airline does not need permission for a flight in aid of charity, as its operations are subject to the requirements for public transport flying.

Caravans (Motorway Restrictions)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to repeat the trial scheme restricting caravans to the inside lane on the M5 on other motorways in England and Wales; and if he will make a statement. [188578]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency currently has no plans to repeat the trial elsewhere on the network.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot scheme on the M5 at Bristol which restricts vehicles towing caravans to the inside lane; if he will publish his evaluation; and if he will make a statement. [188579]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency is currently evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot scheme, which ended on 28 August. It is anticipated that an announcement will be made when the evaluation is complete this autumn.

Departmental Fraud Costs

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate his Department has made of

the cost of fraud to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the executive agencies affiliated to his Department in each of the last five years. [186406]

Charlotte Atkins: The answer covers the period since the Department was formed on 29 May 2002 and since that date the estimated cost of fraud (including theft) in my Department including the executive agencies are as follows:

	Central department	*Agencies*	*Total (£)*
2002–03	757	73,560	74,317
2003–04	8,439	76,164	84,603

Assets have been valued at cost, net book value or replacement cost depending on the circumstances of the individual case. Recoveries from perpetrators or others, e.g. insurance claims, have been netted off. Some incidents are still under investigation and final values may change.

Departmental Thefts

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the items that his Department has reported lost or stolen to the police from his Department's buildings and property since 2001. [186405]

Charlotte Atkins: The answer covers the period since the Department was formed on 29 May 2002 and since that date the following items listed below have been reported to the police by my Department as lost or stolen:

The answer to the question only includes buildings occupied by staff in the Central Department. To obtain a full answer including the executive agencies would involve disproportionate cost.

Theft of wallet

Theft of personal cheques (2 occurrences)

Loss of building passes (2 occurrences)

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the equivalent monetary cost of theft to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Executive agencies affiliated to his Department was in each year since his Department was established. [186408]

Charlotte Atkins: The answer covers the period since the Department was formed on 29 May 2002 and since that date the estimated cost of theft in my Department including the Executive agencies is as follows:

£

	2002–03	*2003–04*
Central Department	757	7,659
Agencies	47,043	57,349
Total	47,800	65,008

Assets have been valued at cost, net book value or replacement cost depending on the circumstances of the individual case. Recoveries from perpetrators or others, e.g. insurance claims, have been netted off. Some incidents are still under investigation and final values may change.

M1

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reasons the southbound carriageway of the M1 motorway was closed at Junction 11 on 23 August; who authorised the closure; for how long the motorway was closed; and what assessment he has made of the necessity for closure. [188580]

Mr. McNulty: At approximately 14:50 hours on Monday 23 August, a pedestrian jumped from the bridge that crosses the motorway at Hatters Way, Luton into the path of an oncoming lorry. He sustained fatal injuries. The death has been recorded by HM Coroner's office as suicide.

Bedfordshire Police immediately closed the southbound carriageway in order to carry out their investigations.

A symbol signed diversion route was set up for road users affected by the carriageway closure. Other strategic signs were set further north of the incident warning of the closure.

This was a particularly difficult investigation and clear up task for all involved. The body of the deceased was further struck by other approaching vehicles; thus raising both the sensitivity and the complexity of the police operation.

The carriageway was re-opened to traffic at 18:10 hours.

M20

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ensure that the siting of noise abatement fencing along the M20 between junctions 4 and 5 takes appropriate account of the approval of additional housing in the area. [188920]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 14 September 2004]*: It is the responsibility of the local planning authority, Tonbridge and Mailing borough council to consider Whether noise mitigation measures should be provided by the developer of sites in their area in line with current guidance on planning and noise.

Currently there are proposals for a noise bund within Leybourne Grange development site near the M20 at Junction 4.

In addition the Highways Agency is carrying out further studies to determine what noise mitigation measures would be appropriate at existing housing sites between Junctions 4 and 5.

Medway/London Rail Services

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to prevent the implementation of the reduction in the Cannon Street service from Medway to London proposed by the Strategic Rail Authority. [188882]

Mr. McNulty: The Strategic Rail Authority is continuing to develop the train service specification for the integrated Kent franchise in the light of responses to its consultation earlier this year. When final decisions

are made, a stakeholder briefing document will be issued giving information on consultees' comments and the final train specification.

PowerShift Grants

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many applications for Powershift grants for the Toyota Prius were *(a)* submitted and *(b)* approved in (i) 2002–03, (ii) 2003–04 and (iii) 2004–05 to date; and how many of the approvals were for (A) new and (B) demonstrator vehicles. [188996]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 14 September 2004]*: The Toyota Prius is listed on the PowerShift Register and is eligible for a £700 grant where used in England/Wales/Northern Ireland. A separate scheme operates in Scotland. The number of applications approved and paid for PowerShift grants for Toyota Prius from year 2002 to date in England/Wales/N Ireland are as follows:

(a) Applications submitted and for which a grant offer letter has been issued[1]

	Number
2002–03	1
2003–04	412
2004–05	1,045

[1] Number of applications that have failed before reaching grant offer stage is not recorded onto the applications database.

(b) Grants paid

	Number
2002–03	0
2003–04	146
2004–05	[1]117

[1] To end August.

A grant is available to the first owner (person or organisation) to register a PowerShift approved vehicle, subject to meeting the usual eligibility criteria (i.e. must operate in England, Wales or Northern Ireland). This includes dealer demonstrator vehicles that are registered, but the number of applications in respect of demonstrator vehicles is not recorded separately.

Railways

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many dismantled railway lines in the UK have been *(a)* re-instated and *(b)* safeguarded since 1990; and what the cost of re-instated lines was in each case. [188569]

Mr. McNulty: No consolidated record is kept of the position of dismantled railway lines. The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) is aware of 13 re-instated lines available for use by passenger trains. Safeguarding is a matter for local authorities and the SRA is not aware of any central register. The SRA does not maintain a central record of the costs of re-instated railway lines.

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) why the new signalling system promised for Stockport station is not yet operational; [188226]

(2) why engineers have been brought from India to fix the old signalling system at Stockport station; [188227]

(3) when the new signalling system at Stockport station will be operational; [188228]

(4) why the crossover points between Heaton Chapel station and Stockport station have been removed. [188229]

Mr. McNulty: These are operational matters for Network Rail. Network Rail will respond directly to my hon. Friend.

Recruitment/Consultants

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent by his Department in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available on (i) headhunters, (ii) recruitment consultants and (iii) management consultants. [186403]

Charlotte Atkins: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my predecessor to the hon. Member for South-West Bedfordshire (Andrew Selous) on 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 650W.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bathing Water (South-West)

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what central Government funding is available in the South West region to meet the cost of compliance with the EU Bathing Water Directive. [186966]

Mr. Morley: There is no central Government funding available to meet the cost of compliance with the EU Bathing Water Directive for the South West or any other region. It is for sewerage undertakers to comply with the Directive, and the costs are taken into account by Ofwat in setting price limits.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department spent on *(a)* head-hunters and recruitment consultants and *(b)* management consultants in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [185990]

Alun Michael: Defra came into being in June 2001. From information held centrally, the Department spent £520,354 in financial year 2002–03, and £619,213 in financial year 2003–04, on recruitment services.

The Department also spent £190,212 in financial year 2002–03, and £189,319 in financial year 2003–04, on recruitment advertising.

Information on management consultants is not held centrally and the information cannot be provided at proportionate cost.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the

Department and its predecessors spent on recruitment consultants in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available. [184430]

Alun Michael: Defra came into being in June 2001. From information held centrally, the Department spent £520,354 in financial year 2002–03, and £619,213 in financial year 2003–04, on recruitment services.

The Department also spent £190,212 in financial year 2002–03, and £189,319 in financial year 2003–04, on recruitment advertising.

Information on management consultants is not held centrally and the information cannot be provided at proportionate cost.

Employment Tribunals

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many cases against her Department, the agencies for which it is responsible and its predecessor organisations have been brought to employment tribunals in each year since 1997 in relation to *(a)* equal pay, *(b)* sex discrimination, *(c)* race discrimination, *(d)* disability discrimination and *(e)* unfair dismissal; how many cost awards were made against (i) respondents and (ii) applicants; and how much has been spent (A) settling and (B) contesting claims. [181460]

Alun Michael: Defra came into existence in 2001. Since then the number of cases brought against the Department and the agencies for which it is responsible is as follows:

	Equal pay	*Sex discrimination*	*Race discrimination*	*Disability discrimination*	*Unfair dismissal*
2001	—	—	—	—	1
2002	—	1	1	3	4
2003	—	1	—	—	1
2004	1	1	1	6	2
Total	1	3	2	9	8

The one equal pay case is currently on-going pending appeal and no costs have been awarded as yet. One of the six unfair dismissal cases for 2004 has been settled, all other 2004 cases are continuing. For the other cases listed there were no awards made against my Department and its agencies during the years quoted but a total of £30,553 has been paid in agreed settlements.

The total amount spent on contesting these claims could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Fur Farms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many fur farms are licensed in England. [188727]

Mr. Bradshaw: None. The Fur Farming (Prohibition) Act 2000 has banned fur farming in England since 31 December 2002.

Parish/Town Councillors

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what help is available for the training of parish and town councillors and clerks; and what level of funding her Department provides to assist in such training. [188314]

Alun Michael: The Government wish to encourage all town and parish councils to reach the standards of the best. To achieve this, councillors and clerks need a wide range of skills to act as the voice of their communities, deliver services and create strong local partnerships. Therefore, town and parish councils should be actively supporting their councillors and clerks to participate in training and continuing professional development.

The Rural White Paper (November 2000) established the "QUALITY" town and parish council scheme and provided £2 million in assistance to help councils meet the new quality standards and establish a national strategy to provide training and support for parish and town councils.

The National Training Strategy for parish and town councils was published in November 2001 in partnership with the Government, the Countryside Agency, the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks. Jointly, these organisations have used the £2 million mentioned above to:

Establish County Training Partnerships made up of local bodies that specialise in providing training for the parish council sector (38 partnerships established);

Develop a professional qualification for clerks, the Certificate in Local Council Administration (over 600 registrations for the certificate, 138 certificates awarded so far);

Create a distance learning package for clerks and councillors (completed by some 800 clerks as of 1 September 2004);

Produce a handbook for councillors, "The Good Councillors Guide" (80,000 copies issued); and

Produce an award winning training video, "What's on the Agenda".

In addition, through the Countryside Agency, Defra is providing over £300,000 this year to continue developing County Training Partnerships and County Associations of Local Councils to act as support infrastructure for parish and town councils. Some £40,000 of this money is used to provide a bursary scheme to help small councils meet their training costs.

Potato and Vegetable Farming

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department is making for allocating single farm entitlements with authorisation to grow potatoes and vegetables; and what criteria will be applied in the process. [186982]

Alun Michael: Forms will be issued in March 2005 for farmers to apply, by 16 May, for the allocation of Single Payment Scheme entitlements and for payment against those entitlements. As part of the application process, eligible farmers will be able to ask for a number of their entitlements to have an authorisation attached. Those allocated entitlements with an authorisation will be able to grow fruit, vegetables and potatoes on the equivalent number of hectares which they will need to have to support their annual claim for payment against those entitlements.

Eligibility for the allocation of entitlements with authorisations will be restricted by regional ceilings, which represent the average number of hectares of fruit, vegetables and potatoes that were grown in each region in the period 2000–02. Allocations to individual farmers will be based first on the number of hectares they grew of those crops in 2003. If there is any headroom remaining between the regional ceiling and the number of individual claims based on 2003 production, then 2004 production may also be taken into account. If there still remains headroom under the ceiling then 2005 production may additionally be taken into account. With this in mind, farmers who wish to claim entitlements with authorisations will be asked to provide details of their 2003, 2004 and 2005 production of fruit, vegetable and potatoes on their application forms. Entitlements, including those with authorisations, will be allocated by the end of 2005.

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of Common Agricultural Policy reform regulations on the availability of land for let to specialist potato and vegetable growers in 2005. [186983]

Alun Michael: Some concerns have been raised that the introduction of the Single Payment in 2005 could affect the willingness of landowners to let land in that year. The Department has discussed these issues with representatives of the farming industry and their professional advisers and our view remains that the interests of both landowners and growers can be protected by appropriate contractual arrangements between the two parties.

Refrigerators

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many refrigeration unit storage and treatment facilities have been found to be in breach of regulations relating to the implementation of European Council Regulation No. 2037/2000 since it came into force; and what action was taken in each case. [187017]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency has concluded three successful prosecutions against operators of fridge storage facilities. These have resulted in penalties of £35,000, £15,000 and a four-month custodial sentence respectively, reflecting the seriousness with which the Government and the Courts regard these offences. In addition a number of warning letters and enforcement notices have been served, requiring fridge treatment plant operators to comply with licence conditions.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* storage and *(b)* treatment facilities for refrigeration units there are in England and Wales; and how many of these have been inspected by the Environment Agency since European Council Regulation No. 2037/2000 came into force. [187018]

Mr. Morley: 78 sites are licensed to store fridges, although all may not be operational. 19 sites are licensed for the treatment of fridges.

The sites have been inspected in accordance with the Environment Agency's Operator and Pollution Risk Appraisal (OPRA) system and the Waste Management Facility Site Inspection Methodology. Under OPRA, these sites would initially have been inspected at monthly intervals. The assessments of operators' performance consider both the type and severity of non-compliance and the environmental significance of that breach or non-compliance.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total cost to *(a)* central Government and *(b)* local authorities of meeting the requirements of European Council Regulation No.2037/2000 as they relate to refrigeration units has been since 1 January 2002. [187019]

Mr. Morley: The Government were responsible for securing provision for additional costs that local government faced as a result of the ozone depleting substance Regulation 2037/00.

A special grant of £40 million was provided for additional costs that local authorities in England incurred as a result of implementing the Regulation for the period 2002–03.

£6 million was provided in the 2002–03 local government finance settlement to cover the period 1 January to 31 March 2002.

The Spending Review of 2002 included provision within the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services block for the continuing costs for 2003–04 onwards, which was incorporated into the special/hazardous wastes allocation.

Estimates for future expenditure have also been incorporated into the Spending Review for hazardous wastes. The actual amounts are significantly less than in 2002–03, because of the decrease in cost of the disposal of refrigeration units and the consequences of implementing producer responsibility under the waste electronic and electrical equipment directive (WEEE).

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of the ozone depleting substances covered by European Council Regulation No. 2037/2000 have been recovered from *(a)* domestic refrigeration and *(b)* commercial refrigeration units since the implementation of the regulation, broken down by (i) refrigerant fluid and (ii) foaming agent. [187020]

Mr. Morley: The information is not available in the form requested as the data on the recovery of ozone

depleting substances (ODS) do not identify the equipment from which they were recovered. In addition, it is not possible to calculate the percentage of ODS recovered from the refrigerant fluids. This is because, it is not known how much refrigerant fluid is in the unit on arrival at the licensed waste management site, as many units are damaged in use or transit, and fluid will have escaped before the units are received for disposal.

The following information is given.

The sites recovering ODS from foam, principally in relation to domestic units, range from a recovery rate of 40 per cent. to 80 per cent. of the theoretical maximum. The Environment Agency is currently investigating the reasons for this large variation.

The total amount of ODS including CFCs recovered from all equipment was: 387 tonnes in 2002 and;

494 tonnes in 2003.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what procedures are in place to ensure that *(a)* handling, *(b)* removal and *(c)* storage of refrigeration units results in minimal leakage of ozone depleting substances; and what measures exist to ensure an accurate monitoring of leakage. [187021]

Mr. Morley: Sites for the storage of fridges are regulated under the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994. A site licence is required and the standard permit requires storage of fridges to comply with a number of conditions, many of which are specifically aimed at reducing damage to refrigeration units while they are in storage. Compliance with these conditions is assessed during routine inspections.

Since most storage takes place outside, monitoring of leakage using instrumentation does not take place. However, the Environment Agency visually inspects the conditions under which fridges are stored and compliance with storage conditions minimises the risk of leakage from the coolant circuit.

Monitoring equipment is employed at the treatment facilities and emissions are analysed at the destruction facilities for recovered ozone depleting substances.

Severely Disadvantaged Areas

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms are located within land designated as *(a)* moorland within the upland severely disadvantaged area and *(b)* other land within the upland severely disadvantaged area. [186560]

Alun Michael: The number of farms that have submitted an area aid application for 2004 and are located within land designated as *(a)* moorland within the severely disadvantaged area is 30 and *(b)* other land within the severely disadvantaged area is 2,778.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms straddle the border between land classified as moorland within the upland severely disadvantaged area and other land within the upland severely disadvantaged area. [186561]

Alun Michael: The number of farms that have both land classified as moorland within the upland severely disadvantaged area and other land within the upland severely disadvantaged area is 3,068.

Sudden Oak Death Syndrome

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the risk from sudden oak death syndrome to woodlands in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and if she will make a statement. [187259]

Mr. Bradshaw: Central Science Laboratory and Forest Research have prepared a Pest Risk Assessment (PRA) for the whole of Great Britain which concludes that a number of tree species are potentially at risk from Phytophthora ramorum, the cause of Sudden Oak Death. The PRA also compared long-term British climatic data with that in Oregon where the disease is also present. This suggests that it is principally the south and the west of the country that are at the highest risk. The Forestry Commission completed a nation-wide survey of trees earlier this year and no evidence of the disease was found in trees at any of the 1,217 sites visited, which included some sites in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Forestry Commission has just completed a second more limited survey of 109 plots in England and Wales. While some of the 73 samples taken are still being processed, to date none of these have proved positive for P. ramorum.

Travel Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the travel costs were of civil servants in *(a)* her Department, *(b)* the predecessor Department and *(c)* the related agencies in each year since 1997. [183903]

Alun Michael: The following table shows overall departmental expenditure recorded since the Department was formed in 2001. These figures exclude agency figures which are shown in the agency table. There are no figures provided for the period prior to Defra's formation as Defra was formed primarily from two predecessor Departments and as this information could only be provided incurring disproportionate cost.

£000

Year end 31 March	*Departmental travel*
2001–02	11,192
2002–03	7,170
2003–04	7,069

The figures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 include travel expenses incurred as a result of foot and mouth disease.

All travel was in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

The expenditure figures for related agencies of civil servants in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is as follows:

£000

	Defra agencies
2001-02	4,065
2002-03	4,205
2003-04	4,951

Note:
The Defra agencies include: Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, Central Science Laboratory, Pesticide Safety Directorate, Rural Payments Agency, Veterinary Laboratories Agency, Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

Veterinary Antibiotics

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the total tonnage of veterinary antibiotics used in the UK, in the most recent year for which figures are available, were used for *(a)* farm animals and *(b)* domestic and other animals. [187478]

Mr. Bradshaw: The VMD collects and publishes figures annually on the UK sales of veterinary antimicrobials, including those sold for use in both food producing and non-food producing animals. It is reasonable to assume that there is a close correlation between these figures and the quantities of antimicrobials used in the UK. These figures are collected on a voluntary basis and the reports are available on the VMD web site at www.vmd.gov.uk under the publications and general tabs or from Dr. Kay Goodyear (telephone 01932 338409).

The most recent available figures show that of the 457 tonnes of active ingredient of veterinary therapeutic antimicrobials sold for use in 2002, 403 tonnes were products indicated for use in food-producing animals only, 24 tonnes were indicated for use in non food-producing animals only and 30 tonnes were indicated for use in both food-producing and non food-producing animals.

Water (South-West)

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has held with Ofwat about recent increases in water rates in the South West. [186964]

Mr. Morley: The Secretary of State has not met with Ofwat recently. However, I have meetings with Philip Fletcher, Director General of Water Services, from time to time at which we discuss a range of issues including water prices.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what central Government funding is available to defray the cost of replacing and updating water and sewerage pipes in the South West. [186965]

Mr. Morley: There is no central Government funding for pipe or sewer replacement for any area. It is for water and sewerage undertakers to maintain their networks, and the costs are taken into account by Ofwat in setting price limits.

Water Framework Directive

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress she has made on implementing the Water Framework Directive; and if she will make a statement. [186356]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* The Water Framework Directive sets out a staged timetable, up to 2015, for member states to transpose it into national law and implement its requirements.

The directive was transposed into English law at the turn of the year and implementation is well under way. Notification of the UK competent authorities was sent to the European Commission on 22 June 2004. The next key stage is the characterisation of river basin districts, identifying the pressures and impacts of human activity on the water environment, which must be completed by 22 December 2004. The Environment Agency, as competent authority for England and Wales, is working hard to ensure timely delivery of this analysis. They published initial characterisation results for public review on 1 September 2004.

Woodland Grant Scheme

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications were made to the Woodland Grant Scheme in each of the last three years; how many were successful; and what was the total sum of grant awarded in each year. [187151]

Mr. Bradshaw: For the Forestry Commission's Woodland Grant Scheme in England the number of applications made, number approved and the value of the grants in the approved schemes since 2001 are given in the following table.

Financial year	Woodland grant scheme applications	Approved schemes	Value of grants in approved schemes (£ million)
2001-02	2,500	2,184	17.9
2002-03	2,801	2,239	18.4
2003-04	3,017	2,333	23.0

Note:
The processing of applications takes a number of weeks so applications may have been received in a different year to that in which they were approved.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications under the Woodland Grant Scheme were received between 1 April and 28 June; what the total sum of money applied for was; how many of these applications have been successful; and what the total sum of grant approved is. [187152]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Forestry Commission received a total of 700 applications for a total of £3.9 million between 1 April and 28 June 2004 of which £1.1 million has so far been approved. The current status of all these applications is given in the following table.

Status	Number
Application withdrawn by applicant or rejected by the Forestry Commission	58

Status	Number
Awaiting information from the applicant in order to continue processing	148
Applications currently being processed by the Forestry Commission	246
Grant offer made	152
Offer accepted by applicant	96
Total	700

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what grants will be available from her Department or the Forestry Commission between now and 31 March 2006 to assist the creation of new woodlands. [187256]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Forestry Commission will continue to pay the woodland creation grants approved in existing Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) contracts. These contracts extend beyond 31 March 2006 and include capital grants for establishment, additional grants for afforestation of improved agricultural land and for creating new woodland with public access. A range of premiums will also be paid to support the National Forest, Community Forests, South West Forest and the North West's 'Forest Futures' initiative.

Subject to meeting the technical and administrative requirements of the WGS, grants will also be paid on those applications received before the WGS closed to new applications for new planting, but which have yet to be approved.

Payments will also be made under the associated Farm Woodland Premium Scheme operated by Defra. This makes annual payments in accordance with the terms of the scheme for up to 15 years. This scheme will apply to some of the WGS applications which have yet to be approved.

It is expected that from mid 2005 new applications for grant aid will be accepted by the Forestry Commission for woodland creation under the English Woodland Grant Scheme. This will be in time for planting to take place in the 2005-06 planting season, with grant payments being made from April 2006.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many woodland grants were made by her Department or by the Forestry Commission in respect of woodlands in *(a)* the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and *(b)* Buckinghamshire in each of the last four financial years; what the sum of such grants was in each such year; and if she will make a statement. [187257]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Forestry Commission made the following payments in the Chilterns AONB and Buckinghamshire under the Woodland Grant Scheme in the last four years.

a) Chilterns AONB

Financial Year	Number of Claims Paid	Claim Value £000
2000-2001	170	200.2
2001-2002	167	273.7
2002-2003	174	273.5
2003-2004	120	187.3

b) Buckinghamshire

Financial Year	Number of Claims Paid	Claim Value £000
2000-2001	176	238.8
2001-2002	186	327.6
2002-2003	179	270.0
2003-2004	134	198.6

In addition to the Woodland Grant Scheme, the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme administered by Defra made annual payments to farmers in compensation for income forgone as a consequence of converting agricultural land to woodland.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications for woodland grants her Department and the Forestry Commission has received during the current financial year in respect of woodlands in *(a)* the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and *(b)* Buckinghamshire; what the total sum applied for was; how many such applications, and to what aggregate value, have been approved; and if she will make a statement. [187258]

Mr. Bradshaw: Between 1 April and 28 June the Forestry Commission received nine applications for a total of £19,000 on land within the Chilterns AONB and 11 applications for a total of £22,000 on land within Buckinghamshire. The current status of these applications is given in the table below together with the value of those approved.

a) Chilterns AONB

Status	Number
Application withdrawn by applicant or rejected by the Forestry Commission	1
Awaiting information from the applicant in order to continue processing	1
Application currently being processed by the Forestry Commission	4
Grant offer made	1
Offer accepted by applicant	2 (Value of £1,600)

b) Buckinghamshire

Status	Number
Application withdrawn by applicant or rejected by the Forestry Commission	1
Awaiting information from the applicant in order to continue processing	4
Application currently being processed by the Forestry Commission	2
Grant offer made	2
Offer accepted by applicant	2 (Value of £1,900)

In addition to the Woodland Grant Scheme, the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme administered by Defra and which makes annual payments to farmers in compensation for income forgone as a consequence of

converting agricultural land to woodland is included with the one grant offer made in the Chilterns AONB area.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Age of Criminal Responsibility

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned on the effects of changing the age of criminal responsibility; and if he will make a statement. [186818]

Paul Goggins: We have no plans to change the current age, 10 in England and Wales, and have not commissioned research on the subject.

Crime

Mr. Anthony D. Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful criminal prosecutions were brought for crimes perpetrated in each Norfolk constituency in each year since 1997; and how many criminal charges were pressed for crimes perpetrated in Great Yarmouth in each year since 1997. [186717]

Paul Goggins: Statistics of defendants charged with offences are not collected centrally, nor is it possible to break down the court proceedings data collected centrally to constituency level.

The following table, however, gives the number of defendants *(a)* convicted and *(b)* not convicted in the Norfolk police force area as a whole:

Defendants convicted and those not convicted of offences of all types at all courts in the Norfolk police force area, 1997 to 2002

	Defendants convicted	*Defendants not convicted*[1]
1997	19,137	1,764
1998	17,537	1,564
1999	16,330	1,597
2000	15,083	3,351
2001	16,661	5,448
2002	16,608	5,234

[1] Includes defendants whose proceedings were discontinued, those discharged under Sec 6 MCA 1980, and those, whose charges were withdrawn, dismissed or acquitted.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish *(a)* the growth forecasts and *(b)* the forecasts of the number and proportion of young men in the population used as assumptions in the Trends in Crime model, Home Office Online Report 38/04. [187236]

Paul Goggins: The growth forecasts used as assumptions in the trends in crime model are those published by Her Majesty's Treasury in the Budget report 2004.

Projections for the proportion of young men in the population are published on the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) website.

Departmental Properties/Staff

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 13 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1053W, on departmental properties/staff, if he will place a list of the properties in the Library. [187338]

Fiona Mactaggart: The addresses of Home Office properties are not disclosed for national and personal security reasons.

Financial Advice

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many contracts his Department had with *(a)* Barclays, *(b)* Royal Bank of Scotland, *(c)* UBS Warburg and *(d)* Bank of Scotland for advice on private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts in each financial year since 2001–02; and what fees were paid in each case. [186694]

Fiona Mactaggart: From the best information available, there have been no such contracts placed with these organisations in the time period specified.

Hate Crime

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what hate crime legislation introduced in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 remains to be implemented; and when it will be implemented. [186887]

Paul Goggins: Sections 145 and 146 are the only provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 specifically relating to hate crime; these provide for courts to treat motivation by racial or religious prejudice, or prejudice related to disability or sexual orientation, as an aggravating factor in sentencing for any criminal offence. These sections are not yet in force, but section 145 is simply a re-enactment of existing legislation, contained in section 153 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000, that is already in force. The commencement date for these sections of the 2003 Act is currently under consideration and will be announced in due course.

HMS Daedalus

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department has made a formal expression of interest in HMS Daedalus to the Ministry of Defence on behalf of *(a)* the Prison Service, *(b)* another agency of his Department and *(c)* Hampshire Constabulary. [188145]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* I can confirm that my Department has not made a formal expression of interest in HMS Daedalus on behalf of the Prison Service or any other part of the Home Office. The acquisition of properties for use by the police is a matter for the appropriate police authority and Chief Officer of Police.

Lost Passports

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passports sent to his

Department for immigration purposes have been lost in each of the last five years; and how many were subsequently found. [181998]

Mr. Browne: Statistics on the number of letters issued for passports reported lost or mislaid in the Immigration Nationality Directorate would be available only at disproportionate cost.

However, in General Group, which processes all applications for variation of leave to remain from in-country applicants and considers applications for Home Office travel documents from non-British nationals, there were 53 issued from April 2001 to March 2002; 335 issued from April 2002 to March 2003; and 469 issued from April 2003 to March 2004. This should be balanced against the number of decisions made in the same period which were 380,000; 403,000; and 534,000 respectively.

Prisons

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Prison Custody Officer certificates have been issued by his Department for staff at HMP Bronzefield. [187102]

Paul Goggins: Her Majesty's Prison Bronzefield opened on 17 June 2004 and 135 Prison Custody Officers have been certificated.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Prison Custody Officer certificates have been withdrawn by his Department for each privately run prison in each month since 1 January 2003. [187103]

Paul Goggins: From January 2003 to March 2004, three Prison Custody Officer Certificates were withdrawn from Her Majesty's Prison Dovegate, one certificate at Her Majesty's Prison/Young Offenders Institution Altcourse and one certificate at Her Majesty's Prison/Young Offenders Institution Doncaster.

Since April 2004, one Prison Custody Officer certificate has been withdrawn at Her Majesty's Prison Dovegate and one certificate was withdrawn at Her Majesty's Prison Wolds.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Prison Custody Officer certificates have been issued by his Department for each privately run prison in each month since 1 January 2003. [187104]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is as follows.

	Certificates issued from January 2003 to March 2004	*Certificates issued since April 2004*[1]			
		April	*May*	*June*	*July*
HMP/YOI Altcourse	31	9	0	8	0
HMYOI Ashfield	123	12	1	1	9
HMP/YOI Doncaster	33	0	0	14	0
HMP Dovegate	132	2	3	3	9
HMP Forest Bank	69	1	0	20	0
HMP Lowdham Grange	66	11	0	11	0
HMP/YOI Parc	47	11	3	0	16
HMP Rye Hill	94	9	0	4	1
HMP Wolds	3	4	1	1	0
Total	598	59	8	62	35
Overall total since January 2003		762			

[1] The Office for Contracted Prisons took over responsibility for Prison Custody Officer certification on 1 April 2004.

Her Majesty's Prison Bronzefield opened on 17 June 2004 and 135 Prison Custody Officers have been certificated.

Retirement Age

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* set retirement age applying to all or most personnel and *(b)* maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered is in (i) his Department and (ii) its agencies. [186375]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Civil Service Management Code gives departments and agencies the authority to determine policy on normal retirement age for their own staff subject to the conditions set out in Chapter 11.3.

In answer to part 'A' of your question all non-industrial Home Office staff working in grades between Administrative Assistant and Grade 6, including equivalent grades will have the option to retire at any point between the ages of 60 and 65. The normal retirement age for the Senior Civil Service is 60. However, Heads of Departments and Agency Chief Executives have the flexibility to retain members of the Senior Civil Service beyond 60 if they judge it to be in the public interest and are satisfied about the fitness and efficiency of the individual to carry out his or her duties.

In answer to part 'B' of your question, Home Office policy continues to be that there should be no age discrimination on selecting candidates who have the relevant skills and qualifications and are considered to be capable of delivering value for money (i.e. a return on recruitment costs and training requirements before the normal retirement age). Up to and including Grade 6. European Law also prevents us from imposing age limits as part of the selection procedure.

Sentencing Guidelines

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Sentencing Guidelines Council will review the magistrates court guidelines. [187245]

Paul Goggins: The Sentencing Guidelines Council will in due course produce guidelines on all criminal offences. These will supersede the magistrates courts guidelines.

Young Offenders

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female prisoners under the age of 18 years were (i) serving a custodial sentence and (ii) on remand in each of the last three years in England. [186523]

Paul Goggins: The requested information is provided in the table.

Population of juveniles in STCs, LASCHs and prison establishments, by custody type and sex England, 30 June

	Immediate custodial sentence	Remand
Male		
2002	2,242	549
2003	2,016	518
2004	1,959	544
Female		
2002	173	44
2003	156	41
2004	150	32

Source:
Information on population in STCs and LASCHs is from the Youth Justice Board.
Information on population in prison establishments is from the Prison Service information system.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young offenders aged 18 to 21 are in prison *(a)* under sentence, *(b)* on remand and *(c)* in total; and how many there were on average in each category in each of the last five years. [187231]

Paul Goggins: The table shows information from the Prison Service information system on the number of young offenders aged 18–20 who were in prison establishments in England and Wales *(a)* under immediate custodial sentence *(b)* on remand and *(c)* in total in each of the last five years.

Population of young offenders aged 18–20[1] in prison establishments, by custody type England and Wales, 30 June

	Immediate custodial sentence	Remand	Total
2000	6,670	2,103	8,780
2001	6,728	1,867	8,597
2002	6,766	2,189	9,018
2003	6,779	1,920	8,789
2004	6,543	1,890	8,513

[1] The figures include young offenders who have turned 21 but who have not been reclassified as adults.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Criminal Cases Review (Angela Cannings Judgment)

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will take steps to ensure that those whose convictions are reviewed under the process set up after the Angela Cannings decision with no further action resulting are notified that a review has taken place. [172613]

The Solicitor-General: The review of cases identified following the Angela Cannings judgment follows a three-stage review process. First, the relevant CPS areas identify the key features in cases and then they are passed to a Central Review Team comprising prosecutors who are highly experienced in complex criminal casework. A smaller number of cases are then passed to the Interdepartmental Group for final consideration.

The review process is not determinative of whether any conviction is unsafe or not. Offenders' legal representatives will be written to where it is felt there may be features which warrant further consideration by either the Court of Appeal or Criminal Cases Review Commission. The Crown Prosecution Service will in each case where an offender is written to make an independent decision on whether to contest the appeal.

As the review process initiated by the Attorney-General is not determinative of the safety of any conviction it is not the intention of the Interdepartmental Group to notify each offender whose case does not contain features identified by the Court of Appeal in Angela Cannings. It is however open to any convicted person if it is felt he or she was wrongly convicted to appeal out of time to the Court of Appeal or to bring the case to the attention of the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the cost of running her Office's canteen facilities was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185381]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 20 July 2004]:* Since April 2002 canteen facilities at the Cabinet Office's core London buildings have operated on a nil subsidy basis.

In 2003–04, the Government Car and Despatch Agency, an Executive Agency of the Cabinet Office, incurred some £35,000 for the running of a canteen facility at its London Headquarters site. For the remainder of the Department's estate, either no such expenditure was incurred or figures can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Owing to changes in the Cabinet Office's accounting system, figures for 1996–97 cannot be readily retrieved without incurring disproportionate cost.

Directgov

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) which elements of the production and operation of the Directgov website are being outsourced to India; [181131]

(2) for what reason elements of the production and operation of the Directgov website are being outsourced to India; [181132]

(3) what the security implications are of elements of the production and operation of the Directgov website being outsourced to India; [181133]

(4) what assessment he has made of the economic effect on the United Kingdom of elements of the production and operation of the Directgov website being outsourced to India; [181134]

(5) if he will make a statement on the outsourcing of the production and operation of E Gov ventures to foreign countries. [181135]

Ruth Kelly: Outsourcing is a long established element of business. The UK gains economically from free and open global markets, and the Government believe companies should source from whichever country best fulfils their need.

Directgov website, powered by a bespoke content management system and application known as DotP, is government information organised and delivered by multiple departments. Directgov provides consistent information on UK government services for citizens and businesses, at home and overseas.

DotP is part of the secure central infrastructure that this Government are putting in place to ensure best value electronic government services. There has always been an outsourced element of DotP involving the private sector—these companies have obligations to make certain such work is carried out adopting government policy on security and competition, whether the work is carried out in the UK or overseas. The central infrastructure will continue to be developed in a way that ensures its viability and in line with government policy on security and competition. The intellectual property belongs to Her Majesty's Government. Any outsourcing under the contract has not resulted in a loss of UK jobs.

The approach to production and operation (i.e. the maintenance) of Directgov content is a matter for participating departments. As far as we are aware, at this time none of the elements of content production or maintenance are being outsourced to India.

Non-departmental Public Bodies

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if she will list the date of the most recent annual general meeting of each non-departmental public body held in accordance with Cabinet Office guidelines. [188811]

Ruth Kelly: Cabinet Office guidelines state that non-departmental public bodies should hold Annual Open Meetings where practical and appropriate. The Cabinet Office does not hold lists of the dates of such meetings.

The annual publication 'Public Bodies' indicates which NDPBs hold public meetings. Copies of 'Public Bodies' are available in the Library.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Community Legal Service

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many Community Legal Service franchises have been granted in Wales to firms undertaking *(a)* criminal work and *(b)* family work; and if he will make a statement. [188977]

Mr. Lammy: There are currently 212 solicitors' offices in Wales which hold either a full or temporary Specialist Quality Mark for Crime and a General Criminal Contract with the Legal Services Commission to provide legal advice and representation to people accused of or charged with a crime.

There are currently 286 solicitors' offices in Wales which hold contracts in the family category of law.

Welsh Language

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Department has adopted a Welsh language policy. [189085]

Mr. Lammy: My Department is committed to meeting the requirements of the Welsh Language Act. The Court Service, the Magistrates Court Committees in Wales and the Office of the Information Commissioner have schemes in place approved by the Welsh Language Board. The Legal Services Commission is in the process of finalising their draft scheme.

Documents produced by my Department are already published in Welsh, as well English whenever there is a clear need to do so.

After extensive discussion between the former LCD (and then the DCA) and the Welsh Language Board a draft Welsh Language Scheme for the remainder of the DCA was sent to the Board in September 2003 for final approval. The Board replied to my officials last December raising a number of new and unexpected issues.

A resolution to these issues was reached with the Board in August 2004, and my staff are currently making a few minor amendments to our draft scheme. I hope that we can now move forward to approval of the final scheme very soon.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

2012 Olympics

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding has been allocated for the 2012 Olympic bid. [189052]

Tessa Jowell: As stated in the Command Paper Cm 5867 laid before the House in June 2003, the Mayor and I agreed that DCMS and the London Development Agency should contribute to the costs of the bid organisation and associated planning in equal shares to a combined limit of £30 million.

Academic Consultation

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many times her Department has consulted members of the academic community with regard to *(a)* physical activity, *(b)* gambling and *(c)* alcohol since January; and if she will make a statement. [188749]

Mr. Caborn: The Department has consulted members of the academic community formally and informally on about 100 occasions so far this year in respect of gambling. There have been no consultations on either physical activity or alcohol since January.

Betting

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to undertake a review of fixed odd betting terminals; and if she will make a statement. [188857]

Mr. Caborn: I expect to see in November 2004 the report of the independent research on the usage of fixed odds betting machines, which was commissioned by the Association of British Bookmakers at my request. We shall be including provision in our proposed Gambling Bill for the statutory regulation of these and other machines which do not fall within the definition of gaming machines in the current law, but which nevertheless have all the essential characteristics of gaming machines.

Departmental Paper Sources

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what procedures are in place to ensure that paper and card products used by her Department originate from a sustainable source; and if she will make a statement. [189300]

Mr. Caborn: The Department takes seriously the commitment to sustainable procurement in respect of the supply of all goods and services. Contracts for the supply of paper and card products specify that content must be at least eighty percent recycled where the product allows. In respect of A4 copier paper only one hundred percent recycled paper is purchased. The onus is upon the supplier to show compliance.

Departmental Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if she will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188697]

Mr. Caborn: 100 per cent. of Confidential Waste is shredded and recycled. Other recyclable office paper is separated from general waste by providing staff with two waste bins and is all recycled. 80 per cent. of all card is also recycled, only high gloss card being excluded. It is the policy of the Department to recycle or compost all usable waste. In procurement the Department seeks to limit the amount of packaging in which goods are delivered, thereby reducing the amount waste to be disposed of.

Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects digital terrestrial broadcasting to be available in Pendle; and if she will make a statement. [188567]

Estelle Morris: Ofcom do not hold data on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) coverage in individual constituencies. However, according to Ofcom, DTT services are available to those constituents that receive their television signals from the Winter Hill or Pendle Forest transmitters. This includes viewers in Nelson, Barrowford, Brierfield and most of Colne.

At present around 73 per cent. of UK households can access DTT services, but the Government are committed to ensuring that at Switchover everyone who can currently get the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form (BBC 1 and 2, ITV, Channel 4/S4C and Channel 5) can receive them on digital systems.

Much progress has been made in the discussions between the Government, Ofcom and the Public Service Broadcasters and while the broadcasters have not reached a full consensus on the optimum timetable, some—including the BBC—have suggested that 2012 may be the most appropriate date for the completion of Switchover.

Historic Buildings

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many applications to build on sites of Scheduled Ancient Monuments have been approved in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [188774]

Mr. Caborn: Scheduled monument consents that are granted by the Department are not recorded by the types of works that are to be undertaken on them. Therefore this information is unavailable.

English Heritage inspectors take into careful consideration any works to scheduled monuments that are applied for, assessing the archaeology of the site and its national importance before advising the Department if consent should be granted.

Ofcom

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on progress in winding-up the heritage regulators whose work has been assumed by Ofcom. [188233]

Estelle Morris: The regulatory functions of the Independent Television Commission, Radio Authority, Oftel, and the Broadcasting Standards Commission were transferred to Ofcom on 29 December 2003; under transitional arrangements the bodies remained formally in existence, principally to provide for completion of the Annual Accounts. These have since been published and laid before the House, apart from those for Oftel, which will be published shortly. An Order formally abolishing these bodies will be brought forward in due course. In addition, the functions of the Secretary of State formerly performed by the Radiocommunications Agency have been transferred to OFCOM, but no winding up will be required in that case as the RA was part of the DTI.

Royal Palaces

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what living accommodation at St. James's Palace was allotted to members of the Royal Family prior to the move by HRH Prince Charles to Clarence House; to which members; and what the current disposition of that accommodation is. [188563]

Mr. Caborn: Prior to the Prince of Wales moving into Clarence House, St. James's Palace provided the official London residences for the Prince of Wales, the Princess

Royal and Princess Alexandra. The move has had no impact on the apartments of the Princess Royal and Princess Alexandra.

The former official residence of the Prince of Wales is being converted into office accommodation which will be used by staff from the Prince of Wales's household. Their previous offices in St. James's Palace are to be taken over by the Royal Collection Department.

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what residential accommodation at Buckingham Palace was allocated to members of the Royal Family, and to which members, *(a)* in 1999 and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [188564]

Mr. Caborn: Buckingham Palace is the official London residence for The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh. The Duke of York and Earl and Countess of Wessex also have residential accommodation in the Palace for use when they are in London. The position is unchanged between 1999 and now.

Tourism

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the level of Government grant in aid was to each regional tourist board in England in each year since 1997 *(a)* per head of population and *(b)* in real terms; and what the proportion was of (i) overseas and (ii) domestic tourists in England in each regional tourist board area in the same period. [188666]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) provided grant in aid to the English Tourism Council (ETC, formerly the English Tourist Board) between 1997–98 and 2002–03. Grant in aid was paid by the ETC to the Regional Tourist Boards (RTBs) as shown in the following table:

Grant in aid at 2002–03 prices

Tourism Board	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*£000 2002–03*
Cumbria	275	266	239	399	646	449
East of England	557	432	427	633	868	806
Heart of England	528	545	494	692	931	793
London[1]	513	432	382	433	1,964	1,900
Northumbria	284	241	273	394	570	447
North West	331	322	314	438	614	575
South East	363	315	303	385	552	544
Southern	519	526	471	606	759	766
South West	496	536	512	568	842	663
Yorkshire	572	564	504	597	755	655

[1] In 2001–02 and 2002–03, £1.9 million p.a. was passed from DCMS to the Greater London Authority (GLA). As well as £1.5 million for the promotion of London overseas as a destination and as a gateway to the rest of the UK, this included £400,000 for the development of tourism infrastructure, equivalent to the funding formerly passed to the London Tourist Board via the ETC. This funding is maintained under the current DCMS-GLA Agreement for 2003–06. £1.9 million passed to the GLA in 2003–04.

In 2003–04, DCMS funding for tourism development in the regions passed to the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The 2003–04 grant in aid payments to the RDAs are shown in the following table:

Grant in aid in 2003–04

Regional Development Agency[1]	*£000*
East of England	543
West Midlands	252
East Midlands	252
North East	333
South East England	744
South West England	403
Yorkshire and the Number	360
North West	713

[1] In 2001–02 and 2002–03, £1.9 million p.a. was passed from DCMS to the Greater London Authority (GLA). As well as £1.5 million for the promotion of London overseas as a destination and as a gateway to the rest of the UK, this included £400,000 for the development of tourism infrastructure, equivalent to the funding formerly passed to the London Tourist Board via the ETC. This funding is maintained under the current DCMS-GLA Agreement for 2003–06. £1.9 million passed to the GLA in 2003–04.

Grant in aid per head of the resident population for each Regional Tourism Board area is shown in the following table:

Grant in aid per head of resident population[1] *at 2002–03 prices*

Tourism Board	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*£ 2002–03*
North East	0.11	0.09	0.11	0.16	0.23	0.18
North West and Cumbria[1]	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.12	0.19	0.15
Yorkshire	0.12	0.11	0.10	0.12	0.15	0.13
Heart of England	0.06	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.10	0.08
East of England	0.11	0.08	0.08	0.12	0.16	0.15
London	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.27	0.26
Southern and South East[1]	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.12	0.16	0.16
South West	0.10	0.11	0.10	0.12	0.17	0.13

[1] Population Trends provides population figures for the standard administrative Government Office Regions (GORs). These are not identical to the areas covered by the RTBs but have been used as the best available approximation. It was necessary to combine North West and Cumbria, and also Southern and South East, to match the GOR figures.

Source:
Population Trends

The proportion of overnight tourism visits to each region[1] is shown in the following table:

[1] The International Passenger Survey and UK Tourism Survey provide estimates for the number of trips, including an overnight stay, made within the UK by overseas and domestic tourists respectively. It should be noted that, at regional level, these surveys have a relatively high margin of error.

Percentage

Tourism Board	*Proportion of total domestic tourism visits*			*Proportion of total overseas tourism visits*		
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
East of England	9	10	11	7	6	7
Heart of England	17	17	18	9	9	11
London	13	13	12	51	50	48
Northumbria	8	7	7	2	2	2
North West and Cumbria	11	10	11	6	6	6
Tourism South East	19	20	19	16	17	16
South West	13	15	15	6	6	6
Yorkshire	9	8	9	4	4	4

Note:
Regional UK Tourism Survey data is only available on a consistent basis back to 2000 due to a major change in the survey methodology.

Source:
International Passenger Survey, UK Tourism Survey.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the level of Government grant in aid was to the English Tourism Council in each year since 2000. [188742]

Mr. Caborn: In April 2003, functions of the British Tourist Authority and the English Tourism Council (ETC) were merged to form VisitBritain. Grant in aid for the ETC for the period 2000–03 was as follows:

Grant in aid to ETC

	£ million
2000–01	11
2001–02	9.6
2002–03	11.6

In addition, £3.8 million was awarded to the ETC in 2001–02 and further £1 million in 2002–03 from the Reserve to help tourism recover from the impact of foot and mouth and the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. In 2002–03, the ETC was also awarded £3.6 million over two years from the Invest to Save Budget to support the development of the EnglandNet project to establish an on-line tourism network for England.

Grant in aid allocation to VisitBritain for the domestic marketing of England was £10 million in 2003–04 and £12.9 million is available for 2004–05.

TV Licensing

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what TV Licensing's policy is on the number of times a household which has declared that it does not hold a TV licence because it has no television is re-contacted to verify that declaration; how much such re-contacting cost in the latest year for which figures are available; how many households fell within this category in the most recent year for which figures are available, expressed *(a)* in numerical terms and *(b)* as a proportion of UK households; and if she will make representations to TV Licensing to make these procedures less burdensome on householders. [189036]

Estelle Morris: The BBC has statutory responsibility for the administration of the television licensing system and TV Licensing carries out the day to day administration under contract to the Corporation. I have therefore asked the BBC's Head of Revenue Management to consider the questions raised by my hon. Friend and to write to him direct, placing a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

As part of BBC Charter Review, the Government will be considering how the Corporation should be funded after the expiry of the current Charter, including whether the existing arrangements might be improved.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Business Services

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether he has commissioned reports on how customer relationship management technology could be adapted to support local authorities in their development of joined-up services in relation to business; [188133]

(2) if he will make a statement on his Department's progress in ensuring that single business accounts are in place by the start of April 2006. [188221]

Phil Hope: Through the Local e-Government programme, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has supported the development of customer relationship management (CRM) technology appropriate to local authorities' needs. That CRM technology is a fundamental building block for local e-government, helping to transform local authorities' service delivery, including transactions with business. Building on that within the Local e-Government programme, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has also supported a

National Project on Working With Business (WWB), to provide a framework, called the Single Business Account, for local authorities to improve specifically their provision of information and transactional services for local businesses. The project completed its work earlier this year.

The WWB Project's outputs include a "Single Business Account" toolkit, which draws on data collected via authorities' CRM technology, and a "Single Business Account" pilot. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently supporting the dissemination of these and the Project's other products to ensure that all local authorities in England are aware of them and make maximum use of them. In particular, the products should help to ensure that they meet the shared target to have e-enabled 100 per cent. of their priority services by end 2005 in ways that their customers will use.

Further details about the project are available from enquiries@workingwithbusiness.org.uk

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188212]

(2) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188213]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member by my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackburn on 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1452W.

Essex Careers and Business Partnership Ltd

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assistance can be given under the Local Government Pension scheme to employees of the Essex Careers and Business Partnership Ltd., owned jointly by Essex, Southend and Thurrock councils, now in liquidation; and if he will make a statement. [188821]

Phil Hope: Essex Careers and Business Partnership Ltd. established its own pension arrangements for employees; they were not members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Consequently, the loss of any pension rights as a result of the company's liquidation needs to be resolved initially on that basis.

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will inquire into the decision of Essex, Southend and Thurrock councils to place the Essex Careers and Business Partnership Ltd. into liquidation from 31 March; and if he will make a statement. [188822]

Mr. Raynsford: Essex Careers and Business Partnership Ltd. (ECBP) was a private company delivering Careers Company services across Essex, Southend and Thurrock. Up until 31 March 2004 ECBP delivered these services under a contract with the Connexions Partnership (Connexions Essex Southend and Thurrock), and as a private company it is for the shareholders to decide if and when the company should be placed in liquidation.

Since the company went into liquidation the full range of 'Careers Service' activities has been delivered by Connexions Essex, Southend and Thurrock, and all ECBP staff working on Connexions activities have transferred under TUPE conditions to the Connexions Partnership.

Housing

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what time limit he put on his policy that everyone should have access to decent housing; and what progress has been made in delivering that policy. [187964]

Keith Hill: The Government's target is to

"By 2010, bring all social housing into a decent condition with most of this improvement taking place in deprived areas, and for vulnerable households in the private sector, including families with children, increase the proportion who live in homes that are in decent condition."

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is making good progress in delivering our target. In 2004 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will have cut the number of non-decent homes by 1 million, while £18 billion will have been invested in existing council and housing association homes since 1997. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has also helped over 130,000 vulnerable households in the private sector to bring their homes into decent condition.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what he determines as constituting decent housing. [187965]

Keith Hill: A decent home is one that meets the statutory minimum standard for housing, is in a reasonable state of repair, has reasonably modern facilities and services and provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

Further details are available in the document "A Decent Home—the definition and guidance for implementation" published February 2004, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House of Commons.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what impact the additional funding granted to his Department in the 2004 Spending Review will have on the provision of affordable housing *(a)* in the Tamworth parliamentary constituency and *(b)* in the West Midlands. [188114]

Keith Hill: The funding provided in the Spending Review will, along with efficiency improvements, produce 75,000 social rented homes and 40,000 homes for essential public sector workers and low cost homeownership over the three years to 2007–08. Decisions have not yet been taken on how Regional Housing Pot funding for 2006–07 and 2007–08 (including the additional funding for affordable housing) is split between regions. This needs to reflect the different pattern of needs across regions and the Government's national housing priorities, including

development of the growth areas, and targets. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister aims to complete this work, which raises some complex issues, by the end of the year.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will announce decisions on allocation of funding within regions next summer in the light of recommendations from Regional Housing Boards, which are due in May next year.

Housing (Windows Regulations)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what rules regulate the fitting of windows into houses, with particular reference to FENSA certificates; and if he will make a statement. [188908]

Phil Hope: The installation of both new or replacement windows or doors in dwellings in England and Wales must meet all the relevant requirements in the Building Regulations 2000, as amended. In particular, such windows and doors must allow adequate means of escape in case of fire, adequate ventilation for both the occupants of the dwelling and any combustion appliances in it, reasonable provision for the conservation of fuel and power used in the dwelling and, where necessary, safety glazing to protect against injuries from impact. Special considerations may apply in the case of some listed buildings or those in conservation areas.

FENSA certificates are documents provided by window and door installers who are registered members of the Fenestration Self-Assessment Scheme. The certificates states to the householder that the windows and doors installed meet fully the requirements of the Building Regulations. Where windows and doors are installed by a person who is not a FENSA registered installer, the installation must be notified to the local authority, which will then have the responsibility for checking that the work complies with the Building Regulations.

Local Government Pensions

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what considerations guided him in proposing the change from an 80 to an 85 age/years of service formula in the Local Government Pension Scheme; and when he proposes to implement this change. [188723]

Phil Hope: Proposals to phase out the 85 year rule in the Local Government Pension Scheme are part of the Government's general policy to implement an age 65 retirement date for the public sector. They will also ensure compliance with age discrimination legislation, which must be in place no later than October 2006, and assist in our intentions to ensure the affordability and sustainability of the Scheme. The changes are planned to take effect from 1 April 2005.

Regeneration Projects

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much expenditure has been allocated to regeneration projects in the North East, broken down by parliamentary constituency, in each year since the establishment of his Department; and what the planned expenditure is in the next financial year. [188293]

Phil Hope: It is considered that the information requested can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Regional Assemblies

Ann Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reason a preamble is to be included on the proposed ballot paper for the referendum on a regional assembly in the North East of England. [188805]

Mr. Raynsford: The purpose of the preamble is to ensure that electors are informed of the implications, particularly for local government, of voting on the establishment of a regional assembly.

The form of the ballot paper, including the wording of the preamble, is prescribed by the Regional Assemblies (Preparations) Act 2003*(a)* , which was enacted by Parliament last year.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Recyling

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of his Office's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if he will make a statement on his Office's recycling policy. [188699]

Mr. Hain: The Privy Council Office has responsibility for the day-to-day building management of the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons.

100 per cent. of non-confidential paper and card waste is recycled by the Privy Council Office, in conjunction with Westminster City Council.

The Office's policy is to:

- reduce the amount of waste produced;
- reduce the amount of waste by only disposing of waste that cannot be reused or recycled;
- dispose of waste that cannot be reused or recycled in a way which causes the minimum impact to the environment; and
- manage the Office's waste in line with the '3 Rs waste hierarchy' (reduce; reuse; and recover).

PRIME MINISTER

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

Mr. Beith: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the ministerial responsibilities he has assigned to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. [189119]

The Prime Minister: The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster will have a cross-Government role in the co-ordination of Government policy. He will also be responsible for the work of the Strategy Unit and the Policy Directorate. He is, a Member of Cabinet and will sit on a number of Cabinet Committees. He will also be responsible for Duchy business.

DEFENCE

Armed Forces Modernisation

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of

the ability of the United Kingdom to conduct military operations independently of the United States after the modernisation of the armed forces. [187567]

Mr. Hoon: The force structure changes detailed in the "Future Capabilities" paper that was published in July 2004 (Cm 6269) will provide a broad spectrum of capabilities to ensure that the UK is capable of conducting limited national operations, or of being the lead or framework nation for coalition operations at small and medium scale where the US is not participating. The full spectrum of capabilities is not required for large scale operations, as the most demanding operations could only conceivably be undertaken alongside the US, either as a NATO operation or a US-led coalition, where we have choices as to what to contribute.

Arms Exports

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how the Government monitors where permitted armament exports end up. [188132]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

The Government undertakes monitoring of such equipment in the recipient country when we believe this would genuinely help to minimise the risk of diversion and where such monitoring is practical. In addition, UK Overseas Posts have standing instructions to report any misuse of UK-origin defence equipment. Such misuse would be taken fully into account when the Government assesses any subsequent licence applications We may also, if appropriate, revoke other related licences, and consider whether to prosecute if any criminal offences had been committed.

Parliamentary Questions

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to questions reference 174180, 173337 and 173317 tabled by the hon. Member for Leyton and Wanstead. [178806]

Mr. Ingram: I replied to my hon. Friend on 10 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 604W, 14 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 724W and 1 September 2004, *Official Report*, columns 725–72W respectively.

Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst

Mr. Mackay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. [187481]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence remains committed to the delivery of officer training at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. Recent improvements to the site include substantial refurbishment of Victory College, and the building of a new Officers' Mess annex.

Russia

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the destruction of biological weapons material in the Russian Federation. [188334]

Mr. Hoon: Under the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, a number of countries have undertaken to consolidate and secure collections of pathogenic material in the Russian Federation and other countries of the Former Soviet Union. In the biological area the UK has given priority to the risks of proliferation of scientific expertise rather than materials.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what support his Department is providing for the reform of the military in the Russian Federation. [188366]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence has a bilateral Defence Relations Activity Programme designed among other objectives to facilitate appropriate military reform. Key elements are:

Military to Military Co-operation

The Naval programme has established affiliations between UK and Russian counterparts and progressed into exercises conducted by both ships and training establishments. Army co-operation has covered specific activities of UK expertise, including countering Improvised Explosive Devices and Peace Support Operations. It is intended to advance this programme through the development of unit affiliations leading to field exercises in the peace support arena.

The Russian Resettlement Project

Trains members of the Russian armed forces in skills that will assist them in finding civilian employment following discharge. Since 1995, we have trained 20,800 former members of the Russian armed forces, of which 70 per cent. have found gainful employment.

The Arctic Military Environmental Co-operation (AMEC) Agreement

The Arctic Military Environmental Co-operation (AMEC) Agreement between Norway, USA, Russia and UK aims to deal with the legacy of Soviet military equipment and ameliorate its impact on the Arctic environment. Since joining in 2003, the UK has become involved in a range of projects, including the dismantling and stabilisation of nuclear powered submarines and surface ships.

Financial Reform

The Russian MOD requested advice on financial control in the military, which was delivered via in-depth briefings at the MOD to Deputy Defence Minister Kudelina in early 2004.

NATO-Russia Council (NRC)

The UK also supports Russian military reform as a member of the NRC, which facilitates engagement between the 26 member states of NATO and Russia. It provides a forum for discussion of key issues, including defence reform.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his counterparts in EU member states about increasing the contribution of the European Union to non-proliferation efforts in the Russian Federation. [188369]

Mr. Hoon: None.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academic Performance

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether there is evidence from trends in academic performance that *(a)* pupils and *(b)* students from (i) white and (ii) other ethnic communities are increasing their level of performance. [188291]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Youth Cohort Study has been run by the Department for a number of years and collects information from young people after they have finished compulsory education. The following table shows the percentage of pupils that achieve five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C:

Attainment of five or more GCSE grades A-C in year 11 by ethnic group: 1991–2001*

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997[1]	1998	1999	2000	2001
Weighted sample	24,922	—	18,020	—	15,899	—	14,662	—	13,698	—	16,707
Percentage											
All	37	—	42	—	44	—	46	—	49	—	51
White	37	—	43	—	45	—	47	—	50	—	52
Black	23	—	21	—	23	—	29	—	39	—	36
Asian	33	—	36	—	38	—	45	—	48	—	52
Indian	38	—	45	—	48	—	54	—	60	—	60
Pakistani	26	—	24	—	23	—	29	—	29	—	40
Bangladeshi	14	—	20	—	25	—	33	—	29	—	41
Other Asian	46	—	50	—	61	—	61	—	72	—	64
Other ethnic group	[2]—	—	37	—	46	—	47	—	43	—	53
Not stated	18	—	16	—	29	—	27	—	26	—	30

[1] From 1997, includes equivalent GNVQ qualifications achieved in year 11.
[2] Not available.

Source:
Youth Cohort Study (England and Wales) cohorts 6–11, sweep 1.

Information on achievement of students is not available from the same source, but the following table, from the Higher Education Statistics Agency shows the numbers in higher education from different ethnic groups and the proportion of these groups who obtained first or upper second class degrees:

Proportion of first degree graduates in each ethnic group achieving a first or upper second class degree

	1997/98		2002/03	
Ethnic group[1]	*Graduates*	*First or 2:1 (percentage)*	*Graduates*	*First or 2:1 (percentage)*
White	180,130	53	201,355	58
Black	5,630	29	7,085	34
Indian	6,695	39	10,085	44
Pakistani	2,935	35	4,695	36
Bangladeshi	765	34	1,400	38
Chinese	1,835	44	2,525	45
Asian Other	2,095	40	2,735	46
Mixed	n/a	n/a	825	53
Other	2,820	47	3,505	52
Unknown ethnicity	27,720	48	16,125	45
Total	230,625	51	250,335	55

n/a = not available.
[1] Covers UK domiciled students only. From the academic year 2001/02 onwards, HESA has coded ethnicity using a more detailed ethnic breakdown that allows identification of those of mixed ethnicity. In years prior to this, those of mixed ethnicity will have been recorded in one of the other ethnic groups.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Archaeology

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether he plans to retain archaeology as a GCSE examination subject. [188549]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is regulator of the public examinations system. It oversees the work of the examinations awarding bodies, to ensure that their administration, marking and awarding procedures run smoothly. Awarding bodies are independent organisations and, as such, Ministers have no powers to intervene in their actions.

The QCA does expect awarding bodies to offer a broad portfolio of qualifications, but cannot insist on them offering specific subjects. QCA can, however, insist that the awarding bodies give sufficient notice to centres and give support to centres in finding suitable alternative qualifications. In this instance the QCA felt that appropriate notice had been given by AQA to drop its GCSE Archaeology specification and, considering the fact that most candidates were post-16 (there were only 92 pre-16 candidates for GCSE archaeology in 2003), the AS qualification seemed a suitable alternative.

When Ministers consider the final report of the Working Group on 14–19 Reform we will ensure that any proposals for reform will allow a wide range of qualification areas and subjects to be available to ensure choice and breadth of knowledge for learners.

Departmental Press Officers

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his projection is of the number of press officers employed in his Department for 2004–05. [187554]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: It is anticipated that 20 press officers will be employed in this Department in 2004–05.

European Languages Day

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to mark European Languages Day. [188037]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department, in conjunction with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and CILT, the National Centre for Languages, will be marking the day with a public event, to be held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The programme for the day of celebrations will include the European Awards for Languages ceremony, which will recognise the innovation and achievement of 17 different language learning projects across the education spectrum, and the launch of the Languages Work project.

Medical Training

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students *(a)* were admitted to and *(b)* graduated from medical training in the UK in each of the past 10 years. [189003]

Dr. Howells: The available information covering medical school intake and graduate output at institutions in England is given in the table. Information for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved Administrations.

Actual Medical School intake and output in England 1993/94 to 2003/04

Academic year	*Intake*	*Graduate Output*
1994/95	3,814	2,911
1995/96	3,486	2,983
1996/97	3,594	3,025
1997/98	3,749	3,261
1998/99	3,735	3,097
1999/2000	3,972	3,373
2000/01	4,300	3,286
2001/02	4,713	3,280
2002/03	5,277	3,522
2003/04	[1]6,030	n/a

[1] This figure is provisional until December 2004 when a finalised figure will be cleared.

Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Public Services Funding

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will identify, for *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the agencies and task forces for which his Department is responsible, each funding stream for public services in (i) the Isle of Thanet and (ii) the Canterbury City local authority area. [181730]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 1 July 2004]:* The Department provides funding for schools and their pupils aged 3–15, other education services, Children, Young People and Family Services, and the Youth Service, in the Isle of Thanet and Canterbury City, through Kent county council and local partnerships. In 2004–05, Kent county council and local partnerships in the county receive funding from the Department through the funding streams set out as follows. Schools can already spend most of these funds in any way they choose and we will be working with schools and local authorities to take further steps to rationalise funding streams, including a Single Improvement Grant.

Recurrent funding for education in Kent

School standards grant

Standards fund:

Advanced Skills Teachers

Aim Higher

Beacon Schools

Behaviour Improvement Programme

Building schools' capacity for continuing professional development

Early Excellence Centres

Education Health Partnerships

Enterprise Learning Pathfinders

Ethnic minority achievement grant

Excellence in Cities and Excellence Clusters

Extended schools

Federations

Key Stage 3 National Strategy: central coordination

LEA support for workforce remodelling

Leadership incentive grant

Leading Edge schools

Music services

Primary expansion

Primary Strategy Central Coordination

School development grant

School travel advisers

Specialist schools grant

Study support quality development programme

Summer schools for gifted and talented children

Targeted improvement grant

Targeted support for Key Stage 3

Targeted support for primary strategy

Training schools

Vulnerable children

Targeted transitional grant

Teachers' performance pay funding

Teachers' threshold pay grant

Capital funding for education in Kent

Academies capital[1]

Capital support for the expansion of successful and popular secondary schools[1]

Devolved formula capital

Excellence in Cities (City Learning Centres)

Failing Schools and Fresh Start[1]

ICT in schools (including ICT infrastructure, hands-on support, Broadband Interconnectivity and eLearning Credits

Interactive whiteboards

Modernisation funding

New pupil places (basic need)

Non-maintained special schools[1]

Private Finance Initiative

School travel plans

Schools Access Initiative

Seed Challenge

Specialist schools capital

Targeted capital funding

Voluntary aided schools capital

[1] Capital funding stream available to Kent, though the county does not currently have an allocation in 2004–05.

Recurrent and capital funding for children, young people and family services in Kent

Adoption and special guardianship grant

Child and adolescent mental health services
Children's fund partnerships
Children's social services supported capital expenditure (revenue)
Choice protects grant
Connexions partnerships
Integrated children's services grant
Safeguarding children's grant
SENDA funding for the youth service (to help the youth service become compliant with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act)
Sure Start general grant:
Non-ring-fenced funding:
Delivery support fund
Children's information service
Workforce development (recruitment and training)
Nursery schools development
Extended schools
New child care places in disadvantaged areas (revenue)
New child care places in other areas (revenue)
New child care places (capital for out of school child care)
New child care places in disadvantaged areas (capital for playgroup conversion)
New child care places in other areas (capital for playgroup conversion)
Ring-fenced funding lines:
SEN and inclusion (children with special needs and disabled children)
Children's centres (revenue)
Children's centres (capital)
Support childminder scheme
Neighbourhood nurseries (revenue)
Neighbourhood nurseries (capital)
Sustainability of child care places
Sure Start local programme funding
Teenage pregnancy
Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children leaving care
Transforming youth work development fund.

Recurrent and capital funding for post-16 learning and skills provision (outside higher education) in Kent

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for the funding of post-16 learning and skills provision (outside higher education) in the Isle of Thanet and City of Canterbury local authority areas. The Department provides funding to the LSC through the following funding lines:

Learning Participation
School Sixth Forms
Capital
Local Intervention and Development
Administration.

Recurrent and capital funding for higher education in Kent

There are five institutions in Kent LEA: three higher education institutions (HEIs) and two further education colleges who run higher education courses. All of these receive funding from Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). As there are no HEIs on the Isle of Thanet there is no funding by HEFCE. HEFCE provided funding for the following funding lines:

Teaching (core funding, additional places, widening access and improving retention)
Research (quality related research, capability fund)
Moderation of Teaching and Research
Rewarding and Developing Staff.

Truancy

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in *(a)* Suffolk county council and *(b)* Bury St. Edmunds constituency played truant from school in each of the last five years. [187179]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is as follows:

Suffolk county council

Academic year (September to May)	*Compulsory school age*	*Number of pupils that missed at least a half day due to unauthorised absence*	*Average sessions missed per pupil due to unauthorised absence*	*Percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absence*	*Attendance (Percentage)*
Primary					
2003	40,340	3,783	8	0.3	95
2002	40,686	3,826	8	0.3	95
2001	41,317	3,414	8	0.2	95
2000	40,358	2,994	8	0.2	95
1999	39,058	3,002	8	0.2	95
Secondary					
2003	49,322	10,382	15	1.1	92
2002	48,668	8,001	16	0.9	92
2001	47,925	6,352	14	0.6	92
2000	47,180	4,529	14	0.5	93
1999	45,750	4,545	18	0.6	93

Bury St. Edmunds

Academic year (September to May)	*Compulsory school age*	*Number of pupils that missed at least a half day due to unauthorised*	*Average sessions missed per pupil due to unauthorised absence*	*Percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absence*	*Attendance (Percentage)*
Primary					
2003	5,193	463	7	0.2	95
2002	5,253	439	6	0.2	96
2001	5,201	243	7	0.1	95

Bury St Edmunds

Academic year (September to May)	*Compulsory school age*	*Number of pupils that missed at least a half day due to unauthorised*	*Average sessions missed per pupil due to unauthorised absence*	*Percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absence*	*Attendance (Percentage)*
2000	5,191	220	9	0.1	95
1999	4,632	223	7	0.1	96
Secondary					
2003	9,714	1,444	13	0.7	94
2002	9,722	957	14	0.4	94
2001	9,588	727	13	0.3	93
2000	9,392	644	11	0.3	94
1999	9,163	692	10	0.2	94

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the level of voter registration necessary for the October 2004 and April 2005 elections in Afghanistan to ensure a credible democratic mandate for the resulting President and Government; what progress towards that level has to date been made; and if he will make a statement. [188073]

Mr. Rammell: The UN/Afghan official Joint Elections Management Body reports that over 10.5 million voters have been registered in Afghanistan; voter registration is now closed. Although there is no current detailed census information for Afghanistan, this figure clearly represents the overwhelming majority of those eligible to vote. This is a significant achievement and a clear demonstration of the desire of the Afghan people to participate in the democratic process.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Afghan Transitional Administration on the timing of elections in Afghanistan. [188355]

Mr. Rammell: We regularly discuss arrangements for the elections with members of the Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA) at official level. My hon. Friend the then Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs (Mike O'Brien) last discussed this subject with President Karzai and other members of the ATA in Berlin on 1 April.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice his Department is providing to the Afghan Transitional Administration on voter registration. [188359]

Mr. Rammell: Voter registration in Afghanistan has been conducted by the joint Afghan/UN Joint Elections Management Body. The UK was not asked to provide advice on voter registration and has not done so. We have contributed £11 million to the UN voter registration programme.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will break down funding that has been pledged by *(a)* the United Kingdom and *(b)* other United Nations member states for the electoral process in Afghanistan by main category; and how much of that funding has been delivered. [188360]

Mr. Rammell: The UK has contributed approximately £11.8 million to assist with voter registration for the elections in Afghanistan, as well as approximately £3.125 million for the holding of the presidential elections themselves. These funds have been delivered.

Detailed and up-to-date information on the elections, including figures for funding pledged and received by all the relevant donor countries is available on the website of the Afghan/UN Joint Elections Management Body: http://www.elections-afghanistan.org.af.

Anglican Church Property (Algiers)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what stage the negotiations with the Rt. Rev. Dr. Mouneer Anis of Egypt concerning the Anglican church property in Algiers have reached; and if he will make a statement. [188324]

Mr. Rammell: Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials met Bishop Mouneer in London on 28 June to discuss the Holy Trinity Church in Algiers. We agreed that we should work together over the coming months to agree a way forward. Work on this has already begun and will continue until a solution is found. We last contacted the Bishop on 3 September to inform him that we have gathered the relevant documentation, and to ask him to nominate a legal adviser. We await his reply.

Departmental Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if he will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188688]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's policy is to recycle all of its paper waste and thin card, generated in the UK. In 2003–04, 240.76 tonnes of this material were disposed of to recycling. This represents a high proportion of the total. An exact proportion cannot be given as small amounts of paper and card can be inadvertently disposed of in general waste which is not, at present, further sorted and measured.

EU Commission

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the National Assembly for Wales will be consulted by the Government before the EU Commission publishes proposals relevant to its powers; and if he will make a statement. [188976]

Mr. MacShane: The Government are in continual contact with the devolved Administrations about European proposals in their areas of interest, including at Ministerial level, through the Joint Ministerial Committee on Europe (JMC(E)). The Government seeks to reflect the views of the devolved Administrations in the UK negotiating position, which balances the interests of all parts of the UK. In general, the Government are in frequent contact with the devolved Administrations and other relevant parties when responding to specific Commission proposals.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans there are for the devolved Administrations of the United Kingdom to have representation *(a)* on relevant United Kingdom delegations in the EU Council of Ministers and *(b)* in preparatory meetings of COREPER; and if he will make a statement. [188980]

Mr. MacShane: Ministers from the devolved Administrations attend meetings of the EU's Council of Ministers when there are items on the agenda within their devolved responsibilities.

Officials from the devolved Administrations are accredited to the delegation of the United Kingdom Permanent Representation to the European Union and attend meetings of relevant Council working groups. They are in regular contact with the officials who represent the United Kingdom on these working groups.

During the UK Presidency of the EU in the second half of 2005 an official from the Scottish Executive will chair a Transport Working Group and an official from the Welsh Assembly Government will chair the Culture Working Group. These officials will brief the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative for meetings of COREPER.

Other officials from the devolved Administrations will sit in the United Kingdom seats on a range of other Council working groups during the UK Presidency of the EU.

Falun Gong

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the persecution of the Falun Gong in China; and what action the Government are taking to draw attention to this. [188634]

Mr. Rammell: We have serious concerns about human rights abuses against Falun Gong adherents in China. We regularly raise these concerns with the Chinese Government. At the most recent round of the biannual UK/China Human Rights Dialogue, held in London on 13–14 May, we again noted our concerns about the mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners in detention, and handed over a list of individual cases of concern which included Falun Gong prisoners. I also recently raised the issue of human rights with Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui during my visit to China in July.

Gibraltar

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the comments made by the Secretary of State for Defence during the Gibraltar Tercentenary celebrations in August that the enlargement of the European Union would have implications for Gibraltar, if he will make a statement on what those implications are. [188483]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* As the Government have often made clear, enlargement will bring a range of benefits, including economic ones, to both existing and new member states. Gibraltar with its record of economic dynamism is well placed to take advantage of these increased opportunities within an enlarged Union.

Intelligence Workers

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the rules are regarding British intelligence workers being asked to assist in the prosecution of someone abroad who may face the death penalty if convicted; and if he will make a statement. [188937]

Mr. Straw: The British intelligence and security services operate strictly in accordance with statutory provisions and requirements laid down by Parliament. Those requirements take full account of obligations under international law. In particular these services have regard to section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the safeguards in respect of disclosure of intelligence information in section 2(2) of the Security Service Act 1989 and sections 2(2) and 4(2) of the Intelligence Services Act 1994.

Iran

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress was made in discussions at the end of July between Iran, France, the UK and Germany concerning Iran's nuclear programme; what future talks are planned; and if he will make a statement. [188485]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* France, Germany and the UK have jointly drafted a resolution on Iran's nuclear programme for discussion at the meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency, taking place in Vienna this week.

Talks are continuing on a regular basis between senior officials.

Iraq

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the number of United Kingdom personnel working with Iraqi ministries *(a)* before 30 June and *(b)* since 30 June. [188344]

Mr. Rammell: On 1 June, there were some 180 UK personnel working for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, and who were involved in restructuring or assisting Iraqi Ministries or other Iraqi institutions. By the end of September there will be some 35 UK personnel working with Iraqi Ministries, 36 working with Iraqi Governorates or other institutions, and 87 assisting with police and prison training.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department is providing for *(a)* the establishment of systems of criminal and civil justice in Iraq and *(b)* the new Iraqi governments. [188349]

Mr. Rammell: We are providing support in Basra to strengthen the overall capacity of the criminal justice institutions by funding a training seminar to streamline co-operation and communication between the Iraqi police, prison service and judiciary at the provincial and national level. We are also providing six prisons advisors in the south to work with the Iraqi Correctional Service to improve standards and procedures.

We are providing capacity building assistance for the Iraq Special Tribunal tasked with bringing to justice members of the former regime suspected of committing war crimes. This includes support for training judges, prosecutors and court administrative staff.

The Department for International Development is also providing assistance to the judiciary including training for judges in international human rights standards. All other reasonable requests for assistance from the Iraqi Interim Government are considered.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department is providing to the Iraqi Special Tribunal. [188350]

Mr. Rammell: We have allocated £1.3 million for a capacity building assistance programme for the Iraqi Special Tribunal. This includes supporting training of a full Iraqi forensic team for the IST and training for judges and court administration staff.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with representatives of Islamic countries to encourage them to send troops to Iraq. [188356]

Mr. Rammell: The UK has a regular dialogue with Islamic countries in the region and elsewhere on matters relating to Iraq, including possible military deployments. The UK welcomes any contribution to the Multi-National Force. Any decision on troop deployments to Iraq ultimately rests with the Iraqi Interim Government.

Israel

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Israeli Government that it should ensure that the route of the security wall does not become the border of the Israeli state. [188498]

Mr. Rammell: As my right hon. Friends the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary have stated on numerous occasions, final status issues such as the border between Israel and a future Palestinian State can only be decided by the two parties during final status negotiations. We have made our view clear to the Israeli Government, most recently when the Foreign Secretary met with Israeli Vice Prime Minister Olmert on 8 September.

Libya

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to encourage *(a)* economic reform and *(b)* political liberation in Libya. [188370]

Mr. Rammell: The Government welcomes Libya's recent actions, in particular Libya's courageous decision to abandon weapons of mass destruction. The Government are working closely with Libya on governance, reform and human rights.

Since early 2004, through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Global Opportunities Fund, we have been developing and funding projects in Libya, including on administrative, economic and prison reform.

Ministerial Travel

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost was of chartering an aeroplane for his recent trip to Sudan. [188456]

Mr. Straw: The gross cost of chartering an aircraft for the return trip UK-Sudan-Kenya was £168,000. Accompanying media contributed £60,200, making a net cost of £107,800.

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the goals of the Government are for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2005. [188604]

Mr. MacShane: The Government are strongly committed to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The UK's goals for the review conference are to make the case for stronger and more effective counter-proliferation measures and to emphasise the importance of compliance with the treaty. We will do this in the context of emphasising the UK's good record on nuclear disarmament, and we will produce a final report of the studies that we have conducted on the verification of nuclear disarmament. We look forward to working with the chair and other countries before and during the conference itself to help secure a successful outcome.

Oil-for-Food Programme

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress of the inquiry into allegations of corruption in the Oil-for-Food Programme. [188346]

Mr. Rammell: The first report of the UN independent high-level inquiry into allegations of corruption and mismanagement of the Oil-for-Food (OFF) Programme, issued on 9 August, provides background information on the OFF Programme and the status of the inquiry, including its terms of reference and staffing details. A copy of the report is available on the OFF website: www.iic-offp.org/documents/IICSR.pdf. The report does not draw any substantive conclusions. We hope that the independent inquiry will issue a second report, on the role of UN staff and contractors, by the end of 2004. The UK continues to support the UN inquiry into the allegations of corruption of the OFF Programme. We are co-operating fully with the inquiry.

People's Mujahedin Organisation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the findings of the Coalition authorities on the activities of the People's Mujahedin Organisation of Iran personnel in Camp Ashraf in Iraq. [187551]

Mr. Rammell: The status of the residents of Camp Ashraf in Iraq was, until 28 June, a matter for the US authorities and has since then been the responsibility of the Iraqi Interim Government. We understand that each of the residents of Ashraf has been informed about his or her status.

Private Military Companies

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to bring forward legislation to introduce a regulatory regime for private military companies. [188354]

Mr. Rammell: There is an important and legitimate role for the private sector in providing security in post-conflict situations, such as in Iraq and Afghanistan. National armed forces do not always have the capacity to provide security to the international community's reconstruction and humanitarian efforts in these difficult security situations.

The growth in the size and importance of the UK private security industry operating overseas strengthens the case for regulation of this sector. Developing such regulation is a complex undertaking, as set out in the Government's Green Paper "Private Military Companies", published on 12 February 2002. There are a number of difficult questions of definition in deciding how to approach such regulation. The cost of regulation is also potentially high, for both Government and industry.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has instituted a further detailed review of options for regulation over the next few months The Government will keep Parliament fully informed of its thinking in this area.

Terrorism

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the efforts of the Government of Saudi Arabia to track down and bring to justice suspected terrorists; and if he will make a statement. [188074]

Mr. Rammell: The Government of Saudi Arabia have made clear their determination to fight terrorism. A number of suspected terrorists have been arrested and others killed in exchanges of fire with the Saudi Authorities. We are cooperating closely with the Saudi authorities in the fight against terrorism.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the assessment of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee in its report Foreign Policy aspects of the War Against Terrorism, published on 21 July, that Iraq has become a battleground for al-Qaeda. [188072]

Mr. Rammell: We will publish our full response to the Foreign Affairs Committee's report in the usual way by means of a Command Paper in due course. We continue to believe that most attacks in Iraq are the work of elements of the former regime and other disaffected Iraqis, although international jihadists have also been involved in attacks in Iraq.

Western Sahara

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on progress towards a referendum in Western Sahara. [188410]

Mr. Rammell: We seek a just, lasting and mutually acceptable solution to the Western Sahara dispute that provides the people of the Western Sahara with an opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination. We believe UN efforts to find a solution to the dispute should be maintained.

The next Secretary-General's Report on the Western Sahara will be published in October. This will cover the negotiations undertaken by the UN Special Representative to Western Sahara, Alvaro de Soto, since he was tasked with taking UN efforts forward in June 2004.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the US Administration on Moroccan sovereignty in Western Sahara. [188411]

Mr. Rammell: We have regular discussions with the US Administration on the question of Western Sahara. These have focused on ensuring that the UN process leads to a fair and lasting solution to this dispute that provides the people of the Western Sahara with an opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has discussed the Western Sahara with the Government of Spain; and what his policy is on the Joint Franco-Spanish Strategy in the territory. [188412]

Mr. Rammell: We have regular discussions with the Spanish Government on the question of Western Sahara. These have focused on ensuring that the UN process leads to a fair and lasting solution to this dispute that provides the people of the Western Sahara with an opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination.

We welcome new initiatives intended to resolve the Western Sahara dispute. It is important that UN efforts to resolve this dispute are maintained and any proposed initiatives are carried out in conjunction with UN efforts to find a solution.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what issues on Zimbabwe the Government are considering taking to the United Nations General Assembly; and what progress has been made. [188620]

Mr. Straw: Since 2001, we have tabled resolutions on Zimbabwe at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, but they have been defeated by no-action motions. We are currently discussing with our EU partners what action to take at the UN General Assembly this autumn.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Carer's Allowance

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the UK are paid carer's allowance; and how many applications have been rejected in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [188306]

Maria Eagle: The latest available information is that as at 31 May 2004 some 425,455 carers in Great Britain were being paid a carer's allowance[1], and that in the six months ending 30 June 2004[2] some 32,700 claims for the allowance were disallowed.

Information about claims for, and recipients of, carer's allowance in Northern Ireland is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Sources:

[1] DWP Information and Analysis Division 100 per cent. sample at 31 May 2005.

[2] DWP Carer's Allowance Unit Management Information Statistics. The figure includes some 27,000 claims that were disallowed because the person being cared for was not receiving an attendance allowance, or the care component of disability living allowance paid at the middle of higher rate, or the equivalent rates of constant attendance allowance paid under the Industrial Injuries Disability Benefit scheme or the War Disablement Pension scheme. Reliable data for the number of claims disallowed before 1 January 2004 are not available.

Employment Zones

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of the population live in an Employment Zone. [186423]

Jane Kennedy: We estimate that approximately five million people live in Employment Zone areas, representing just under 9 per cent. of Great Britain's population.

Housing and Council Tax Benefits

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many housing and council tax benefit claimants there were in *(a)* each local authority and *(b)* total in 2002–03. [189121]

Mr. Pond: The average number of housing benefit claimants during 2002–03 was 3,804,900; the average number of council tax benefit claimants was 4,590,900. The information for each local authority has been placed in the Library.

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of compensation he expects the Pension Protection Fund to provide to pensioners losing all or part of their occupational pensions when the scheme comes into existence. [188326]

Malcolm Wicks: When the Pension Protection Fund is introduced in April 2005, the level of compensation provided to members of eligible defined benefit schemes and defined benefit elements of eligible hybrid schemes will be as follows:

100 per cent. level of compensation subject to PPF Rules to those above the scheme's Normal Pension Age (NPA) immediately before the assessment date (the first day of the assessment period), and to those below NPA who are either in receipt of survivors' benefit or already in receipt of their pension on the grounds of ill health immediately before the assessment date.

90 per cent. level of compensation subject to PPF Rules to those below NPA immediately before the assessment date, subject to an overall compensation cap.

This is subject to Royal Assent being granted to the Pensions Bill.

Further details of the PPF compensation provisions can be found in Schedule 7 of the draft Bill.

Pensions

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 14 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 729W, on pensions, what a pensioner's income from the State Pension was in each year in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms, broken down by the components identified in footnote 3. [186768]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the tables.

The maximum rate of basic State Pension plus the average amount of additional State Pension in payment for recently retired men aged 65 and women aged 60 in:

(a) Cash terms

£

	1996	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
BSP Maximum Rate	61.15	62.45	64.70	66.75	67.50	72.50
Average additional State Pension	14.80	15.70	13.35	14.65	14.15	15.25

(b) Real terms (2004–05 prices)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	£ 2001
BSP Maximum Rate	74.75	74.50	74.20	75.35	74.00	78.10
Average additional State Pension	18.10	18.70	15.30	16.55	15.50	16.40

Notes:
1. Average additional State Pension figures are derived from a 5 per cent. sample of DWP administrative data taken at March in each year.
2. State Pension is calculated as the maximum rate of basic State Pension plus the average amount of additional State Pension in payment for recently retired men aged 65 and women aged 60. Weekly rates are shown.
3. The real value of Retirement Pension is calculated by uprating the cash value in April of each year to April 2004 prices. In each year the April increase in basic State Pension is related to the increase in the Retail Price Index in the year to the previous September. In most years the increase in the Retail Price Index in the year to April is not exactly the same as the increase in the year to the previous September. Measuring the real value of BSP in April inevitably appears to show some small reductions or increases that would not appear if the new level of basic State Pension were introduced in September. These small variations do not affect pensioner living standards as any differences in inflation are automatically reflected in the following year's uprating.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the sum required to produce an annuity of the same size as the minimum income guarantee/pension guarantee credit for pensioners with pension inflation protection in each year of the MIG pension guarantee credit scheme. [188810]

Malcolm Wicks: Table 1 estimates the amount that would be required to produce an inflation-protected annuity equal to the standard MIG/guarantee credit for a single person.

Table 2 estimates the amount that would be required to close the gap between a full basic state pension and the standard MIG/guarantee credit.

Table 1: The amount required to ensure an RPI escalating annuity income equal to the MIG/PC guarantee at the point of retirement

	Guarantee (£)	RPI escalating annuity rate (percentage)	Amount required to produce an income equal to the guarantee (£)
1999	82.25	6.94	62,000
2000	86.05	6.83	65,000
2001	92.15	6.54	73,000
2002	98.15	6.03	85,000
2003	102.10	5.45	97,000
2004	105.45	5.23	105,000

Notes:
1. The guarantee rate is for a single person, entitled to the highest age premium in the years before the age related premia were equalised.
2. The RPI escalating annuity rate has been provided by the Annuity Bureau for a single male aged 65; it is the top rate in December of each year (except 2004 where the top rate at September has been used) for a £100,000 sum.
3. The amount required has been rounded to the nearest £1,000.

Table 2: The amount required to purchase an RPI escalating annuity sufficient to close the gap between a full basic state pension and the MIG/PC guarantee at the point of retirement

	Guarantee (£)	Full BSP (£)	Amount guarantee exceeds BSP (£)	RPI escalating annuity rate (percentage)	Amount required to produce an income equal to the gap between the guarantee and a full BSP (£)
1999	82.25	66.75	15.50	6.94	12,000
2000	86.05	67.50	18.55	6.83	14,000
2001	92.15	72.50	19.65	6.54	16,000
2002	98.15	75.50	22.65	6.03	20,000
2003	102.10	77.45	24.65	5.45	24,000
2004	105.45	79.60	25.85	5.23	26,000

Notes:
1. The guarantee rate is for a single person, entitled to the highest age premium in the years before the age related premia were equalised.
2. The BSP is the maximum single person rate.
3. The RPI escalating annuity rate has been provided by the Annuity Bureau for a single male aged 65; it is the top rate in December of each year (except 2004 where the top rate at September has been used) for a £100,000 pot.
4. The amount required has been rounded to the nearest £1,000.

Pensions (Capita Forecasts)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the delay in the announcement of pension forecasts by Capita. [189086]

Malcolm Wicks: We are not aware of any delays in relation to the issue of pension forecasts by Capita.

If a member of a pension scheme is concerned that they have not received all the information they are expecting, they should contact the scheme in the first instance.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints the Department has received concerning the late announcement of pension forecasts by Capita. [189087]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has not received any complaints concerning the late announcement of pension forecasts by Capita.

Retirement Age

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what research has been commissioned by his Department on the effects on the health of men over 65 years in the 10 most deprived local authorities in the United Kingdom of raising the retirement age to 70 years. [189108]

Malcolm Wicks: There is no such thing as a state retirement age; many employers choose to set a retirement age for their employees typically at 60 or 65. The Government are currently consulting with key stakeholders on the future of retirement age in light of the 2006 age legislation, and will consider the effects of their final decision on individuals and employers.

The state pension age, the age at which an individual may receive their state pension is currently 65 for men and 60 for women. As announced in the 2002 Pensions Green Paper "Simplicity Security and Choice: Working and saving for retirement", the Government have no plans to increase the state pension age beyond 65. Our aim is to provide the choice and opportunity for all individuals to work longer if they wish and to retire at a point that best suits their circumstances. A number of new measures to support this approach were introduced in the 2002 Pensions Green Paper.

As we are not planning to increase state pension age beyond 65 we have not conducted nor commissioned the specific research raised in the question. However, DWP research report 182 "Working after State Pension Age: Quantitative Analysis" finds that those choosing to work beyond state pension age are much more likely than those not working to report excellent or very good health status. The findings from this report also indicate that those remaining in work beyond state pension age were as least as likely to maintain good health status as all other groups, and found some limited evidence that work could lead to improvements in health status. A copy of the report is available in the Library.

Stakeholder Pensions

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent assessment he has made of *(a)* the take-up of stakeholder pensions, *(b)* the number of employers who offer access to a stakeholder pension and *(c)* the proportion of employer-designated schemes that have no members; and if he will make a statement on the future development of stakeholder pensions. [188472]

Malcolm Wicks: Figures from the Association of British Insurers (ABI) show that at 30 June 2004 2,042,864 stakeholder pensions had been sold since their introduction in April 2001. Official figures for the 2002–03 tax year confirm that 98 per cent. of sales have been to people in work and that the majority of stakeholder pensions are being bought by those on modest incomes; over three-quarters (860,000) of stakeholder pension plans with contributions in them in that year were for workers earning under £30,000 a year and around two-thirds (660,000) were for those workers earning under £20,000 a year. Stakeholder pensions are now an established product and provide an important route for people to save for their retirement.

In total just over 500,000 employers offer their employees access to a stakeholder pension scheme. Of those around 270,000 employers have designated a stakeholder pension scheme as required by law. The remainder do so voluntarily, for example as additional or optional pension provision where a company pension scheme is in place. Many more employees now have access to a good value pension arrangement through their place of work irrespective of their position in the company.

The Employers Pension Provision 2003 survey indicates that around three quarters of employer designated schemes have no members. Research shows that an employer contribution is the most important factor in encouraging pension take-up by employees. Where there is an employer contribution, average take-up by the workforce is around 70 per cent.; compared with 13 per cent. where there is no employer contribution. We will continue to work with employers so they are aware of the important role they play in helping their employees provide for their retirement. Through our Informed Choice Programme we have a range of measures to encourage work place savings. Our initiatives will make it easier for employers to promote good schemes in the workplace, will extend the issue of combined forecasts of State, personal and occupational pension showing projected entitlement and establish the best ways of ensuring that their employees are provided with a decent standard of pension information through the workplace.

From April 2005 the stakeholder pension will become part of the Sandler stakeholder suite of savings products. The new structure will enable providers to market stakeholder pensions more actively and it will also be possible for firms to provide advice to more people. It will continue to offer a good deal for the consumer. Stakeholder pensions are part of our wider plans to help people to save for a decent income in retirement. These include our Informed Choice Programme, The Employer Task Force and the Pension Commission, all of which will assist in increasing private pension access and provision.

Unemployment Benefit

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of unemployment benefits has been *(a)* at current prices and *(b)* as a percentage of gross domestic product in each year since 1979. [188956]

Mr. Pond: I refer my hon. Friend to the written answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Vale of Clwyd (Chris Ruane) on 7 September 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1205–206W.

Work Injuries

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to promote rehabilitation services for people injured at work; and if he will make a statement. [R] [186481]

Jane Kennedy: The Government are taking many steps to promote rehabilitation services for people injured or sick, whether the cause is work related or not. These include the Department's work to produce and publish a Framework for Vocational Rehabilitation.

This framework will demonstrate the Government's commitment to vocational rehabilitation, and in the short term will help to improve understanding of what vocational rehabilitation is and the support that currently exists.

In the longer term, the framework will take additional steps to further promote rehabilitation services for people injured at work.

The Health and Safety Commission in their new strategy recognised the need to strengthen their role in promoting healthier workplaces and in getting people back to work through a much greater emphasis on rehabilitation. The Health and Safety Executive has therefore developed a best practice approach to help employers and managers, in partnership with their employees and their representatives, to proactively manage long-term sickness absence and help those who are absent from work due to sickness. In addition, existing occupational health services also have a role in promoting a return to work after an accident has occurred. NHS Plus, a network of occupational health departments in the NHS, provides such services, which are particularly focused on small and medium sized enterprises.

TREASURY

Civil Service Recruitment

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he had with the First Secretary of the National Assembly for Wales prior to his announcement in the Spending Review of job cuts affecting National Assembly employees; and when these discussions took place. [188979]

Mr. Boateng: The Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Minister of the Welsh Assembly Government have discussions from time to time on various matters.

Inland Revenue Customer Service Survey

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost to public funds was of the Inland Revenue's Customer Service Survey conducted by BMRB International in 2004. [188614]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb) on 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 832W.

Special Measures

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which Government Departments are subject to special measures. [185087]

Mr. Boateng *[holding answer 19 July 2004]*: All Government Departments are required to provide the Treasury with monthly expenditure reports. This year, as a condition for agreeing significant access to the Reserve in 2002–03, the Home Office and the Department for Constitutional Affairs have been asked to discuss their monthly expenditure reports with the Treasury. During 2003–04 both Departments have done so and made considerable improvements in their financial management systems. This has been welcomed by the Treasury.

As part of the normal relationship between these Departments and the Treasury there will be continued sharing of information and discussion of the issues. These measures are being refined and will become part of a common approach to sharing in-year financial information between Treasury and all Departments.

WALES

Turner and Newall

9. **Hywel Williams**: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with ministerial colleagues in the Department for Work and Pensions in respect of pensions for staff at Turner and Newall. [187929]

Mr. Hain: None. However, I am aware that Department for Work and Pensions Ministers have been in discussion with company and trade union representatives about this matter.

Further Education

10. **Mr. Caton**: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has held with Secretaries in the Welsh Assembly Government about the impact of the 2004 spending review on further education provision in Wales. [187930]

Mr. Touhig: SR2004 marks a once in a generation step change in the Government's financing of Wales and a huge investment in our future. The Assembly's budget will rise to almost £13.5 billion a year by 2007–08, and has been welcomed by Assembly Ministers. These resources will significantly enhance the Welsh Assembly Government's ability to enable further education provision in Wales

Higher Education Act

11. **Mr. Prisk:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent discussions he has had with Secretaries in the National Assembly for Wales on the Higher Education Act 2004. [187931]

Mr. Hain: Regular ones.

The Higher Education Act, transferring power for student support and the tuition fee to the Assembly, which has established an independent review under the chair of Professor Teresa Rees.

Anti-social Behaviour

12. **Huw Irranca-Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the effect of anti-social behaviour measures in Wales. [187932]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with Ministerial colleagues on matters affecting Wales.

Following the Government's lead, the Police, Community Safety Partnerships and others in Wales, are increasingly using the wide range of powers put in

place to tackle anti-social behaviour. New figures show that in the year to 31 March 2004 there was a 170 per cent. rise in the number of ASBOs issued in Wales.

Teachers

13. **Mr. Swayne:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Assembly Executive regarding the teaching profession in Wales. [187933]

Mr. Touhig: I regularly meet the Assembly Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to discuss a range of education issues.

Defence-related Jobs

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the First Secretary on the number of defence-related jobs in Wales. [187927]

Mr. Touhig: The defence industry supports many thousands of high quality jobs in Wales and we are keen to encourage further investment in this area. To this end, my right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with the Assembly and with Cabinet colleagues to explore the possibilities for securing more such quality jobs for Wales.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion, and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which his Department is responsible. [187315]

Mr. Touhig: The Wales Office has a total of 53 staff in the offices in London and Cardiff. In view of the number of staff and size of the offices, it is not possible to set rooms aside for any of these purposes.

The London staff can use DCA facilities. All DCA London HQ buildings have a room set aside for smokers. Male and female prayer rooms are available in Selborne House, Clive House and Steel House. Rest rooms are also available in these buildings for nursing mothers and pregnant women.

In Cardiff, staff can access facilities of the National Assembly for Wales at Cathays Park and Cardiff Bay. Two rooms are set aside for smokers in Cathays Park and one in Cardiff Bay. One prayer room is available in Cathays Park for use by all faiths. Nursing mothers and pregnant mothers have the use of two first aid rooms, one in Cathays Park and one in Cardiff Bay.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Computer Technologies

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what estimate she has made of the current and projected use of peer-to-peer file sharing home computer technologies with reference to the type of files exchanged and the volume of material exchanged; [188155]

(2) if she will provide an impact assessment of the growth of use of peer-to-peer file sharing home computer technologies for affected commercial sectors; [188156]

(3) if she will make a statement on her Department's strategy for the future public use of peer-to-peer file sharing home computer technologies. [188157]

Ms Hewitt: We believe that peer-to-peer file sharing activity currently involves music files more than other types of content, but this could change as broadband take-up increases. The British Phonographic Industry has published research indicating that 8.0 million people in the UK claim to be downloading music—with 92 per cent. of them (7.4 million people) using illegal sites. In my reply of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 69W, to a question asked by the hon. Member for Lichfield (Michael Fabricant) about illegal downloading of music, we acknowledged the serious impact on our creative industries from illegal downloading of music and welcomed the positive steps recently taken by the music industry to promote the availability of legitimate music tracks on the internet.

We hope that the development of further imaginative ways of marketing digital content will be given greater impetus by recommendations in due course from the Creative Industries Forum on intellectual property, which was announced in a written statement by my right hon. Friend, the Minister for the Arts, on 19 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 2WS. In particular, we hope the forum will explore the opportunities presented by digital media to provide consumers with attractively priced, reliable and secure alternatives to illegal downloading.

"Fairness for All" White Paper

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many respondents there were to the Fairness For All White Paper; and if she will make a statement on the content of the responses; [187940]

(2) what plans she has to take the proposals contained in the Fairness For All White Paper forward following the consultation period; and on what timetable; [187941]

(3) what plans she has to meet stakeholder organisations for further discussions on the Fairness For All White Paper. [187942]

Ms Hewitt: The consultation following the release of Fairness for All, officially closed on 6 August 2004. Over 450 responses have been received from a wide variety of stakeholders, interested groups and individuals. The Government is currently assessing all the responses it has received in detail and will publicly respond in due course.

The Government will continue to adopt an open and inclusive approach to involving stakeholder organisations in developing our proposals on the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR). As part of this approach we have already met with stakeholders through the independent advisory task force on 7 September. This meeting has advised on, and informed, the ongoing analysis of the 'Fairness for All' consultation.

The Government is committed to improving equality and human rights for all in our society. This underpins our vision of a modern, fairer and more prosperous

Britain. We are fully committed to the creation of the CEHR which we believe will help create a more equal and cohesive society.

The establishment of the CEHR will require primary legislation, and we intend to bring a Bill before Parliament as soon as time allows. We anticipate setting up a steering group to continue for 12–18 months to manage the planning and implementation of the key milestones towards the launch day. The CEHR will not be fully operational before the end of 2006 at the earliest.

Bodies (Funding)

Mr. Henry Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* current and *(b)* projected levels of funding are from her Department for (i) the Manufacturing Advisory Service and *(b)* Enterprise Insight. [186340]

Jacqui Smith: The information is as follows:

(i) Manufacturing Advisory Service

(a) In the current financial year (2004–05) the Department will provide funding of £4 million for the Manufacturing Advisory Service.

(b) In the following three years, the Department's expenditure in support of the regional operations of the Manufacturing Advisory Service will be £5 million in 2005–06, £6 million in 2006–07, and £6 million in 2007–08, as announced in the 2004 Spending Review. In addition, the Department will also fund a contract to manage the Manufacturing Advisory Service national network over the same period. The size of this contract has not yet been determined.

(ii) Enterprise Insight

(a) In the current financial year (2004–05), the Department is providing funding for Enterprise Insight of £753,000.

(b) This funding will rise to £5 million per annum in 2006–07 and 2007–08, as announced in the 2004 Spending Review.

Business Regulations

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many business regulations since 2002 have incorporated clauses to set a deadline for a regulation to cease to have effect unless renewed. [186355]

Nigel Griffiths: Two.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many regulations which affect small businesses have been abolished by her Department over the past year. [186351]

Nigel Griffiths: The information requested is not held centrally.

Companies Act 1985

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money has been paid into court pursuant to the provision of section 430(11) of the Companies Act 1985 in each of the past 10 years. [188600]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* This information is not collected centrally by legislative provision and could be provided only at disproportionate cost due to the amount of information to be processed and the need to retrieve information from files not currently in use. This information is therefore being withheld under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information on the grounds that it would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

Departmental Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if she will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188696]

Ms Hewitt: Between April 2003 to March 2004, over 98 per cent. of the Department's waste from its HQ operations was recovered for recycling or energy production.

The Department has a recycling strategy in line with the Government's framework for sustainable development, with appropriate procedures and facilities in place.

Departmental Staff (Upper Age Limits)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether *(a)* her Department and *(b)* agencies for which it is responsible (i) have a set retirement age which applies to all or most personnel and (ii) have a maximum age beyond which applications for employment will not be considered; and what the age is in each case. [186093]

Ms Hewitt: The retirement age for all DTI staff in grades below the Senior Civil Service is 65. For staff in the Senior Civil Service the normal retirement age is 60.

We require applicants for employment to have sufficient time to complete the required probation period (generally 12 months) for their grade or specialism before they reach age 65.

Economic and Social Research Council

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proposals there are to increase funding for the Economic and Social Research Council. [188402]

Ms Hewitt: The Government's commitment to the continuing excellence of UK science was reinforced by the outcome of the 2004 Spending Review, in which it announced annual real growth in the public science base of 5.8 per cent., through the DTI and DfES, which will see it climb to over £5 billion by 2007. That is more than a billion pounds more than this year and nearly double the expenditure in 1997. Under existing plans, the Economic and Social Research Council is expected to receive an additional £15.8 million next year as a result of the previous Spending Review. Allocations to Research Councils and other bodies through the Science Budget, for 2006–07 onwards, will be announced early in 2005.

Manufacturing Advisory Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the Manufacturing Advisory Service. [186345]

Jacqui Smith: The Manufacturing Advisory Service has been a huge success as a source of practical help to small and medium-sized manufacturing companies. It plays a vital role in helping our manufacturers to improve their productivity and to compete effectively in an increasingly global economy. In the period from its establishment in April 2002 to June 2004 the Manufacturing Advisory Service has delivered £66.8 million in added value to manufacturing companies it has assisted, with average productivity improvements running at 30 per cent. Its success was recognised in the recent 2004 Spending Review, as a result of which the Department's funding for MAS will increase to £17 million over the period 2005–06 to 2007–08, match funded by the regional development agencies. We are working with the regional development agencies and other stakeholders to ensure that we take full advantage of this additional funding to build on the success that has already been achieved.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total annual projected resource budget is for the Manufacturing Advisory Service. [187106]

Jacqui Smith: Following the 2004 Spending Review announcement, the Department's expenditure in support of the regional operations of the Manufacturing Advisory Service will be £5 million in 2005–06, £6 million in 2006–07, and £6 million in 2007–08, match funded by the Regional Development Agencies. In addition, the Department will separately fund a contract to manage the MAS national network over the same period. The size of this contract has not yet been determined.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual projected resource budgets are for each of the regional manufacturing advisory services. [187107]

Jacqui Smith: The Department is currently in discussion with the Regional Development Agencies about the regional allocation of the Department's funding for the regional operations of the Manufacturing Advisory Service over the 2004 Spending Review period. The Regional Development Agencies will be expected to match fund the Department's own contribution.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual resource budgets have been for each of the regional manufacturing advisory services since 2002. [187108]

Jacqui Smith: The Department's budget allocation in support of the regional centres of the Manufacturing Advisory Service in the South East, London, West Midlands, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, South West, and Wales, over the period 2001–02 to 2004–05, has been £1,350,000 each. The allocation to the North East has been £940,000, to the East Midlands £1,441,000 and East of England £1,145,000. The Department's budget allocation has been matched funded by the Regional Development Agencies in each region.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total annual budget for the Manufacturing Advisory Service as a whole has been since 2002. [187112]

Jacqui Smith: The Department's total budget allocation for the regional operations of the Manufacturing Advisory Service over the period 2001–02 to 2004–05 has been £12.9 million, match funded by the Regional Development Agencies. The Department's budget allocation for the management of the Manufacturing Advisory Service national network over the same period has been £1.2 million.

Medical Research (Animals)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to improve protection for the *(a)* employees and *(b)* investors of companies which carry out medical research involving animals; and if she will make a statement. [186333]

Ms Hewitt: The Government are determined to tackle animal rights extremists who attempt to stop individuals and companies going about their legitimate business.

On 30 July, together with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, I announced a series of tough new measures which will help deal with the illegal activists who harass, threaten or physically attack those involved in vital, life-saving scientific research. Animal research has helped save hundreds of millions of lives, and is only carried out where absolutely necessary and under stringent controls. This research is subject to the strictest regulation: Britain has the most tightly controlled regime governing animal experiments in the world.

The new proposals strengthen on-going action by the Government, the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the courts to deal with criminal extremists and underline the Government's commitment to protecting the scientific community.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many official visits she has made to the London Borough of Havering in the last 12 months; [189238]

(2) how many official visits she has made to Romford Market. [189239]

Ms Hewitt: None.

Research Councils (Grants)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the level of Government grant to each research council was in each of the last three years. [188401]

Ms Hewitt: The specific allocation made to each of the seven UK Research Councils, from the Office of Science and Technology 's Science Budget, for the last three years, is fully outlined in the DTI's publication, entitled the Science Budget, 2001–02 to 2003–04. Copies of the document were placed in the Libraries of the House.

Science and Innovation Investment Framework

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what qualitative analysis was undertaken in the preparation of the paper Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–2014, published in July, to determine the likely consequences of the proposed investment strategy on the types of research projects undertaken in the United Kingdom. [188078]

Ms Hewitt: A range of analysis was used in the preparation of the Science and Investment Framework 2004–2014 including a public consultation to which around 200 responses were received from individuals and organisations including businesses, charities, higher education institutes and representative organisations. The framework builds on the substantial work of the DTI Innovation report and the Lambert Review of Business-University Collaboration, both published in 2003. The proposed investment strategy does not attempt to determine the types of research projects that should be undertaken. Allocation of funding to specific projects will continue to be governed by excellence and relevance to the needs of potential users and the nation. The framework identifies the strategy to underpin the Government's ambition, shared with its partners in the private and not-for-profit sectors, is for the UK to be a key knowledge hub in the global economy, with a reputation for outstanding scientific and technological discovery as well as turning the knowledge into new products and services.

Science Expenditure

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the proportion of the United Kingdom total science spending which is fully independent of commercial interests; and what trends the Government have identified relating to past and future variations in this proportion of science spending in the UK. [188076]

Ms Hewitt: The Government's commitment to the continuing excellence of UK science was reinforced by the outcome of the 2004 Spending Review, in which it announced annual real growth in the public science base of 5.8 per cent., through the DTI and DfES, which will see it climb to over £5 billion by 2007. That is more than a billion pounds more than this year and nearly double the expenditure in 1997. The Government fully recognise the role that public and private organisations including businesses and charities play in the investment of the science base. As, outlined in the Science and Innovation Framework 2004–14, we aim to further encourage collaboration between the various organisations. No estimate has been made of the proportion of the total spend which is fully independent of such interests.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Abortions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of terminations performed in the Province in each of the last 10 years. [187453]

Angela Smith: The following table provides figures for the number of medical abortions recorded in Northern Ireland hospitals for each year from 1995 (the earliest year available) to 2003 (the latest year available).

	Number
1995	72
1996	64
1997	80
1998	71
1999	76
2000	82
2001	75
2002	76
2003 (Provisional)	73

Altnagelvin Hospital

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he to increase the number of critical care beds at Altnagelvin Hospital. [188677]

Angela Smith: The number of critical care beds at Altnagelvin Hospital has increased significantly in recent years. The hospital currently has nine critical care beds—five intensive care beds and four high dependency beds.

Critical care capacity at Altnagelvin and other hospitals is kept under regular review and we would expect continued expansion in bed numbers in future years in response to continued increases in demand.

Ambulances

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many of the total ambulance accidents in the last two years in Northern Ireland were attributed to *(a)* driver error and *(b)* mechanical failure; and if he will make a statement. [188373]

Angela Smith: Of the 121 road traffic accidents involving Northern Ireland Ambulance Service ambulances in the last two years for which information is available (15 April 2002–14 April 2004), 16 have been attributed to driver error and none to mechanical failure. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety does not hold information about accidents involving other ambulance service providers in Northern Ireland.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many road traffic accidents involving Mercedes Sprinter ambulances in the last two years in Northern Ireland were attributed to *(a)* driver error and *(b)* mechanical failure; and if he will make a statement. [188374]

Angela Smith: Of the 64 road traffic accidents involving Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Mercedes Sprinter A and E ambulances in the last two years (15 April 2002–14 April 2004), 12 have been attributed to driver error and none to mechanical failure. My Department does not hold information about accidents involving other ambulance service providers in Northern Ireland.

Births

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* recorded births and *(b)* birth defects there were in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [187770]

Angela Smith: *(a)* The number of recorded births in Northern Ireland each year from 1994 to 2003 (the latest year for which the data are available) is given in the following table.

Number of recorded births (live and still) in Northern Ireland, 1994 to 2003

	Births
1994	24,251
1995	23,838
1996	24,535
1997	24,218
1998	23,790
1999	23,089
2000	21,605
2001	22,074
2002	21,507
2003	21,756

(b) Information on all birth defects is not available. However, information is collected by the Chief Medical Officer on the number of children born each year suffering from a number of selected congenital malformations in Northern Ireland. This information is provided in the following table for the years 1994 to 2003.

Number of selected congenital malformations, 1994 to 2003

	Anencephalus	*Hydrocephalus*	*Spina Bifida*	*Downs Syndrome*
1994	3	6	19	29
1995	3	10	12	25
1996	6	5	6	38
1997	3	9	9	45
1998	7	10	11	42
1999	5	13	8	27
2000	0	13	9	32
2001	5	11	13	36
2002	6	9	9	12
2003[1]	3	6	12	32

[1] Figures not yet published by CMO.

Cancer

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* conclusions he has drawn and *(b)* actions he has taken following the publication of the second cancer statistics report of the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry. [188676]

Angela Smith: The "All-Ireland Cancer Statistics Second Report 1998–2000" is a comprehensive and constructive outcome of the Memorandum of Understanding between Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the National Cancer Institute in America. The report's data harmonisation, analysis and research will undoubtedly help to enhance our understanding of cancer. The report highlights areas of success and makes recommendations for action to improve cancer outcomes.

Detailed consideration of the report's findings and recommendations is being undertaken as part of the work of the Northern Ireland Regional Cancer Services Framework Steering Group, which is chaired by the Chief Medical Officer. The Framework Steering Group was set up in January 2004 to consider the future development of cancer services, including prevention, early detection, screening and treatment. The Framework Steering Group, which aims to build on existing health promotion initiatives such as the Tobacco Action Plan, is expected to complete its recommendations by December 2004.

Education

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* controlled grammar, *(b)* voluntary grammar, *(c)* Catholic maintained grammar, *(d)* controlled secondary, *(e)* Catholic maintained secondary, *(f)* grant maintained integrated, *(g)* controlled integrated and *(h)* independent schools in Northern Ireland provide post-primary education between the ages of 11 and 16 years; and how many pupils are educated in each. [188759]

Mr. Gardiner: The number of schools and enrolments are as follows:

	Number of schools providing post-primary education between the ages of 11 and 16	*Year eight to 12 enrolments at these schools*	*Total enrolment at these schools*
Controlled Grammar	17	10,838	14,883
Voluntary Grammar	53	35,529	48,464
Catholic Maintained Grammar	0	0	0
Controlled Secondary	68	34,884	37,289
Catholic Maintained Secondary	76	39,057	44,275
Grant Maintained Integrated	14	6,876	8,070
Controlled Integrated	4	1,951	2,007
Independent Schools	13	353	781

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of pupils educated in grammar schools in Northern Ireland gained five or more GCSEs at Grade A* to C in each of the last five academic years. [188760]

Mr. Gardiner: Figures for 2003–04 are not yet available. The percentage of grammar school pupils gaining 5 or more GCSEs at Grade A*-C in each of the previous five academic years is as follows:

	Percentage achieving 5+ GCSEs at Grades A-C*
1998–99	95
1999–2000	95
2000–01	95
2000–02	95
2002–03	96

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of pupils from Northern Ireland gained five or more GCSEs at Grade A*-C in each of the last five academic years; and what the figures were for England and Wales. [188761]

Mr. Gardiner: Figures for 2003–04 are not yet available. The percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more GCSEs at Grade A*-C in each of the previous five years is as follows:

Percentage achieving 5+ GCSEs at Grades A-C*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Northern Ireland	56	57	57	59	59
England	48	49	50	52	53
Wales	48	49	50	50	51

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of pupils from Northern Ireland gained two or more 'A' levels at Grade A*-E in each of the last five academic years; and what the figures were for England and Wales. [188762]

Mr. Gardiner: Figures for 2003–04 are not yet available. The percentage of pupils gaining two or more A Levels at Grade A-E in Northern Ireland, England and Wales is as follows:

Percentage achieving 2+ A levels A-E	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Northern Ireland	92	93	93	95	95
England[1]	82	83	87	89	90
Wales	91	92	93	94	94

[1] Includes FE sector colleges

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of pupils from Northern Ireland left school with no formal academic qualifications in each of the last five academic years; and what the figures were for England and Wales. [188763]

Mr. Gardiner: Figures for 2002–03 and 2003–04 are not available. The percentage of Northern Ireland pupils leaving school with no formal qualifications in each of the previous five years is as follows:

	Percentage
2001–02	5.2
2000–01	4.8
1999–2000	3.6
1998–99	2.7
1997–98	3.1

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education has advised me that equivalent information is not available for England and Wales.

Health Inequalities

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made towards removing inequality in *(a)* enjoyment of good health and *(b)* health services in Northern Ireland. [187766]

Angela Smith: There has been significant progress in removing inequality. This includes the comprehensive public health strategy, "Investing for Health", which has set an ambitious cross-governmental agenda to improve health and well-being and reduce health inequalities. It also has been addressed through the continuous development of the capitation formula, which ensures that the allocation of resources between Boards reflects need and the higher costs of delivering services in rural areas. More generally, the level of investment in primary care and hospitals throughout Northern Ireland will benefit everyone, but particularly those who are most in need.

Health Service

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients were detained on mental health grounds in Northern Ireland hospitals in each of the last 10 years. [188499]

Angela Smith: Information on the number of patients detained annually on mental health grounds in Northern Ireland hospitals is available from the Psychiatric Census, which is carried out in mental illness and learning disability hospitals on 31 March each year. Figures for the position since 1996 are as follows.

	Number of detained patients
1996	345
1997	383
1998	390

	Number of detained patients
1999	408
2000	365
2001	348
2002	—
2003	394

Information is not available prior to 1996 and figures for 2004 are not yet available. Figures for 2002 have not been returned by all hospitals; therefore it is not possible to provide a total Northern Ireland figure for that year.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to increase the number of specialist stroke units in the Province. [188526]

Angela Smith: There are already a number of specialist stroke units in Northern Ireland. In line with the evidence-based strategy for Stroke Services, stroke implementation teams have been established within each of the Health and Social Services Board areas. These teams will identify gaps in the current provision of stroke services and will explore the potential to increase further the number of specialist stroke units.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what public consultation process will occur following departmental recommendations from the review of public health functions in the Province. [188674]

Angela Smith: The recommendations from the Review of Public Health Function in Northern Ireland under consideration. Decisions on consultation have still to be taken.

Digital Hearing Aids

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate has been made of the number of people in Northern Ireland who would benefit from a digital hearing aid who do not yet have one; and what plans there are to increase the number of patients using digital hearing aids. [188532]

Angela Smith: There are estimated to be over 100,000 hearing aid users in Northern Ireland, and audiologists consider that around 90 per cent. of these could benefit from a digital hearing aid (DHA).

The new hearing aids were introduced on the health service, on a phased basis, in October 2003 and are supplied to new hearing aid users, if appropriate. It will take a number of years to re-assess every existing user's suitability for a DHA.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has included the wider provision of the new hearing aids in its Priorities for Action 2004–05, setting a target to supply 5,000 DHAs per year. An additional £0.5 million per year has been provided for this purpose, making a total of £1 million per year allocated to the provision of DHAs.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients have been provided with digital hearing aids in each of the last 12 months. [188533]

Angela Smith: Information on the numbers of persons provided with digital hearing aids is not available for each of the last 12 months. However, during the period from October 2003 to the end of January 2004, approximately 2,000 persons were provided with digital hearing aids.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on infection control procedures at hospitals in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [187442]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* MRSA and *(b)* total staphylococcus aureus cases have been reported in the Province in each of the past five years. [187808]

Angela Smith: The information requested is as follows.

Laboratory reports of MRSA bloodstream infections in Northern Ireland: 2000–04 (to 6 September)

2000	130
2001	190
2002	184
2003	252
2004	153
Total	909

Laboratory reports of all cases of staphylococcus aureus bloodstream infections (including MRSA) in Northern Ireland: 2000–04 (to 6 September)

2000	352
2001	426
2002	492
2003	595
2004	362
Total	2,227

These figures are based on voluntary reports made by Trust laboratories.

Medical School

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been made of the need for a second medical school in the Province. [188542]

Angela Smith: I am aware that the University of Ulster intends to investigate the feasibility of a new medical school, based at its North West campus. Subsequently it will be necessary to consider how any proposal from the university might meet the tests of viability and sustainability, as well as how such a proposal would be funded and developed within the wider context of tertiary education within Northern Ireland.

Prosthetic Limbs

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on *(a)* funding for and *(b)* development of services for those with prosthetic limbs. [187784]

Angela Smith: Funding for the prosthetic service is provided from the Physical and Sensory Disability Programme of Care. In 2003-04 expenditure on the prosthetics service totalled just over £1 million.

Representatives of the Prosthetic Users Forum met officials in the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in the Autumn of 2003 to discuss the prosthetics service and in March 2004, Green Park Healthcare Trust submitted to the Department a copy of the report 'Needs Assessment for Northern Ireland Regional Prosthetic Service'. This included a service development plan for 2004-05 costing £360,000.

The Department has included as an action in its Priorities for Action 2004-05:

'Boards and Trust should collaborate with Green Park Trust to develop the range of prosthetics available. In particular, this should include wider provision of an improved range of prosthetics for some 125 users by 31 March 2005. Boards should submit final figures for 2004-05 in their September progress reports'.

An additional £250,000 was allocated by the Department for this purpose.

A further meeting between representatives of the Prosthetics Users Forum and Departmental officials is being arranged and this will assist in developing future plans to further develop the prosthetics service.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on services in the Province for those with prosthetic limbs. [187785]

Angela Smith: A regional prosthetics service is provided by Green Park Healthcare Trust, on the Musgrave Park Hospital site, which serves just under 1,800 prosthetic users across a spectrum of ages and disabilities. The service benchmarks its performance against other prosthetic centres throughout the UK.

It is endeavouring to rise to the challenges of increased user expectation and new technology. Consideration is being given to further development. The service won the Prosthetics and Orthotics Services Innovation Award 2004, run by the Limbless Association in the UK.

Public Employees (Religion)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the religious breakdown is of the employees of the Child Support Agency for Northern Ireland. [188737]

Mr. Spellar: The following table details permanent and casual non-industrial NICS staff in the Child Support Agency as at 1 January 2004.

Community Background	*Number*	*Percentage*
Protestant	798	45.1
Catholic	943	53.3
Not determined	29	1.6
Total	1,770	

Public Transport

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many passengers travelled on *(a)* Ulsterbus, *(b)* Citybus and *(c)* Northern Ireland Railways in each of the last five years. [188732]

Mr. Spellar: The following table shows the number of passengers who travelled on Ulsterbus, Citybus and on Northern Ireland Railways over the last five years. The figures are in millions.

Million

	Ulsterbus	*Citybus*	*Northern Ireland Railways*
1999-2000	48.2	21.3	5.9
2000-01	46.8	20.3	5.9
2001-02	44.8	20.2	6.2
2002-03	46.0	19.9	6.3
2003-04	45.9	19.5	6.9

Racism

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was allocated to combating racism in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [187414]

Mr. Paul Murphy: You asked about the level of funding provided to combat racism in Northern Ireland since 1997.

As I and my ministerial colleagues have repeatedly stated publicly the nature and evidence of racist-inspired violence and harassment of minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland is both abhorrent and unacceptable to all right-minded people.

In response, action continues to be taken across Government and in partnership with our colleagues in the statutory, voluntary, community and business sectors aimed at combating it and redressing the distress of those suffering it.

It is also the intention of the various funding initiatives to help build the capacity of the communities concerned and the good relations with regard to the other communities here.

In the years since 1997, the following funding has been allocated to support minority ethnic communities as well as addressing racism within Northern Ireland:

	Sum awarded (£)
1998-99	883,944.41
1999-2000	794,847.09
2000-01	284,194.42
2001-02	701,857.46
2002-03	1,401,293.33
Total	4,065,836.60

The table details the total funding made available from the following range of sources for the period 1 April 1998 to 31 March 2003 inclusive:

European programmes managed by Government Departments;

Equality Commission NI;

Community Relations Council; and

Government Departments and non-departmental bodies.

The funding has been provided to meet core funding central management and administrative costs, and enable organisations to develop and provide services.

Details of funding provided since March 2003 is currently being collected and will be advised by supplementary answer at the earliest opportunity.

Warm Homes Scheme

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the take-up has been of the Warm Homes scheme in each Northern Ireland constituency for 2003, broken down by *(a)* numbers of installations and *(b)* total cost of work involved. [188735]

Mr. Spellar: The information is as follows:

Constituency	Cost	Number of homes (£)
South Down	858,206.81	837
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	642,868.21	473
Newry and Armagh	605,482.16	570
Belfast North	401,833.58	461
West Tyrone	535,021.67	452
Upper Bann	512,632.66	566
Mid-Ulster	481,125.69	426
Strangford	329,061.64	305
Lagan Valley	372,350.89	346
Belfast West	309,711.43	412
Foyle	327,759.35	381
Belfast East	248,275.24	282
East Antrim	246,630.49	277
Belfast South	212,373.11	241
East Londonderry	290,392.94	312
North Antrim	301,131.06	324
South Antrim	217,508.13	277
North Down	224,916.53	204
Total	7,117,281.59	7,146

Waste Disposal

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the most recent annual cost of disposing of *(a)* all waste and *(b)* disposable nappies in each council area in Northern Ireland. [187767]

Angela Smith: The three District Council Waste Management Partnerships are required to submit Annual Performance Reports to the Department of the Environment. The scope of these reports has recently been revised to include details of the combined costs for the treatment and disposal of wastes and the first new data set is due in October 2004. Information on disposal of disposable nappies is not collected separately by district councils. However, on receipt of the Annual Performance Reports, the Department will estimate the cost of treating and disposing of disposable nappies for Northern Ireland as a whole, as well as treatment and disposal costs for all wastes by district council. I will write to the hon. Lady when this information is available and a copy of the letter will be placed in the library.

HEALTH

Vegetarianism

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy *(a)* to devise a legal definition of the word vegetarian and *(b)* to ensure that vegetarian food products are clearly labelled; and if he will make a statement. [187522]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government is aware of vegetarian consumers' concerns that some food products may be inappropriately labelled as 'suitable for vegetarians'.

Consumers are protected by the Food Safety Act 1990 and the Trade Descriptions Act 1968, which contain general provisions outlawing false or misleading labelling. The Government therefore has no plans to introduce a legal definition of 'vegetarian'. It does, however, believe that establishing Food Standards Agency (FSA) advice for industry and enforcement authorities setting out minimum standards for use of the terms 'vegetarian' and 'vegan' may be helpful. The FSA plans to hold a stakeholder meeting on 24 September to explore this option.

Abortions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many women from Northern Ireland had terminations in England or Wales in each of the past five years. [188672]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend, the Member for Heywood and Middleton (Jim Dobbin) today.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many women undergoing an abortion in England and Wales in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003 had had (i) one, (ii) two, (iii) three, (iv) four and (v) five or more previous abortions. [189000]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is published in the annual Abortion Statistics, series AB, Office for National Statistics and Department of Health, Statistical Bulletin 2003/23 and Statistical Bulletin 2004/14, copies of which have been placed in the Library.

Criminal Record Bureau

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether Criminal Record Bureau checks performed by one NHS organisation can be transferred for use by another. [188001]

Mr. Hutton: In principle, Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosures are transferable between national health service employers and, in order to reduce bureaucracy and cost, the CRB has produced guidance to help employers through the procedure. But it is for the new employer to decide whether to accept a disclosure issued previously, having regard to such factors as the age of the disclosure, the similarity of the positions applied for and the nature of the information disclosed on the previous occasion.

Ectopic Pregnancies

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many ectopic pregnancies there were per 1,000 population for each major ethnic group in the last year for which figures are available. [187014]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of hospital episodes for ectopic pregnancies and the number of hospital deliveries, 2002–03. The information is taken from the hospital episode statistics (HES).

Ectopic pregnancies, national health service hospitals, England. Number of hospital episodes for ectopic pregnancy and number of hospital deliveries, 2002–03

	Number of ectopic pregnancies	*Number of deliveries*	*Percentage*
Asian	286	34,438	0.83
Black	447	22,206	2.01
Chinese and other	164	11,508	1.43
Mixed	69	3,554	1.94
White	4,819	306,830	1.57
Not given	3,022	168,036	1.80
Total	8,870	546,572	1.62

Note:
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed). Ethnicity data on HES should be used with care and may not yet be robust enough to support analysis of ethnic differences.

Source:
HES.

Free Eye Tests

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many old age pensioners in the Tamworth constituency have benefited from the introduction of free eye tests in each year since 1997. [188127]

Dr. Ladyman: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of pensioners are not collected centrally. Free sight tests for patients aged 60 and over came into effect on 1 April 1999.

The total number of national health service sight tests paid for patients aged 60 and over in the Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority for the years 1999–2000 to 2003–04 are shown in the table.

	Sight tests
1999–2000	105,830
2000–01	120,100
2001–02	115,940
2002–03	138,050
2003–04	139,450

Note:
Some patients aged 60 and over will be eligible for sight tests for other reasons as well, for example, on income grounds. The classification for such patients will depend on the patient and the practitioner.

Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients. Although most people do not come back for a sight test within the year, some patients suffering from medical conditions are advised to have re-examinations sooner.

Free School Fruit

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children in the Tamworth constituency benefit from the free fruit in schools scheme. [188126]

Dr. Ladyman: 3,774 children in the Tamworth constituency are benefiting from the school fruit and vegetable scheme. This represents a 100 per cent. take-up in 31 schools.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children in the Romsey constituency benefit from the free fruit in schools scheme. [187168]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Romsey will join the school fruit and vegetable scheme in November 2004, when children aged four to six will start receiving a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day. There are 966 eligible children at schools with a Romsey post code.

General Practitioners

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanism has been put in place to enable the smooth transfer of a general practitioner transferring from one primary care trust's performers' list to another. [188000]

Mr. Hutton: The mechanism by which a general practitioner moves from one primary care trust's primary medical performers list to another is specified in regulations 17(3) and (4) of the NHS (Performers Lists) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/585). Information about operation of medical performers lists is available on the Department's website at: http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/PrimaryCare/ManagementPrimaryCarePractitioners/fs/en

Gloucestershire Aneurism Screening

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the Gloucestershire Aneurism Screening Project; and if he will assess the case for extending the project across England. [186309]

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will introduce a national screening programme for abdominal aortic aneurysms; [187052]

(2) what assessment he has made of the screening pilot project for abdominal aortic aneurysms in Gloucestershire; and if he will make a statement. [187053]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 7 September 2004]:* The United Kingdom national screening (NSC) committee makes recommendations to Ministers on all aspects of screening programmes. It is currently considering the evidence for, and the feasibility of, implementing a screening programme for abdominal aortic aneurysms, including the implications for the national health service, before advising Ministers.

While screening has the potential to save lives or improve health through early diagnosis of serious conditions, there are benefits and drawbacks. The Government will take all factors into account, in particular the advice of the NSC, but also the experience of the Gloucestershire project, before reaching decisions.

Home Deliveries

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what care an NHS trust is required to provide to women wishing to have a home birth. [186115]

Dr. Ladyman: If a National Health Service trust provides a home birth service, it should ensure that suitably skilled midwives are available to attend the woman and to provide care and support throughout the labour and birth. Appropriate transfer arrangements should also be in place in case the woman or baby needs specialist medical care.

Hospital Infections/MRSA

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when Towards cleaner hospitals and lower rates of infection: A summary of action was commissioned; when it was signed off and ready for publication; and when it was decided to publish it. [185798]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We have an ongoing programme of work on infection control and hospital cleanliness, informed by advice from the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and the Chief Nursing Officer, which has produced publications such as the CMO's Getting Ahead of the Curve and Winning Ways. A summation of this work was commissioned by the Secretary of State on 1 July 2004 to improve public understanding of what was being done. The Secretary of State approved a final text of Towards Cleaner Hospitals and Lower Infection Rates on 9 July 2004 and the document was published and posted on the Department's website on 12 July 2004.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to ensure that the same *(a)* methods and *(b)* criteria are used to detect MRSA in all acute hospitals and in each department within those hospitals. [187065]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The detection and identification of methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) in samples is set out in the Bacteriology Standard Operating Procedures (BSOP) issued by the Health Protection Agency. All National Health Service laboratories accredited by Clinical Pathology Accreditation (UK) must have in place standard operating procedures that are based on, or give equivalent results to these BSOP Standards.

Patients who develop infection will have samples taken as part of their clinical care but trusts will also carryout screening for MRSA infection and colonisation. The NHS is recommended to use the report of a working party of the British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy, the Hospital Infection Society, and the Infection Control Nurses Association, published in 1998. This gives guidance on which patients should be screened for infection or colonisation by MRSA but policies will need to take account of local circumstances.

Infant Mortality

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 1 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 409W, on infant mortality, if he will set out *(a)* the baseline for the target to reduce the gap by 10 per cent. by 2010, *(b)* what the gap should be in 2010 if the target is met and *(c)* the current size of the gap between routine and manual groups and the population as a whole. [187853]

Dr. Ladyman: The baseline is the average of the three years 1997–99. In the baseline period, the infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births among routine and manual groups was 13 per cent. higher than the overall rate in all social groups (6.3 deaths per 1,000 live births compared with 5.6). I would underline that the target is to reduce the gap by at least 10 per cent. For the target to be met, in 2010 the infant mortality rate among the routine and manual group will be at most 11.7 per cent. higher than in all social groups. On the latest available data, 2000–02, the infant mortality rate among the routine and manual group was 16 per cent. higher than in all social groups.

Notes:

1. Social groups are as defined in the National Statistics socio-economic classification.

2. Figures for 'all social groups' and 'routine and manual groups' are for live births within marriage and joint registrations only, as social class can be allocated only to those groups where the occupation of the child's father can be identified.

3. The 'routine and manual' category consists of people in lower supervisory employment, sales and retail assistants, agricultural workers and technical occupations, semi-routine occupations, and routine occupations.

Mental Health

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will outline his Department's plans for the "Mind Out for Mental Health" campaign; what evaluation has been made of it; and how much has been spent on it. [187859]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The "Mind out for Mental Health" campaign ended on 31 March 2004. In June, we announced a new five-year strategic plan to tackle stigma and discrimination on mental health grounds, which will build on the work of the "Mind out for Mental Health" campaign and will be formally launched on World Mental Health Day, 10 October.

The "Mind out for Mental Health" campaign was evaluated twice: at the end of 2001–02 and 2002–03. Additional research was carried out on "Read the Signs", a strand of the campaign specifically targeted at young people. Copies of the evaluation reports have been placed in the Library.

A total of £3,473,000 was spent on the campaign since its launch in March 2001.

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will increase the numbers of consultants and nurses qualified to diagnose and treat myasthenia gravis. [188270]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of consultants, doctors and nurses specifically qualified to diagnose and treat myasthenia gravis is not collected centrally.

As at March 2004, there were 427 consultants in neurology. Since September 1997, numbers have increased by 149, or 54 per cent., and we are working towards increasing their numbers further.

We are encouraging more doctors to practise neurology by expanding the number of specialist registrar (SpR) opportunities in the specialty.

In 2003–04, central funding has been distributed to support the implementation of 10 additional SpR posts in neurology. All the posts have now been implemented. Trusts also have the opportunity to create up to 20 locally funded SpR training opportunities. Trusts were surveyed in February 2004, when six locally funded opportunities had been implemented, with the remaining 14 planned to have been implemented by August 2004.

In 2004–05, neurology has been allocated a further two centrally funded posts and strategic health authorities have been given freedom to agree as many additional SpR training opportunities as are necessary to achieve Working Time Directive compliance, subject to obtaining educational approval.

The number of nurses overall employed in the national health service has increased by 77,500 since 1997 and we are increasing the number of training places for nurses and midwives. Between 1996–97 and 2003–04, the number of students entering training to become a nurse or midwife has increased by 9,300, or 62 per cent.

National Service Framework for Children

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he proposes to publish the national service framework for children. [186073]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer dated 22 July 2004]:* The national service framework was published today.

NHS and Primary Care Trusts (Funding)

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 13 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1100W, on NHS and primary care trusts (funding), under which part of the Code of Practice on Access to Official Information he declines to make available figures collected by strategic health authorities on the financial position of NHS trusts and primary care trusts. [188047]

Mr. Hutton: This information is considered to be exempt under Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government information.

NHS Targets

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which previously published targets set for the NHS remain in place which are not listed in either the list of future targets or those to be achieved by March 2005 in the planning and priorities framework for 2005 to 2008. [188158]

Mr. Hutton: There are only 20 new national requirements set out in National Standards Local Action, the health and social care standards and planning framework for 2005 to 2008.

Fewer national requirements will create more scope for local priorities so that the national health service and social care has much more flexibility to deliver personalised services for patients and to recognise local needs and priorities.

While there is a need to focus on new priorities, it is essential that levels of service set through previous planning rounds are maintained. The Department will continue to monitor and report on all the commitments made.

Orthotics

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to develop the pathfinder programme with regard to orthotics. [187120]

Mr. Hutton: The pathfinder project was designed to deliver real changes at local level and to improve care for patients and included a consultation period with all the key stakeholders to determine how the findings of the orthotic pathfinder report can be adopted nationally and what resources services would need to achieve this.

This report differs from previous reports in that it describes a project that was designed to deliver the changes necessary to improve patient care rather than merely comment on the state of existing services. The document details the experiences of six trusts as they went through a process of change and the benefits that can be achieved if these changes were rolled out across the rest of the NHS. It details the specific changes made to improve the access to and clinical effectiveness of orthotic clinics.

The report has been published on the national health service purchasing and supply agency website and stakeholders have now the opportunity to respond. The report is intended not only to force the debate for change, but also to serve as a resource for those working to develop local solutions to local problems. We hope the information it contains can be widely shared, explored and evaluated both within and beyond the orthotic community. It would be premature to comment in advance of the community's response to this report and further evaluation on how we develop this important area of health.

Working Time Directive

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of the impact in the NHS of the working time directive on *(a)* the training of junior hospital doctors, *(b)* nurses and *(c)* accident and emergency departments in hospitals. [187949]

Mr. Hutton: Compliance with the working time directive (WTD) is a legal requirement for all employers. Responsibility for its implementation in the national health service rests with local operational authorities. We have vested responsibility for monitoring compliance with strategic health authorities (SHAs), as part of mainstream NHS performance management.

NHS trusts' plans to comply with the WTD were agreed with SHAs, which continue to support their achievement throughout the NHS. These plans take account of the need to maintain the quality of medical education and training; to develop the contribution made by staff in other disciplines; and to continue to provide excellent services to patients.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 16 September 2004

WALES

Departmental Staff

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many staff are employed in the Wales Office; how many there were in 1997; and if he will make a statement. [188997]

Mr. Hain: Staff numbers for the Wales Office, since its establishment on 1 July 1999, are shown in table 5.7 of the Wales Office Annual Report 2004 (Cm 6228), a copy of which can be obtained from the Library of the House.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Bexley Council (Asset Sales)

Derek Conway: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will investigate the process by which Bexley council proposes to dispose of the North Cray school site in Sidcup to London and Quadrant. [188590]

Phil Hope: Disposal of land by local authorities is governed by section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. Authorities have discretion to dispose of land in any manner they wish. The First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's only power is to grant or withhold consent where authorities wish to dispose of land at less than the best consideration reasonably obtainable and the proposed disposal falls outside the scope of the General Disposal Consent in ODPM Circular 06/2003. There are no statutory powers available to launch an investigation into the disposal process used in any specific case. If an individual feels the correct procedures have not been followed the best course of action would be to approach the Local Government Ombudsman.

Canvey Island (Housing)

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many additional houses he anticipates will be built on Canvey Island over the next 10 years; and how many school-age children he estimates will live in those houses. [189304]

Keith Hill: It will be for Castle Point borough council, as the local planning authority, to decide how many homes should be built on Canvey Island once the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England has been issued. It will also fall to the local authorities to consider how many school-age children are likely to live in any additional Canvey Island housing, having regard to local demography, types of housing to be provided and local educational standards.

Care Homes

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authority run care home beds there were in Surrey in each year since 1997. [188169]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The table shows the number of local authority staffed care home places in Surrey, as at 31 March for the years 1997 to 2001.

Number of local authority staffed care home places in Surrey at 31 March, 1997 to 2001

	Rounded numbers Number of places
1997	1,760
1998	970
1999	860
2000	860
2001	520

Source:
RA.

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Deprived Wards (Weston-super-Mare)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* score and *(b)* rank are for each of the wards in Weston-super-Mare according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 for each of (i) the seven domain indices, (ii) the sub-domains and (iii) the two supplementary indices. [188670]

Phil Hope: The Index of Multiple Deprivation (2004) is based on Super Output Areas (SOAs) rather than wards. SOAs are geographical units which are based on consistent areas of between 1,000 to 3,000 people. They are designed to measure small areas more effectively and to be consistent over time. Tables which show each of the wards in Weston-super-Mare and each of the Super Output Areas which make up these wards have been made available in the Library of the House. The scores and ranks of these SOAs are given as requested. In the ranks, 1 is most deprived. One of the Super Output Areas, in Wrington, is partially in this ward and partially in the adjacent ward. This SOA is included.

Disabled Facilities Grant Programme

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to abolish the means testing of the disabled facilities grant for the parents of disabled children in England. [188185]

Phil Hope: The Government are sympathetic to the difficult situation faced by families with disabled children, and announced a review of the operation of the DFG programme on 5 January 2004. In answer to a parliamentary question in the other place, the right hon. Lord Rooker said that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, jointly with the Department of Health will be reviewing the disabled facilities grant programme, in the context of the Spending Review 2004. A number of

financial and policy issues affecting the programme, including the operation of the means test and the maximum grant limit will be evaluated.

Energy Efficiency

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* pensioners and *(b)* other people have received help to insulate their homes in York in each year since 1997. [188947]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not collected centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Housing

Llew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the cost of bringing hard to heat homes in the current housing stock up to standards described in his programme for decent homes. [188613]

Keith Hill: The Government and their partners are exploring the most effective means of improving the energy efficiency of hard-to-heat homes in different circumstances, for example where gas supplies are not available or where construction precludes the installation of traditional cost-effective insulation measures. This work is being pursued in the wider context of progress against the UK Fuel Poverty Strategy.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new *(a)* social rented and *(b)* affordable homes have been provided in York in each year since 1997. [188948]

Keith Hill: The number of new registered social landlord dwellings for rent and low cost home ownership dwellings that have been built within York, as reported by the Housing Corporation, are tabled as follows:

	Registered social landlord dwellings for rent	*Low cost home ownership dwellings*[1]
1997-98	101	14
1998-99	0	0
1999-2000	155	6
2000-01	119	28
2001-02	50	3
2002-03	29	1
2003-04	35	12

[1] May include some refurbishment of existing dwellings

Leasehold Property Sales

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to allow the purchase of leasehold property, especially under Right to Buy, by Muslims on the same or a similar basis to freehold, who want to take advantage of the Budget provisions to allow purchase of property without the payment of interest and double stamp duty. [188014]

Keith Hill: The Government are aware of the barriers faced by social tenants who wish to use Sharia'a compliant loan finance packages to purchase their homes under the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes. These barriers exist in respect of both freehold and leasehold sales. To address them, the Government are considering ways of facilitating the sale of social homes to such tenants on voluntary terms. It intends to issue proposals for consultation soon.

Millennium Dome

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the schedule of maintenance and repairs for the Millennium Dome. [189319]

Keith Hill: The dome has been maintained under the terms of the contracts with MDL and Anschutz in order to hand over the dome for the construction of the arena and surrounding waterfront development. It has also been maintained sufficiently to enable it to be hired for short-term events in order to mitigate running costs.

The planned preventative maintenance regime that has been adopted covers the following categories of maintenance: fabric and supporting steelwork; air management system; water and drainage systems; services and plant; lighting; CCTV; voice alarm; fire alarm; landscaping; perimeter fence; and operational buildings required.

Regional Assemblies

Ann Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the proposed *(a)* question and *(b)* preamble on the ballot paper for the referendum on a regional assembly in the North East of England; and what assessment he has made of the Electoral Commission's statement on the proposed referendum question. [188804]

Mr. Raynsford: The form of the question and preamble on the ballot paper for the referendum on a regional assembly in the North East is prescribed by the Regional Assemblies (Preparations) Act 2003*(a)*. The question was amended during the passage of the Act to take account of the Electoral Commission's comments and those of others.

Unauthorised Roadside Sales

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will introduce additional measures to enable local authorities more easily *(a)* to prosecute owners of vehicles and *(b)* to remove vehicles which are placed for sale on the highway; and if he will make a statement. [187982]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Defra is currently consulting through it's 'Clean Neighbourhoods' document on a raft of measures that will improve the suite of powers available to local authorities in the management of our local environment. These would be taken forward once a suitable legislative opportunity arises. The document includes proposed measures on nuisance vehicles.

The proposal is to create a definition of 'nuisance' vehicle that would include vehicles that were detrimental to the amenity of an area or causing a nuisance. Local authorities would have the power to remove these vehicles immediately and recover the costs of doing so. It would become a prosecutable offence for being responsible for such a vehicle.

What constitutes a nuisance or detrimental to the amenity of an area would be clarified in regulations and will be subject to the results of the consultation. Vehicles which are placed on the highway for sale is being considered as part of this process.

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what legislation is available to local authorities *(a)* to prosecute owners of vehicles and *(b)* to remove vehicles which are placed for sale on the highway; and if he will make a statement. [187983]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Legislative powers available to local authorities currently cover vehicles that are abandoned. The Government recognises the link between abandoned vehicles and other irresponsible or inconsiderate vehicle ownership and is looking to give local authorities more powers to deal with these issues.

Defra is currently consulting through it's 'Clean Neighbourhoods' document on a raft of measures that will improve the suite of powers available to local authorities in the management of our local environment. These would be taken forward once a suitable legislative opportunity arises. The document includes proposed measures on nuisance vehicles.

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What constitutes a nuisance or detrimental to the amenity of an area would be clarified in regulations and will be subject to the results of the consultation. Vehicles which are placed on the highway for sale is being closely considered as part of this process.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Pre-trial Reviews

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Solicitor General what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of pre-trial reviews in the magistrates courts. [187946]

The Solicitor-General: Service has played an active, collaborative part in the Effective Trial Management Programme (ETMP), an initiative involving criminal justice agencies, and the judiciary, to plan, design and introduce non-legislative case management reforms heralded in the Government's White Paper, Justice for All.

During 2003, ETMP has tested a range of improvements to the pre-trial process in six criminal justice areas. These have included measures designed to ensure that pre-trial hearings in the magistrates' courts are held only where necessary to progress a case to an effective trial.

For example, in Essex, the first Area to introduce changes to the management of magistrates' courts cases, almost all contested cases are progressed outside of formal court hearings by case progression officers based in the courts, the CPS, and the police, working with the local judiciary, and a named contact for the defence.

There has been an independent evaluation of the changes introduced in Essex, which has calculated that this process change could result in a saving of 8,640 hearings in a year, leading to more efficient utilisation of courtroom time; a decrease in ineffective trials; and improved timeliness. Other test areas have introduced similar changes.

Guidance on how cases might be managed most effectively and efficiently from pre-charge through to conclusion, including the good practice and learning points from the ETMP test areas, is now contained within the Criminal Case Management Framework (CCMF). The Lord Chief Justice, the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor, the Attorney General and Baroness Scotland jointly issued the Framework on 21 July 2004. It states that "hearings before the court may take place if there is a material failure likely to affect the proper progress of the case."

All other remaining criminal justice areas are now planning, designing or implementing similar changes to the process.

TREASURY

Acceptance in Lieu

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* museum quality and *(b)* pre-eminent objects were granted conditional exemption by the Acceptance in Lieu Panel in each year since 1994. [187509]

Dawn Primarolo: Conditional exemption is granted or refused by the Inland Revenue rather than by the Acceptance in Lieu Panel. Exemption depends on the making of an acceptable undertaking in relation to preservation and access as well as on the standard of quality referred to in the question. The Inland Revenue have taken advice on quality from the Acceptance in Lieu Panel in cases where pre-eminent quality is required, following the changes in Finance Act 1998; prior to that the Inland Revenue sought advice directly from appropriate experts.

The available information is as follows: the figures show the number of objects or groups which remain exempt, net of the relatively small number of cases where relief given in the years shown has, subsequently been withdrawn, e.g. following a sale. The year shown is the year in which the exemption claims were finally granted and not the year of death or other transfer which determines the quality standard applicable to the claim.

	Number of objects or groups of objects	
Year	*Museum Quality*	*Pre-eminent*
1994-95	3,525	—
1995-96	7,651	—
1996-97	1,406	—
1997-98	3,135	—
1998-99	4,085	—
1999-00	2,690	—

Year	Number of objects or groups of objects: Museum Quality	Pre-eminent
2000–01	7,101	14
2001–02	1,395	36
2000–03	3,067	61
2003–04	1,060	700
2004–05 (to date)	—	99

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of *(a)* museum quality and *(b)* pre-eminent objects considered by the Acceptance in Lieu Panel were granted conditional exemption in each year since 1994. [187510]

Dawn Primarolo: The Acceptance in Lieu Panel have assessed the quality of objects which were subject to the "pre-eminent" test laid down by Finance Act 1998. Objects subject to the previous test were referred by the Inland Revenue directly to appropriate experts. Formal assessment of quality is the last substantive step in processing a claim, and apart from cases currently being finalised all cases which have reached the relevant quality standard have been granted exemption. The information available for cases rejected by the Revenue's advisers is as follows.

All cases considered up to and including 1999–2000 were subject to the quality standard applicable prior to Finance Act 1998; the split of rejected cases in subsequent; years between that standard and the pre-eminent standard required by Finance Act 1998 is not readily obtainable from the records available.

Year	Proportion rejected by value: Percentage
1994–95	0.2
1995–96	0.2
1996–97	0.5
1997–98	0.4
1998–99	1.3
1999–00	0.9
2000–01	0.2
2001–02	0.8
2002–03	3.0
2003–04	0.4
2004–05 (to date)	6.9

Employment (Yorkshire)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were in work in (i) City of York parliamentary constituency, (ii) City of York Council area and (iii) Yorkshire and the Humber in (A) May 1997 and (B) each May since then. [188954]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Hugh Bayley, dated 16 September 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were in work in (i) City of York Parliamentary Constituency, (ii) City of York Council area and (iii) Yorkshire and the Humber in (A) May 1997 and (B) each year since. I am replying in his absence. (188954)

The attached table gives the estimates of people in employment by gender in the City of York Parliamentary Constituency, York Unitary Authority and Yorkshire & Humberside region for the twelve months ending February each year from 1997 to 2004.

As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are subject to sampling variability. In particular, for smaller areas such as York Parliamentary Consistency, changes in the estimates from year to year may arise from sampling fluctuations and the pattern of change over a run of years should be considered rather than changes in individual years.

People in employment by gender in the City of York parliamentary constituency, York Unitary Authority and Yorkshire and Humberside region: 12 months ending February each year, not seasonally adjusted

Thousand

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
All persons							
City of York PCA	44	45	48	45	51	51	54
York UA	83	77	83	83	93	93	93
Yorkshire and Humberside	2,151	2,170	2,212	2,211	2,259	2,265	2,280
Male							
City of York PCA	22	24	28	25	27	28	29
York UA	44	43	45	44	49	49	50
Yorkshire and Humberside	1,163	1,178	1,202	1,197	1,208	1,221	1,233
Female							
City of York PCA	22	21	20	20	24	24	25
York UA	39	34	38	39	44	43	43
Yorkshire and Humberside	988	993	1,010	1,014	1,051	1,044	1,047

Source:
ONS—Labour Force Survey.

Allergy Relief Products

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the VAT rate on allergy relief products was in each year between 1974 and 1996; and if he will make a statement; [188933]

(2) if he will apply a zero VAT rate on allergy relief products; and if he will make a statement. [189151]

John Healey: Allergy relief products prescribed by a doctor and dispensed by a registered pharmacist have been VAT zero-rated since VAT was introduced in 1973.

Allergy relief products administered to patients in the course of medical care or treatment in a clinic or hospital have always been exempt from VAT.

A number of specific zero rates are available for goods designed specially for use by chronically sick or disabled people. Many allergy sufferers are not chronically sick or disabled; however, these reliefs may apply to allergy relief products in certain limited circumstances.

Since the introduction VAT, in the UK, allergy relief products supplied in all other circumstances are liable to VAT at the standard rate which, since 1 April 1991, has been 17.5 per cent. Prior to that, the standard rate of VAT was as follows: from 1 April 1973—10 per cent.; from 29 July 1974—8 per cent.; from 18 June 1979—15 per cent.

Long-standing formal agreements with our European partners allow us to keep our existing VAT zero rates, but do not allow us to extend them or introduce any new ones. It is therefore not possible to extend the scope of our zero rates to allergy relief products which do not currently benefit from zero-rating.

Civil Service (Job Losses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which services within his Department will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review. [189632]

Mr. Boateng: Full details of the workforce changes announced in the Spending Review are being worked through, and we are consulting all stakeholders including unions and staff.

Departments will come forward in due course with details of workforce changes once plans are finalised.

Diesel (Taxation)

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of taxation per litre is on diesel produced naturally from used cooking oil. [189292]

John Healey: The duty rate for diesel produced from biomass or waste cooking oil and used as a road fuel is 27.10 pence per litre providing that it meets the specification for biodiesel as set out in HM Customs and Excise Public Notice 179E "Biodiesel and Bioblend". If it does not meet the specification, it is dutied as a fuel substitute at the same rate as ultra low sulphur diesel (ULSD) which is 47.10 pence per litre.

Milk Tokens

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many eligible claimants of tax credit have been waiting for over six months for their milk tokens. [189279]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue provides the Department of Health (DoH) with monthly extracts from its database of people who, on the basis of information they report to the Revenue as tax credits claimants, are entitled to milk tokens.

The number of cases for which such notification to DoH is delayed for six months after the calculation of the award is thought to be very small. I understand from DoH that they currently have no delays in issuing milk tokens to eligible claimants based on data supplied by the Revenue.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland on 22 July on the value of applications made to the Crown Estate's Research Committee. [189472]

Mr. Timms: I did so on 14 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1508W.

Tax Collection (Costs)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost of collection of *(a)* national insurance, *(b)* income tax, *(c)* capital gains tax and *(d)* inheritance tax was in each year since 1997. [189430]

Dawn Primarolo: For years up to and including 2001–02, the costs of collecting income tax, capital gains tax, inheritance tax and national insurance contributions can be found on page 45 of the Inland Revenue Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2002 (published in December 2002). Figures for 2002–03 are contained within Appendix 2 of the Inland Revenue Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2003 (published in December 2003).

Tax Credit

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what action is being taken to ensure that the Inland Revenue's computer system is able to cope with the complexity of tax credit claims and payments; how many overpayments of tax credit have been made in the current financial year; what the value of those overpayments is; and how many overpayments are subject to recovery. [188897]

Dawn Primarolo: The new IT systems for tax credits have been introduced as planned and are delivering the processes for finalising tax credit awards for 2003–04 and renewing claims for 2004–05. Information about the number of overpayments in relation to 2004–05 tax credits awards will be available after those awards are finalised.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the tax credit appeal by the constituent of the hon. Member for Birkenhead, Mr. Matthew Morrison of Beckwith Street, Birkenhead, lodged on 19 April, will be heard. [189280]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue aims to settle tax credit appeals by agreement with the customer, wherever possible. For appeals that go to tribunal, the Appeals Service aims to hear cases within 12 weeks of receipt of a submission. The Inland Revenue wrote to Mr Morrison about his case on 24 August 2004.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value is of tax credit overpayments not recovered because the Inland Revenue accept that the

overpayment arose because of a mistake by the Inland Revenue and the person could reasonably have thought their award was right. [187842]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested for 2003–04 awards is not yet available.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value is of compensation awarded for tax credit errors made by the Inland Revenue. [187844]

Dawn Primarolo: Compensation payments can be made for mistakes or unreasonable delays. For payments during 2003–04, I refer the hon. Member to my reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Hamilton South (Mr. Tynan) and to the hon. Member for Northavon (Mr. Webb) on 20 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 190–91W.

Later payments up to the end of August 2004 totalled £570,000.

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement regarding the performance of the Tax Credits Office at Preston, and in particular its Disputes Team, with reference to the case of a constituent of Onslow Crescent in Solihull whose name has been communicated to him. [189159]

Dawn Primarolo: The Tax Credit Office (TCO) aims to reply to 80 per cent. of complaints within 15 working days and is on line to achieve this target this year.

The TCO is in contact with the hon. Member and his constituent about his constituent's claim.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abandoned Vehicles

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent research has been conducted on the number of vehicles being abandoned; and if she will make a statement. [188724]

Mr. Morley: The most recent data on the numbers of vehicles being abandoned in England has been collated through Defra's Municipal Waste Management Survey of 2002–03 and the Abandoned Vehicle Survey of 2002–03. Although these show an increase in the total amount of abandoned vehicles, the trend has significantly slowed since 2001–02.

Abattoirs

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abattoirs in the UK are licensed to kill over 30 month old cattle. [188491]

Alun Michael: There are currently 20 abattoirs in the UK contracted to slaughter cattle for the over 30 months scheme.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether cattle over 30 months may be transported to slaughter in the same lorry as those under 30 months. [188494]

Alun Michael: Cattle over 30 months can be transported to slaughter in the same lorry as those under 30 months, providing that all necessary animal movement and welfare legislation is adhered to.

Apples

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what special programmes are in place to support and encourage apple growing in England. [186287]

Alun Michael: There are no programmes specifically to subsidise apple growing, but, Defra funds a substantial research and development programme of benefit to apple and other fruit growers. Growers are also eligible for assistance under the England Rural Development Programme. In particular, Defra's Countryside Stewardship Scheme funds the conservation of about two-thirds of England's traditional orchards.

Bastroe Channel

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 16 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1340W, on the Bastroe Channel, what the findings were of the independent environmental impact assessment of the Bastroe Channel project by experts appointed by the Council of Europe. [187615]

Mr. Morley: The report of the independent on the spot appraisal conducted on behalf of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention on 22–24 July 2004 will propose that the Standing Committee make the following recommendations to the Government of Ukraine:-

1. to immediately suspend ongoing works in the Bystre canal estuary and abandon implementation of phase two of the project, for the purpose of preventing any significant modification of natural habitats of species listed in appendices I and II of the Convention and settled in the neighbouring maritime and shoreline areas; to carry out in-depth monitoring in physical and biological terms of the evolution of the Bystre estuary and canal;

2. to act on the recommendations set out in the UNESCO/Ramsar appraisal report (October 2003), which called for a fuller and more in-depth environmental impact study, analysing and comparing the costs to the public of the possible alternatives and the consequences of the works at transfrontier level;

3. to organise an international workshop in autumn 2004, under the auspices of the Council of Europe, with a view to drawing up a strategic plan for the sustainable development of the Vilkova region. This event, held at the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Ukraine, should bring together, alongside the ministries responsible inter alia for regional planning, environment, tourism and transport, representatives of scientific bodies (Academy of Sciences, Kyiv University, Institute of Ecology etc), local authorities (municipality of Vilkova) and local NGOs, as well as the main international organisations concerned by the project (MAB/UNESCO, Bonn/AEWA, Bern, Ramsar conventions and ICPDR).

4. invite the other two countries signatory to the trilateral agreement on cooperation in the natural reserves of the Danube delta and lower reaches of the Prut, namely Moldova and Romania, to participate in this event.

5. to ask for the assistance of international organisations to draw up this plan, in particular WWF International and IUCN, and that of the multi lateral lending agencies for its implementation (EU, EBRD, World Bank etc);

6. to reinforce protection of the active part of the delta by including the delta isle of Limba, located close to the mouth of the Chilia arm, right bank, in the core zone of the biosphere reserve, as well as the habitats of major ecological interest, lying to the south of Vilkova and currently included in the reserve's buffer and transit zones.

It is expected that the Bureau of the Standing Committee, meeting this month, will request that this report be placed on the agenda of the Standing Committee annual meeting on 29 November for consideration, together with a draft recommendation which the Standing Committee will be invited to adopt.

Chemicals Regulation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessments she has made of the effect on the number of experiments on animals of the new REACH regulations; and if she will make a statement. [187479]

Alun Michael: The EU proposal on REACH requires information to be gathered on chemicals in order to provide the basis for protecting human health and the environment. This information may come from a number of sources, one of which is animal testing. The Commission has estimated that this draft Regulation will require data to be gathered on approximately 30,000 chemicals. Of these, 20,000 are thought to be produced or imported in quantities of less than 10 tonnes. At this tonnage the current Commission proposal requires 25 animals per chemical, although it should be remembered that in most cases the tests are expected to demonstrate that the chemical concerned is safe and therefore involves no threat to humans or animals. It is a key objective of the UK Government's work on REACH to keep animal testing to a minimum. Discussions are continuing on that basis.

The Commission proposal would require further data as tonnage increases to reflect the greater potential human and environmental exposure. The tests performed need to comply with the relevant requirements for the protection of laboratory animals set out in Directive 86/609/EEC where, among other things, methods used must be refined in such a way as to minimise the amount of suffering caused to the animals concerned. Further, the chemical industry already has some of this data and there are other sources of information such as modelling of data and grouping of chemicals to read-across data from one chemical to another, all of which will reduce the amount of new testing that will be required. If recent experience from a major testing programme in the USA were to be duplicated in Europe, the number of new animal tests that will need to be undertaken will be significantly lower than the estimates talked about to date.

It is an overall objective, for the UK Government, in negotiating this Regulation, to ensure that animal testing is kept to the minimum necessary to protect human health and the environment. One of the ways we aim to do this is by applying an intelligent approach to testing.

The Government welcomes the Commission's efforts to minimise animal testing and recognises that several provisos have been included in the legislative proposal to encourage maximum use of existing data, avoid duplication of testing and use alternative methods wherever appropriate.

CITES

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the Government's policy on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species; and what steps the Government can take to influence the EU position on CITES. [188117]

Mr. Morley: The UK has always sought to maintain a balanced approach to CITES issues—basing its decisions on sound science. This means, promoting worthwhile and practicable conservation measures while upholding the principle of sustainable development. The views of the UK Government on these issues are widely respected both within the EU and CITES as a whole, and as such have been, and continue to be, very influential in shaping the EU position on CITES issues.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the resumption of a legal ivory trade; and what representations she has made to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species on this issue. [188119]

Mr. Morley: The UK Government and the other EU member states take the view that no decision on commercial trade in ivory should be taken outside the framework agreed at the last Conference of CITES Parties in Santiago. This allowed for a one-off sale of ivory stocks held by Botswana, Namibia and South Africa subject to certain strict conditions, which have yet to be met.

It is our view that it would be inappropriate to consider any wider resumption in the commercial trade in ivory until there has been a proper assessment of the wider impact of this proposed one-off sale. This is therefore the line that the UK and other member states will take at the forthcoming CITES conference in Bangkok.

Combined Heat and Power

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which combined heat and power plants she has visited in her official capacity. [187579]

Mr. Morley: None. Ministers and officials all meet regularly with the Combined Heat and Power Association and members of the industry. Departmental Ministers have visited a number of CHP schemes.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will give further details of the very serious challenges to be overcome highlighted in her foreword to the Combined Heat and Power Strategy. [187580]

Mr. Morley: The Strategy details a range of interventions in the market to help support CHP which, by their very nature, are needed to overcome the challenges ahead. We recognise the current unfavourable economic climate for CHP, which largely results from high gas prices and low electricity prices. We are therefore not complacent and will continue to monitor progress towards the CHP target and work in active partnership with industry to ensure delivery of the Strategy.

Cormorant Predation

Mr. Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1084, on cormorant predation, what additional measures will be introduced to help angling clubs and fishing owners protect fish stock in freshwater fisheries from cormorant predation. [189283]

Mr. Bradshaw: After careful consideration of cormorant population dynamics and modelling I am announcing a new strategy to help fishery owners and angling interests deal with the problems caused by cormorants.

A revised licensing system will make it simpler to apply for licences to cull cormorants where serious damage to fisheries can be shown. The new system will presume that where significant numbers of cormorants are present at a site, and it is clear that these are feeding on fish stocks, serious damage is occurring, or there is a risk of serious damage. However this will continue to be confirmed on a case-by-case basis, to ensure that Defra is satisfied that there is no other solution in accordance with the law, and to ensure that there are significant numbers of cormorants feeding which are causing, or are likely to cause, serious damage. Defra will continue its research into non-lethal methods of managing cormorant populations. Further work will be undertaken, in the near future, to test the applicability of fish refuges, optimise their design and to determine their most cost-effective spatial arrangement for them in still waters, as well as looking at ways to resolve problems in rivers.

The licensing system will be made simpler in the following ways Licences will be:

Issued for a period of up to two years;

Revoked or amended by Defra as necessary;

Issued between 31 August and 15 April;

Issued in advance to prevent problems occurring;

Issued without an assessor's visit unless it is a new licence application or where circumstances have significantly changed. Every site will be visited at least once every two years, with site visits being undertaken more often if this is considered necessary;

Licences can be amended by telephone, fax or by email

We will also ensure that the Environment Agency and other Defra agencies are aware of the changes and encouraged to follow permitted procedures where appropriate.

In addition to the measures above, where it is necessary to protect salmon and sea trout smolts, we will be prepared to issue licences to kill birds during the smolt run up to 1 May This extension will also apply to protect designated spawning sites, such as gravel shallows on rivers, for appropriate species of fish and fisheries. In addition those sites planning fresh stockings of fish in still waters will be able to obtain licences where such fish would be particularly vulnerable to attack.

The new licensing system is expected to lead to an increase in the number of cormorants culled. Mathematical modelling by the Central Science Laboratory suggests that the overall cormorant population would be reduced but would stabilise at a number significantly higher than its historic level. We will ensure that the cormorant population will be monitored through a refined Wetland Bird Survey count and, if necessary, the number of licences reduced in future years to ensure the stabilisation of the population.

The consequences of the new policy will be assessed on an annual basis and the number of cormorants allowed to be killed under licence adjusted as necessary to ensure stabilisation of the population. Defra will cease to issue licences for a period, and may consider revocation or suspension of licences currently issued, should the cormorant population not respond in the manner predicted. This will provide an added safety mechanism and will protect the conservation status of the bird, (as required under the Birds Directive), while providing enough flexibility to resolve fishery problems.

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a written ministerial statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which her Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188190]

(2) if she will make a written ministerial statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which her Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting of *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188191]

Alun Michael: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1451W.

Designated Accommodation

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many rooms are set aside for *(a)* the use of smokers, *(b)* worship, broken down by religion and *(c)* nursing mothers and pregnant women in each building and set of offices for which her Department is responsible. [187317]

Alun Michael: The implementation of these policies is decentralised so details are not readily available for the whole Defra estate. But the information for the Department's major headquarters sites in London,

Guildford and York and for the site of the Rural Development Service at Reading is as follows:

	Smoking	*Worship*	*Nursing pregnant*
9 Millbank	[1]	First aid room	First aid room
Cromwell House	1	First aid room	First aid room
Eastbury House	1	First aid room	First aid room
Ergon House	1	First aid room	First aid room
1a Page Street	1	First aid room	1
Nobel House	1	First aid room	First aid room
Whitehall Place East	1	First aid room	First aid room
Guildford	4	1	First aid room
Reading	1	On request	
York	3	On request	1

[1] Shares facility with Nobel House.

In the interests of providing a healthy working environment, Defra pursues a non-smoking policy in the workplace but provides smoking rooms wherever possible. The Department is committed to policies of equal opportunity and tolerance and responds to the needs of religious worship where this is required (for the Christian Fellowship, for Ramadan or for private contemplation for example). Also any conference room or meeting room can be booked for the purpose of religious observance. Similarly Defra seeks to serve the needs of nursing and expectant mothers. At smaller sites, provision for worship and nursing mothers is often combined with other facilities such as quiet rooms or first aid rooms for reasons of practicality and cost effectiveness.

Farming

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the farms in Essex which are predominantly *(a)* dairy and *(b)* cattle and sheep. [188726]

Alun Michael: As at the June 2003 Agricultural Census there were 33 holdings that were predominantly dairy and 396 that were predominantly cattle and sheep in Essex.

These figures include the unitary authorities of Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea. The Agricultural Statistics Act 1979 prevents the disclosure of the addresses of these holdings.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assistance will be offered to farmers who have suffered crop loss and crop value loss owing to weather conditions during harvest this year; and if she will make a statement. [187970]

Alun Michael: It is clear that there have been difficulties during one of the wettest harvest periods on record, particularly in some parts of the country. Defra officials had a detailed meeting with representatives of the NFU on 1 September where it was agreed that the position is still evolving and it would not be possible to establish an overall position for another 10 to 14 days. Until there is a fuller picture, it is not clear whether any measures to alleviate the situation would be warranted. Follow-up meetings are planned between my officials and industry representatives to discuss the issue.

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of the single farm payment on *(a)* dairy farmers, *(b)* cattle farmers and *(c)* sheep farmers in farms located within land designated as (i) moorland within the upland severely disadvantaged area and (ii) other land within the upland severely disadvantaged area; and if she will make a statement. [186559]

Alun Michael: Defra's assessment of the likely impact of the Single Payment is available on the website at: www.defra.gov.uk/farm/capreform/implementation/docs/webnoterev16.pdf

This includes information concerning the impact on farms of different types and farms within the Less Favoured Areas and I am placing a hard copy of the information in the Library of the House.

Foot and Mouth

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what the evidential basis was for the conclusion in the report, Origin of the UK Foot and Mouth Disease Epidemic in 2001, that the February 2001 UK outbreak and the September 2000 South African outbreak had a common origin rather than the South African outbreak being the origin of the UK outbreak; and if she will publish the results of the phylogenetic analyses which were undertaken; [183398]

(2) what outbreaks of the foot and mouth virus have been identified by the Government as providing a plausible common origin for the February 2001 UK outbreak and the September 2000 South African outbreak; [183399]

(3) if she will publish the results of further analyses of the genome sequences of isolates from the February 2001 UK and the September 2000 South African foot and mouth disease outbreaks and their likely origins, performed since the publication of the report on the Origin of the UK Foot and Mouth Disease Epidemic in 2001; [183400]

(4) whether a foot and mouth disease outbreak isolate with a closer phylogenetic relationship to the February 2001 UK outbreak than the September 2000 South African outbreak has been identified. [183402]

Margaret Beckett: The conclusion, in the report of the Origin UK Foot and Mouth Disease Epidemic in 2001, that the UK and South African epidemics are likely to arise from a common origin, rather than the South African outbreak being the source for the UK outbreak, is based on knowledge of the history of the disease pattern and control measures in place in both countries rather than any direct evidence from phylogenetic analyses. The detailed evidence for this conclusion is set out clearly in the main body and annexes 5 and 6 of the report published by my Department in June 2002. The report may be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/inquiries/lessons/fmdorigins.pdf.

Phylogenetic analyses alone cannot attribute causal relationships between outbreaks and can only provide data on the similarity between isolates. The following

two papers have been published on the possible origin of the UK 2001 outbreak. They include details of the phylogenetic analyses, the first comparing only VP1 sequence data and the second on the complete genome sequences:

Knowles, N.J., Samuel, A.R., Davies, P.R., Kitching, R.P. and Donaldson, A.I. (2001). Outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease virus serotype O in the UK caused by a pandemic strain. *Veterinary Record* 148: 258–259.

Mason, P.W., Pacheco, J.M., Zhao, Q.-Z. and Knowles, N.J. (2003). Comparisons of the complete genomes of Asian, African and European isolates of a recent foot-and-mouth disease virus type O pandemic strain (PanAsia). *Journal of General Virology* 84: 1583–1593.

No viruses have been submitted to the World Reference Laboratory (WRL) for foot and mouth disease which have a closer relationship to either the South Africa 2000 or the UK 2001 than these two viruses have to each other. The most closely related virus that is in the WRL collection to these viruses originated from Japan in 2000. However, as indicated above, this should not be taken to indicate a causal relationship between the Japanese and other isolates. Due to the widespread distribution of the pan-Asia strain and its limited genetic diversity, phylogenetic analysis is unlikely to provide further information on any possible common origin for the UK and South African outbreaks.

Copies of the two scientific papers referred to above will be placed in the Library of the House.

Fuel Poverty

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much public money was spent in insulating and improving heating in *(a)* elderly and *(b)* low income homes in each of the last 25 years. [186107]

Mr. Morley: Since the establishment of Defra in June 2001, the Warm Front scheme, which provides a range of insulation and heating measures to private households in England, has spent approximately £296.6 million. Of this, around £220 million has been spent on the elderly.

The Energy Saving Trust, which is grant funded by my Department, also provides support to local authorities to run local energy efficiency programmes.

GM Crops

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it is her policy to ensure co-existence measures between GM and non-GM crops are in place before supporting the addition to Europe's common catalogue of seeds varieties of GM maize. [188756]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: It is the Government's clear policy to introduce measures on the issue of the co-existence of GM and non-GM crops before commercial cultivation takes place in the UK. We do not expect commercial cultivation of GM crops in the UK before 2008. The recent decision to add 17 varieties of GM maize to the EU Common Catalogue of seed varieties does not alter this as the varieties in question are not appropriate for cultivation in UK conditions.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on recent decisions of the European Commission relating to plans for commercial growing of 17 different varieties of GM maize, as submitted by Monsanto. [188308]

Mr. Morley: The European Commission has approved the addition of 17 varieties of GM maize to the EU Common Catalogue of seed varieties. The Common Catalogue is an amalgam of individual member states national seed lists and it is a routine procedure for varieties on individual national seed lists to be added to the Catalogue. These 17 varieties are already on either the national seed lists of France or Spain.

The 17 maize varieties all contain the same GM transformation event which confers resistance to the European corn borer. This GM event was given EU wide approval for commercial cultivation in 1998, and maize varieties containing this GM event have been grown in Spain since then.

While adding these varieties to the EU common catalogue means they could theoretically be grown in the UK it is not expected that any farmer in the UK will attempt to grow them. This is because these varieties are very late maturing and in UK conditions they would not produce a crop with anything like the feed value that livestock farmers require from maize. Nor would they ripen to produce a grain crop. In addition the pest to which the maize varieties are designed to be resistant is not a problem in the UK. We understand that Monsanto do not intend to offer these seed varieties for sale in the UK.

Harvest

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from *(a)* farmers in the Vale of York and *(b)* farmers elsewhere in England regarding the impact of the bad weather in August on the harvest; and what measures her Department proposes to take to alleviate the situation. [187560]

Alun Michael: The Department has received representations from farming interests and Defra officials had a detailed meeting with representatives of the NFU. It is clear that there have been difficulties during one of the wettest harvest periods on record particularly in some parts of the country. However, it was agreed at the meeting that the position is still evolving and it would not be possible to establish an overall position until there is a fuller picture to establish whether any measures to alleviate the situation would be warranted. The Department is in close touch with the industry and the EU Commission on this issue.

Hazardous Waste

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1298W, on hazardous waste, how many landfill sites are able to accept hazardous waste. [185612]

Mr. Morley: Currently, there are 11 merchant dedicated hazardous waste landfill sites (which would receive hazardous waste on a commercial basis accepting hazardous waste). Of these six are operating under PPC permit and five are operating under current Waste Management Licence (WML).There are eight in-house dedicated hazardous waste landfill sites (which are used to dispose of waste from their own operations such as factory process waste) accepting hazardous waste. Of these two are operating under PPC permit and six under WML. Finally, there are 13 non-hazardous sites each with a separate cell for stable non-reactive hazardous waste accepting hazardous in the separate cells. Of these two are operating under PPC permits and 11 under WML.

Some sites have been issued with PPC permits but are not yet operational usually due to sites undergoing engineering/construction (approximately nine sites). In addition, there are a number of applications pending.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many hazardous waste dumping incidents were reported to the Environment Agency in each of the last five years for which figures are available, broken down by region. [188095]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: The Environment Agency reports the data broken down by Agency Regional boundaries and is available for the calendar years 2001–04. The table shows the total numbers of incidents of deposits involving hazardous materials on land and in water, recorded in each of the years for each region. Data for 2004 are for the year to date.

Region	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Anglian	90	89	117	66
EA Wales	29	54	61	45
Midlands	128	120	78	47
North East	88	106	143	112
North West	86	48	74	38
South West	44	70	36	33
Southern	75	62	65	49
Thames	58	83	90	43
Total	598	632	664	433

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the postponement of the meeting of the Hazardous Waste Forum that was due to take place on 3 September. [188094]

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons the Hazardous Waste Forum meeting, due for 3 September, was cancelled; and on what date the meeting will now take place. [188755]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: The chair of the forum suffered a bereavement in the week before the meeting, necessitating her absence, and there were no other senior officials available to take her place. All members were given over a week's notice of the cancellation, and in the process, the secretariat sought views of the forum on the need for a further meeting before the next planned one at the end of November.

In the light of comments from a minority of members, a further, likely smaller scale, meeting of the forum is being rescheduled for 11 October. In the meantime the Department continues to maintain regular contact with stakeholders on the forum. The secretariat for the forum has specifically requested feedback from its members on any pressing regulatory or other issues since 16 July which need to be shared with the forum, or discussed at the 11 October meeting.

Illegal Fly-tipping

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action the Government recommend against those guilty of illegal fly-tipping; and what discussions she has had with the Environment Agency on policy implementation. [188406]

Mr. Morley: The illegal disposal of waste, or fly-tipping, is a serious criminal offence. The current penalties for those found guilty of this offence is a maximum fine of up to £20,000 and two years imprisonment for incidents involving non-hazardous waste and unlimited fines and five years imprisonment for incidents involving hazardous waste. The Government is currently consulting on proposals as part of the Clean Neighbourhoods consultation to increase these penalties.

The Government would like to see the Environment Agency and local authorities take more effective action to prevent and detect fly-tipping and to prosecute those responsible. We are developing, in close consultation with the Agency and local authorities, a whole range of measures to support this strategy and to aid the Agency and local authorities in implanting our policy.

My officials frequently discuss the implementation of Government policy with Environment Agency officials, and Ministers also discuss issues at regular bi-lateral meetings.

Landfill

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many waste landfill sites have applied for a hazardous waste site permit. [183404]

Margaret Beckett: 30 sites have applied for a hazardous waste landfill site PPC permit. This number comprises 18 merchant sites (which would receive hazardous waste on a commercial basis) and 12 in-house sites (which are used to dispose of waste from their own operations such as factory process waste), and includes those sites for which a permit has been refused.

In addition, there are 44 sites that have applied for a PPC permit to build a cell that can accept stabilised non-reactive hazardous waste in a non-hazardous landfill site.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much methane gas per year is produced by landfill sites in England; how much is put to use; and what plans she has to increase this latter figure. [187548]

Mr. Morley: In a report commissioned by Defra it is estimated that in 2000, approximately 660,000 tonnes of methane was emitted from UK landfills, accounting for 27 per cent. of the total methane released from the UK.

The amount of methane that is used has significantly increased over the last five years and information held by the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) indicates that there is currently 612,674 KW installed capacity at a total of 269 UK landfill gas power stations. This is out of a potential capacity that could be readily exploited for utilisation of approximately 800,000 KW.

The proportion of methane in landfill gas that is used has increased in response to two main drivers and is expected to continue to increase. These drivers are:

(i) The Landfill Regulations (England and Wales) 2002

These regulations require landfill operators to collect, treat and use landfill gas (e.g. electricity generation) to the extent possible. The requirements for improved landfill gas management form an important part of new landfill permits being permitted by the Environment Agency in accordance with the Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) regulatory regime.

(ii) The Renewables Obligation

As part of its revised policy for renewable energy in the UK, the Government introduced the Renewables Obligation for England and Wales. This Obligation requires power suppliers to derive a specified proportion of the electricity they supply to their customers from renewable resources and includes strong financial incentives for suppliers. Landfill gas currently provides approximately one-quarter of the UK's installed generating capacity for renewable power.

Light Pollution

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints concerning light pollution were received by each local authority in England in each of the last 10 years; and if she will make a statement. [187574]

Alun Michael: Data on complaints about light pollution are not collected by central Government.

The Government are consulting through the Clean Neighbourhoods consultation on proposals to broaden the scope of the statutory nuisance regime in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to include artificial light. To be a statutory nuisance, it would have to be emitted from premises and be prejudicial to health or a nuisance. The closing date for responses to the consultation is 24 September 2004.

Lions

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department will oppose the proposed ban on the international trade of lion trophies and skins; and if she will make a statement. [188060]

Mr. Morley: The UK, in common with the other EU member states, is currently maintaining an open position on this matter and would like to explore the scope for an agreed solution with the range states before coming to a final decision.

Ministerial Air Travel

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list for each year since 1997 the number of miles flown by each Minister in her Department on official departmental business. [181873]

Margaret Beckett: The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for 2003–04 is currently being assembled and will be published shortly. All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Planning Policy Statement 22

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether Planning Policy Statement 22 was subject to rural proofing by her Department. [188461]

Alun Michael: The question appears to be based on a misapprehension about rural proofing. It is the responsibility of each Government department to rural proof its policies, and this principle is included in current guidance on regulatory impact assessment. Defra officials are able to provide rural evidence and guidance in support of this while I meet Ministers regularly to help the process along.

Defra officials made a substantial contribution to the consultation on Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy and its accompanying Good Practice Guide. By working closely with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, we have ensured that PPS22 gives appropriate guidance on considerations of landscape and biodiversity alongside strong support for the development of renewable energy resources.

PR Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183853]

Alun Michael: Defra was formed in June 2001. Figures on expenditure on public relations and publicity by all sections of Defra are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However the salary costs for staff employed on the full range of communications activities by the Communications Directorate of the Department since its formation in June 2001 were:

	Months	*£ million*
2001-02	10	2.5
2002-03	12	4.1
2003-04	12	3.5

Private Sewers

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the adoption of private sewers following her consultation on the recommendations contained in the W. S. Atkins Report. [188085]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* The Department plans to publish a response to the consultation in the early autumn. This will summarise responses, give the Government's views and set out the issues that need to be addressed before a final decision can be made. A decision paper should be published early next year.

Recycling

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what amounts of *(a)* waste cooking fats and *(b)* batteries were disposed of in each of the last three years; how much of each was recycled; what plans she has to increase those figures; and if she will make a statement. [187549]

Mr. Morley: There are no precise figures for the amount of waste cooking fats disposed of or recycled. However, it is estimated that between 70,000 to 90,000 tonnes of used cooking oil is collected each year for use in animal feed. The remainder goes to incineration at energy plants.

Between 60,000 to 70,000 tonnes of used cooking oil going to animal feed comes from catering premises. However, from 1 November 2004, this use will be prohibited under the terms of the Animal By-Products Regulation (Regulation EC No. 1774/2002). It is thought that other markets, including the growing bio-diesel industry, will absorb this stream of used cooking oil. In the short-term, these alternative markets are likely to be elsewhere in the EU. A Cabinet Office sponsored working group, including industry representatives from the various potential markets for used cooking oil, is considering current and potential UK capacity for domestic use of used cooking oil.

No precise data for the recycling of end of life automotive batteries are currently collected. However, discussions with the battery manufacturing and distributing sector, and the lead recycling industry, suggest that in 2002 and 2003, the UK recycled over 90 per cent. of spent automotive batteries. In each year, an estimated 7.5 million automotive batteries entered the waste stream. In 2002, the UK sold 25,100 tonnes of consumer batteries but only 125 tonnes were collected separately and sent for recycling.

The proposed forthcoming batteries Directive will ensure that recycling levels for all types of portable battery increase. Collection and recycling targets will have to be met four years from transposition date and the UK will have 18 months to transpose the Directive after it is agreed. There has been a significant increase in the number of local authorities introducing battery collection schemes and G&P Batteries will be opening a recycling plant for portable primary batteries in 2005.

Refrigerators

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the principal factors behind failures to recover all potential ozone depleting substances from refrigeration units. [187022]

Mr. Morley: A significant but highly variable proportion of the original ozone depleting substance (ODS) within a refrigerant unit will have been lost during the working life of the appliance. The failure of the coolant system and consequent loss of ODS is one of the reasons why refrigeration units may be discarded by householders.

The licence conditions for storage and treatment facilities of refrigeration units include measures that will minimise the loss of ODS, but further losses may occur during the extraction of the coolant (known as phase 1 degassing), as even the best equipment and procedures will not remove 100 per cent. of the coolant. Other sources of loss may include inappropriate transportation/handling or accidents/vandalism at storage facilities.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how much CFC12 has been recovered from *(a)* refrigeration circuits and *(b)* refrigeration unit foams since European Council Regulation No. 2037/2000 came into force; [187023]

(2) how much CFC11 has been recovered from refrigeration unit foams since European Council Regulation No. 2037/2000 came into force. [187024]

Mr. Morley: The information on CFCs is not held in the form requested, as the data on the recovery of ozone depleting substances (ODS) does not distinguish between the type of ODS, or the equipment from which it was recovered.

The following information is provided.

The total amount of ODS including CFCs recovered from all equipment was:

387 tonnes in 2002 and;

494 tonnes in 2003.

In addition, a significant number of refrigerators leave the UK for treatment—

418,000 in 2002 and 377,000 in 2003—and it will fall to the receiving EU state to recover the associated ODS, and report upon it.

Sustainable Development Impacts

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps have been taken by her Department to review arrangements for public reporting of sustainable development impacts. [188256]

Mr. Morley: The arrangements for public reporting of our progress towards sustainable development for the UK are being reviewed as part of the UK Government's consultation 'Taking it on: developing UK sustainable development strategy together'. This consultation closed on 31 July 2004. Defra, in partnership with other Government Departments, is currently considering the responses received, and we aim to launch the resulting new strategy, including a monitoring and reporting structure, next year.

The Government also reports annually on the management of its own land and buildings in the 'Sustainable Development in Government' Report; this provides an overview of departmental progress against targets in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. The Government has committed to review the framework during 2004–05.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what arrangements her Department has in place to report publicly on key sustainable development impacts. [188257]

Mr. Morley: The UK Government, with Defra as overall lead department, reports annually on its progress towards sustainable development for the UK in the 'Achieving a better quality of life' series of reports. The most recent annual report, covering our actions and progress in 2003 and including updates for the 15 headline indicators of sustainable development, was published on 16 March 2004. A wider set of 147 indicators of sustainable development 'Quality of life counts' were published at the same time. In addition the headline indicators are updated on the Government's sustainable development website, as and when new data become available. These reporting arrangements are being reviewed as part of the consultation 'Taking it on: developing UK sustainable development strategy together'..

The Government also reports annually regarding the management of its own land and buildings in the 'Sustainable Development in Government' Report; this provides an overview of departmental progress against targets in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. The last report was published in November 2003.

Warship Dismantling (Hartlepool)

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on *(a)* the four ghost ships moored in Hartlepool and *(b)* proposals for a further nine former US navy ships to be dismantled in Hartlepool. [188433]

Mr. Morley: The four US ships are currently docked in Able UK's Graythorp dock on Teesside. The necessary permissions are being sought by Able UK for dismantling to take place at this location. The process of granting the permissions is not a forgone conclusion. Relevant applications will be considered and the outcome will depend upon the relevant regulators.

In the meantime, dismantling work is prevented and the dock facility is subject to regular inspection by the Environment Agency in liaison with the Health and Safety Executive. The results of environ mental monitoring indicate that storage of the four US naval ships at the Graythorp dock has not had a detrimental impact or posed a significant threat to the environment or human health.

There are no plans for any further US naval vessels to be towed to the UK at present. The nine ships that are currently in the US are not permitted to be moved to the UK and the US authorities have given a written undertaking that no more ships will be sent unless and until the necessary permissions are in place at the Teesside facility.

Waste Management

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library copies of all documents relating to discussions in Cabinet Committee meetings on the granting of powers to local authorities to charge householders for the collection, processing and disposal of unsorted household waste that has reached the public domain. [188069]

Mr. Morley: It has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions her Department has held with companies offering technologies for differential and variable charging for waste collection and disposal; and if she will make a statement. [188071]

Mr. Morley: The Department has not held any discussions with companies offering technologies for differential and variable charging for waste collection and disposal.

I have accepted an invitation from PM Group plc to visit their manufacturing facility at Bradford to see a demonstration of their waste weighing systems but, owing to other commitments, the visit has not yet taken place.

Water Industry

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out the latest water leakage figures, broken down by water company. [188267]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 14 September 2004]*: The Director General of Water Services publishes leakage figures annually in the 'Security of Supply, Leakage and the Efficient Use of Water' reports, copies of which are available in the Library of the House. In 2003-04 total water company leakage, in Megalitres per day, was reported as follows:

	Megalitres per day
Anglian	215
Bournemouth and West Hants	22
Bristol	53
Cambridge	14
Dee Valley	10
Dwr Cymru	230
Folkestone and Dover	8
Mid Kent	30
Northumbrian North	160
Northumbrian South	70
Portsmouth	30
Severn Trent	510
South East	69
South Staffordshire	71
South West	84
Southern	92
Sutton and East Surrey	24
Tendring Hundred	5
Thames	945
Three Valleys	150
United Utilities	480
Wessex	75
Yorkshire	295

Written Briefings

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the subject and date of each written briefing prepared by her special advisers for all Labour hon. Members since May 1997; and what the total cost is to date. [184863]

Margaret Beckett: The Code of Conduct for Special Advisers sets out special advisers' duties and responsibilities. This includes helping to brief party MPs and officials on issues of Government policy. No central record of such briefings is maintained by the Department. Any written briefings will be distributed by the party.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Cultural Objects

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will reconsider his rejection of the recommendation in paragraph 36 of the First Report of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, Session 2003-04, HC59, on cultural objects: developments since 2000, to introduce a performance objective for the theft of cultural objects; and if he will make a statement. [188900]

Caroline Flint: The reasons we set out in our joint response with the Department for Culture Media and Sport for not accepting this recommendation remain valid.

Whether thefts involve cultural items is not currently recorded by all police forces and would be difficult to do in a consistent way due to the problem of defining "cultural objects".

We are looking to minimise the number of targets on forces to allow them more flexibility to focus on their own local problems and priorities.

The Home Office considers that driving down the theft of cultural items is just one means to the ends of reducing organised crime and drug trafficking, rather than a target in itself.

Setting such a target would, therefore, add to the bureaucratic demands on forces for little, if any, benefit.

We have no plans, therefore, to review our decision.

Al-Muhajiroun

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government is taking to monitor the activities of the Islamic group Al-Muhajiroun. [186837]

Mr. Blunkett: The appropriate authorities closely monitor every word and statement that Al-Muhajiroun's representatives make. We are fully aware of their activities. We have made our position very clear -Al Muhajiroun represents neither the Muslim community or their views. We absolutely reject their offensive statements, as have the vast majority of Muslims in the UK.

Cannabis

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effects of reclassifying cannabis from a class B to a class C drug. [186556]

Caroline Flint: The reclassification of cannabis from a Class B to a Class C drug allows the police to focus a greater amount of resources on tackling Class A drugs, such as heroin and crack cocaine. Early indications are encouraging in terms of achieving this, but detailed figures are not yet available.

Computer Misuse

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the action being taken by the Government to address the use of peer-to-peer computer file sharing to obtain illegal film and images of violence and sexual abuse. [188163]

Paul Goggins: It is illegal to publish some extreme images under the Obscene Publications Act 1959, whether by peer-to-peer or other means. The Government is currently considering whether the law relating to pornographic material featuring violence and sexual abuse should be strengthened.

Disability Discrimination Act

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether all prisons comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in respect of *(a)* prisoners, *(b)* staff and *(c)* visitors; and if he will make a statement. [187974]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service is working constructively to ensure that as a service provider, it responds positively to the needs of disabled prisoners,

staff and visitors. A strategy document was issued to all Prison Service staff in June 2003. This explained the implications for prisons of the changes in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) due to come into effect on 1 October 2004.

The prison estate consists of a wide variety of buildings of differing ages and security levels and therefore access for prisoners to all prisons and prison facilities poses some difficulties. However the Prison Service's policy for all prisoners is to address their needs, including disability related needs, through the sentence planning process. This will allow prisons to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that prisoners are not discriminated against.

The Prison Service has significant experience of operating within the employment provisions of the DDA as non-operational staff have had protection since its first introduction. On 1 October, all operational staff will be covered by the DDA. Policies have been revised to ensure that the treatment for individual staff with disabilities is compliant with the employment aspects of the DDA.

A national disability compliance audit of all Prison Service establishments from a visitors' perspective has not been undertaken. Given the potential scope of the exercise this would not be practicable. It remains the responsibility of each establishment to address the individual requirements of those with particular needs, bearing in mind resource implications and reasonableness. Establishments and Visitors' Centres remain vigilant to the fact that the interpretation of disability within the Disability Discrimination Act is wide.

GPS Tracking Scheme

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the new GPS tracking of offenders scheme will *(a)* replace and *(b)* complement the treatment, supervision and surveillance scheme that is in place for offenders. [188300]

Paul Goggins: The GPS pilot tracking schemes will not replace the treatment, supervision and surveillance schemes that are currently in place for offenders, but will complement them. Tracking technology is a way of enhancing the management of offenders on such schemes. It will give public protection agencies an added layer of information about the offender's movements and will aid intervention if they breach the requirements of their court order or release licence.

Hate Crime

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government has to amend the law to protect *(a)* transsexuals, *(b)* people with learning difficulties and *(c)* people with disabilities from hate crime; and if he will make a statement.[186869]

Fiona Mactaggart: All categories of people are already protected by the criminal law. In particular they are protected from violence and threats of violence by offences such as assault, actual bodily harm and grievous bodily harm. They are also protected from harassment by legislation, including the Protection from Harassment Act. In sentencing for these crimes, courts take particular account of the vulnerability of the victim and the motivation for the crime. The Government has no plans to amend the law to apply differently or specifically to these groups of people.

Health Information (Confidentiality)

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he will take to encourage sharing on a confidential basis of health information relating to residents of secure training centres between private contractors responsible for their medical services and the national health service.[188234]

Paul Goggins: We would encourage those involved in giving medical advice and treatment to young people in secure training centres to share information with each other as much as possible, within the requirements of the law on the confidentiality of medical records.

Pay Systems

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library the most recent review of *(a)* his Department's pay systems, *(b)* the pay systems of the non-departmental public bodies for which he is responsible and *(c)* the departmental equal pay action plan. [181349]

Fiona Mactaggart: There is no single document that could be described as a formal review of the Department's pay systems. However, there is a regular evaluation of the Department pay systems to ensure that they meet its business needs and in response to employee representative pay claims. Changes in the reward arrangements are subject to the public sector pay policy, Her Majesty's Treasury pay remit process and the normal collective bargaining with employee representatives. These changes in pay terms and conditions are then published for staff in the Department to see.

Non-departmental public bodies have delegated authority for their pay and grading arrangements and are individually responsible for their pay systems. Again there is no single document that could be described as a formal review. Changes in pay systems are made within the context of public sector pay policy, Her Majesty's Treasury pay remit process and the normal collective bargaining with employee representatives.

A copy of the Department's equal pay action plan will be placed in the Library.

People's Mujahedin Organisation of Iran

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to remove the People's Mujahedin Organisation of Iran from his list of terrorist organisations; and if he will make a statement. [187550]

Mr. Blunkett: As a matter of policy, the Government does not comment on whether a particular organisation is being considered for proscription or de-proscription under section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000. Such decisions are only taken after the most careful consideration and on the basis of the best possible security advice.

Prisons

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact of the proposed reduction in the number of fire safety officers on the operation of the Prison Service. [187956]

Paul Goggins: The reduction of staff within Fire Safety Section is a result of reorganisation of the Section and is part of the overall headquarters efficiencies. The reduction in staff is tempered by changes in working requirements that has removed identified unnecessary work from the section. It is considered that the level of provision of advice to the Service will not be adversely affected.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the Prison Service has spent on equal pay tribunal cases since 1997. [187959]

Paul Goggins: On 9 September 2004 the Prison Service had spent

£1,034,741 since 1997 on equal pay tribunal cases.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many job evaluation exercises have been carried out by the Prison Service in respect of *(a)* administrative and *(b)* Prison Service staff since 1997; and what the outcome was. [187960]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service introduced Phase 1 of its review of pay and grading in July 2000. Affecting 2,500 middle and senior managers, including those in administrative and operational disciplines, it replaced more than 150 existing grades with a seven-payband common structure supported by a job evaluation system.

Development of Phase 2 of the review, which would have applied to 38,000 lower-graded staff in disciplines that included administrative and operational grades, was halted in April 2002 and the project work subsumed within pay modernisation.

In the process of developmental work, and to date, the Prison Service has carried out 507 individual job evaluations.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many equal pay cases against the Prison Service at employment tribunals have found *(a)* for and *(b)* against the Service since 1997; and what the financial implications of those decisions have been. [187961]

Paul Goggins: On the information available, there have been findings against the Prison Service in eight equal pay claims since 1997. These findings are currently subject to appeal by the Prison Service and it is therefore not possible to provide a realistic estimate of the financial implications.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the Prison Service has spent since 1997 defending employment tribunal cases in respect of equal pay claims. [188220]

Paul Goggins: On 9 September 2004 the Prison Service had spent £1,034,741 since 1997 defending equal pay tribunal cases.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Prison Service plans to review its job evaluation system in the light of recent employment tribunal cases. [188223]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service uses a job evaluation system called Equate, which underpins the jobs of middle and senior managers within Phase 1 of its Pay and Grading scheme. There are no plans to review it in the light of the case of Bailey and Others *v.* Home Office.

However, it is proposed to explore the need for a job evaluation scheme that can be used to evaluate jobs that do not fall within Phase 1.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Prison Service plans to appeal against employment tribunal decisions made during the last 12 months in respect of equal pay claims between administrative support and prison officer grades. [188224]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service lodged an appeal in the case of Bailey and Others *v.* Home Office on 26 August 2004.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many organisations which expressed an interest in drug rehabilitation work for the Prison Service have not tendered for the work. [188400]

Paul Goggins: Prison Service Contracts and Procurement Unit (CPU) received 57 expressions of interest in response to the public notice dated 26 November 2003. All were sent Pre-Qualifying Questionnaires (PQQ). CPU received 41 completed PQQ's by the closing date on 30 January 2004 and rejected 11 of these. Twenty-nine invitations to tender were sent on 20 May 2004 of which 24 tenders were received on 20 July 2004.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 22 July, *Official Report*, column 609W, on prisons, what assessment he has made of the effects of operating with a shortfall in the operational requirement for prison healthcare staff; what steps he is taking to address the shortage; and if he will make a statement. [187476]

Paul Goggins: No such assessment has been made centrally. Prison managers and primary care trusts are responsible for ensuring that an establishment's health workforce includes people with the skills and competencies necessary to implement its prison health delivery plan.

Prostitution Initiative

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how his Department's Prostitution Initiative affects the residents of Leyton and Wanstead. [187742]

Caroline Flint: On 16 July this year the Home Office published "Paying the Price", a consultation paper on the issues related to prostitution. The consultation exercise, which runs until 26 November, will form the basis for the development of a co-ordinated strategy to deal with prostitution.

The existence of prostitution in a neighbourhood can significantly affect local residents through associated noise and traffic, prostitution-related litter, harassment, anti-social behaviour and criminality. Through the civil and criminal law, environmental means and support for those trapped in prostitution to change their lives, a co-ordinated strategy for prostitution will enable local partnerships to deliver real improvements for local communities suffering the detrimental effects of prostitution in their neighbourhoods.

Copies of "Paying the Price" have been placed in the Library and are available from the Home Office website at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/consults/index

We welcome views from my hon. Friend and his constituents.

Rehabilitation

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish the National Rehabilitation Action Plan. [188084]

Paul Goggins: *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: On 19 July 2004, I published the National Reducing Re-offending Action Plan. Over 60 action points have been agreed across Government, covering all the key areas to support the rehabilitation of offenders, in a concerted effort to reduce re-offending. For each agreed action point, the Plan suggests complementary activity for the consideration of those working at the regional and local level. Copies of have been placed in the Library of the House.

Sentencing Guidelines

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government have assessed overseas sentencing guidelines to study the relationship between guidelines and prison capacity. [187246]

Paul Goggins: In taking forward its work, the Sentencing Guidelines Council will be looking at experience of sentencing guidelines in other jurisdictions and, amongst other things, their effect on the prison populations.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the functions are of the Sentencing Guidelines Council's research staff. [187247]

Paul Goggins: The function of the Sentencing Guidelines Council's research staff is to support the Council's work in framing guidelines that take account of, amongst other things: the need to promote consistency in sentencing; the sentences imposed by courts in England and Wales for offences to which the guidelines relate; and the cost-effectiveness of different sentences in preventing re-offending.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he intends the new guidelines system will help increase public confidence in the criminal justice system. [187248]

Paul Goggins: The membership of the Sentencing Guidelines Council encompasses not only sentencers but also representatives who bring experience of policing, criminal prosecution, criminal defence and the promotion of the welfare of victims of crime. The Council must take account of, amongst other things, the need to promote public confidence in the criminal justice system when framing or revising guidelines, and proposed guidelines will be subject to public consultation before being finalised. The courts must then apply the guidelines in all cases and give any reasons for departing from them when deciding on the sentence to be passed. This is a more collaborative and transparent system, which is open to public scrutiny, and should engender greater public confidence in sentencing practice.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the effect the new guidelines system will have on sentencing policy. [187249]

Paul Goggins: Sentencing policy will be reflected in the sentencing guidelines. The legislation also provides for the Home Secretary at any time to ask the Council to frame or revise guidelines relating to a general matter affecting sentencing, to a particular category of offender, or to a particular offence.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has *(a)* to commission research into public attitudes on sentencing guidelines and *(b)* to develop a sentencing information system to provide judges with data about sentencing in similar cases. [187250]

Paul Goggins: We have no current plans to commission research into public attitudes on sentencing guidelines but public consultation forms part of the process in developing guidelines. The Council will be providing sentencing data and analysis to sentencers on a regular basis, including data on sentencing patterns across the country in order to inform discussions at a local level.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the main aims are of the Sentencing Guidelines Council; and what assessment has been made of when these aims will be fulfilled. [187263]

Paul Goggins: The Sentencing Guidelines Council is responsible for framing and revising definitive guidelines on all criminal offences, which will enable all courts to approach the sentencing of offenders from a common starting point. It will take some years to produce comprehensive guidelines and the Council will have a continuing remit to revise them as necessary.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the efficiency of the two-stage sentencing guidelines process. [187264]

Paul Goggins: The Sentencing Advisory Panel provides advice to assist the Sentencing Guidelines Council in framing and revising sentencing and allocation guidelines. The membership of the Panel is broader than that of the Council, including academics and public representation, and consultation on its advice includes public consultation in addition to 28 statutory consultees. This ensures that the Council's deliberations on framing guidelines are informed by views from all interested parties.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Shepherd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether all sex offenders in the bail hostel in Aldridge will be included in the West Midlands tagging trial. [188008]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* No sex offenders from this hostel will be tracked. The pilots of satellite tracking began on 2 September in Greater Manchester, Hampshire and the West Midlands. All three areas will test the technology with prolific offenders and domestic violence offenders, but only the Greater Manchester area will test the technology with sex offenders.

Young Offenders

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young offenders aged 18 to 21 were received into prison in 2003 *(a)* under sentence, *(b)* unconvicted awaiting trial and *(c)* convicted awaiting sentence. [187232]

Paul Goggins: Information from the Prison Service information system records that in 2003 there were 13,261 young offenders aged 18 to 20 received into prison establishments in England and Wales under immediate custodial sentence. There were 9,013 received as untried and 8,359 received as convicted unsentenced into prison establishments in England and Wales.

Total receptions cannot be calculated by adding together receptions in each category, because there is double counting.

Young Offenders Institutions (Staff Checks)

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether criminal records bureau checks are carried out on all staff working in young offenders institutions, including those operated by the private sector. [188312]

Paul Goggins: Prison Service policy requires the Governor of each establishment, including young offender institutions to arrange for a Criminal Records Bureau check on all those appointed to work with children under 18 years of age. These arrangements also apply to young offender institutions operated by the private sector.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Work-life Balance

23. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Minister for Women what recent initiatives she has taken to improve work-life balance for women. [189166]

Ms Hewitt: The Government introduced a package of new laws to support working mothers and their partners in April 2003, including improved maternity pay and leave and the right to request flexible working. We have actively encouraged business to adopt best practice and provide greater flexibility and choice in the workplace. We have invested in child care and continue to do so. Additional funding for Sure Start will support an additional 100,000 new child care places by 2008.

Politics (Participation)

24. **Linda Perham:** To ask the Minister for Women what action she is taking to encourage teenage girls to participate in politics. [189167]

Ms Hewitt: I am delighted to say that "Citizenship" is now taught in all schools, as part of the National Curriculum, to develop young people's knowledge and understanding of their roles, rights and responsibilities in relation to the democratic process, including the electoral system and the importance of voting.

The Women and Equality Unit produced last year a special resource pack for teachers and young people that includes ideas on how to cover women's equality issues in Citizenship classes.

Gender Balance

25. **David Taylor:** To ask the Minister for Women what discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on the encouragement of a greater level of entry by women into relevant academic areas to facilitate more representative gender balance in key professional areas; and if she will make a statement. [189168]

Jacqui Smith: We are delighted that women are excelling and are now attaining more degrees than ever before. In 1993, 8 per cent. of women held degrees. By 2002, this had increased to 14 per cent. Around 50 per cent. of all students on law, accountancy and medicine undergraduate courses are female. However, we must not get complacent. Occupational segregation still exists. Women are still under-represented in certain sectors and senior positions. Women represent less than 25 per cent. of all managers and senior executives, and only 15 per cent. of those working in science, engineering and technology jobs. That is why earlier today my right hon. Friend was delighted to launch a new resource centre in Bradford, dedicated to promoting women in science, engineering and technology.

Pensions

26. **Mr. Carmichael:** To ask the Minister for Women what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions regarding the pension gap. [189169]

Jacqui Smith: We have introduced a raft of measures both to help women in retirement and to help women of working-age build better pensions. Almost all the 2.5 million carers who have benefited from the Second State Pension are women, two-thirds of those receiving pension credit are women, and the introduction of, and increases to, the national minimum wage disproportionately benefits women. We have also launched the Informed Choices for Working and Savings publication.

SCOTLAND

Black Watch Museum

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to visit the Black Watch Museum in Perth. [187935]

Mr. Darling: I have no current plans to do so.

Boundary Commission for Scotland

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he has received the final report of the Boundary Commission for Scotland. [187937]

Mr. Darling: I have not yet received the Fifth Periodical Report of the Boundary Commission for Scotland. As I indicated to the hon. Member on 7 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 940W, while the Commission has until December 2006 to report to me, in the light of its progress so far it seems likely that the report will be received much sooner than this deadline. However, the timing is a matter for the Commission.

Business Competitiveness

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met the First Minister to discuss business competitiveness in Scotland. [187934]

Mr. Darling: I regularly meet the First Minister and discuss a wide range of issues.

Correspondence

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland pursuant to his evidence to the Scottish Affairs Select Committee on 29 June, what steps he has taken to improve the performance of his Department in responding to correspondence. [186380]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office annual report shows that from April 2003 to March 2004 the 15-day target for responding to correspondence was met in 81 per cent. of cases. Internal monitoring procedures are in place to ensure that the 15-day performance target is achieved where possible.

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will make a written ministerial statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188194]

(2) if he will make a written ministerial statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188195]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1451W.

Departmental Buildings

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what proportion of electricity used by buildings in his Department has come from renewable sources in each year since 1997. [186654]

Mrs. McGuire: Information in the form requested is not available.

Departmental Expenditure

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much his Department has spent on electricity use for each year since 1997. [186655]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

Since that date electricity costs of the Scotland Office and Office of the Advocate-General are as follows:

	£
1999–2000[1]	11,855
2000–01	22,807
2001–02	19,526
2002–03	28,439
2003–04	23,703

[1] Part year.

The information relates to buildings where the Scotland Office are major occupiers. Costs relating to buildings shared with the Scottish Executive are not separately identifiable.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much his Department has spent on water and sewerage services in each year since 1997. [186656]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999.

Since that date water and sewerage costs of the Scotland Office and Office of the Advocate-General are as follows:

	£
1999–2000[1]	1,067
2000–01	3,656
2001–02	4,221
2002–03	7,018
2003–04	11,699

[1] Part year.

The information relates to buildings where the Scotland Office are major occupiers. Costs relating to buildings shared with the Scottish Executive are not separately identifiable.

Gershon Review

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what effect he expects the Gershon review of Civil Service manpower to have on payments to the Scottish Consolidated Fund. [186384]

Mrs. McGuire: The arrangements for payments to the Scottish Consolidated Fund are set out in the Statement of Funding Policy, which was published by HM Treasury in July 2004. These arrangements have not changed. In the 2004 Spending Review, the Government announced efficiency gains by departments, which will be redeployed to front line delivery following the Gershon review. It will be for the Scottish Executive to make decisions on efficiency gains in devolved areas.

Ministerial Responsibility

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list the policy decisions he has made as Secretary of State for Scotland and Transport; [186381]

(2) if he will list the policy issues on which he has responsibility both as Secretary of State for Scotland and Secretary of State for Transport. [186382]

Mr. Darling: My policy responsibilities for Transport and for Scotland are set out in the Annual Reports from the Department for Transport and Scotland Office. Naturally within each area I give due consideration to the full range of my responsibilities when reaching decisions on policy.

Scottish Executive Secondees

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many staff in his Department are on secondment from the Scottish Executive. [187936]

Mrs. McGuire: There are presently 56 staff on loan to the Scotland Office from the Scottish Executive. In addition, 26 staff are on loan from the Scottish Executive to the Office of the Advocate-General for Scotland.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the total cost of printing departmental headed notepaper was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185382]

Ruth Kelly: The majority of management units within the Cabinet Office use an electronic Word template to produce departmental headed notepaper at little or no cost to the Department. However, a small number of Management Units do produce their own headed notepaper at an estimated cost of £30,000 in 2003–04.

Financial information prior to the 1997–98 financial year was produced on a previous accounting system and cannot be readily retrieved without incurring disproportionate cost.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academic Standards

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received on changes in the academic standard of *(a)* GCSE and *(b)* A levels; and what research he has commissioned into changes in the academic standard of each. [188812]

Mr. Miliband: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is the body with statutory responsibility for ensuring that the standards of GCSE and A level qualifications are maintained over time. QCA has a rolling programme of standards reviews, which began in 1997. The reports are available on the QCA website.

Following the 2002 Inquiry into A Level Standards, QCA has also appointed an independent panel to advise it publicly on whether or not standards are being maintained. They will report for the first time in the autumn.

Education (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the capital investment in schools in the City of York has been in each year since the formation of the City of York unitary council. [188944]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of schools capital funding is now allocated to local authorities and schools by needs-related formulae. Authorities invest according to priorities agreed locally in their asset management plans. The following table shows the total of my Department's capital allocations to the City of York local education authority and its schools since the formation of the unitary authority in 1996–97.

City of York LEA capital allocations

	£000
1996–97	830
1997–98	1,263
1998–99	1,501
1999–2000	4,281
2000–01	6,877
2001–02	3,987
2002–03	[1]24,379
2003–04	9,561
2004–05	[2]9,047

[1] Includes £12.4 million of PFI credits.
[2] Further allocations may be made.

Education Finance

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 798W, on education finance, if he will break down the total education funding per child in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) England and (ii) North Somerset; and if he will estimate the sums that would be available for education in North Somerset if the average funding per pupil for primary and secondary schools in North Somerset were the same as for England. [188685]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not available by sector (primary and secondary) as this is not how the funding is distributed. Therefore the following two tables set out the information requested using pupils aged 3–10 as the most appropriate figures for primary funding and pupils aged 11–15 as the most appropriate for secondary funding. The formula for the Education Formula Spending Share calculation comprises a basic entitlement for each pupil, which is the same across the country, plus a top-up for each pupil with additional educational needs, which is again the same across the country, plus top-ups for areas where it costs more to recruit and retain teachers. Local education authorities with a greater proportion of pupils with additional educational needs or higher average earnings will receive a higher level of funding per pupil.

Pupils aged 3–10

	North Somerset (£ per pupil)			England (£ per pupil)			North Somerset Estimated total (£ million)
	SSA/EFS	Grants	Total	SSA/EFS	Grants	Total	
1997–98	2,020	180	2,190	2,220	170	2,380	34.9
1998–99	2,190	100	2,300	2,390	80	2,470	37.0
1999–2000	2,280	180	2,460	2,480	150	2,630	39.8
2000–01	2,340	320	2,660	2,540	320	2,860	43.2
2001–02	2,360	400	2,760	2,600	430	3,020	46.8
2002–03	2,380	420	2,810	2,640	460	3,100	48.6
2003–04	2,650	340	2,990	2,930	360	3,290	52.3
2004–05	2,740	330	3,070	3,020	380	3,400	54.5

Pupils aged 11–15[1]

	North Somerset (£ per pupil)			England (£ per pupil)			North Somerset Estimated total (£ million)
	SSA/EFS	Grants	Total	SSA/EFS	Grants	Total	
1997–98	2,960	30	2,990	3,220	30	3,260	33.7
1998–99	3,020	60	3,080	3,290	40	3,320	34.8
1999–2000	3,080	120	3,200	3,340	100	3,440	36.1
2000–01	3,180	260	3,440	3,460	270	3,730	40.5
2001–02	3,220	340	3,560	3,520	410	3,930	43.5
2002–03	3,260	380	3,630	3,570	440	4,010	45.4
2003–04	3,250	490	3,740	3,560	520	4,080	47.2
2004–05	3,400	490	3,880	3,700	550	4,250	50.0

Notes:

1. The North Somerset estimated totals have been calculated by multiplying the England per pupil total for each year, by the total number of relevant pupils (aged 3–10 and 11 -15) in North Somerset in the relevant year.
2. 2003–04 and 2004–05 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited. Updates will be available in the autumn.
3. Figures reflect education Standard Spending Assessment/Education Formula Spending settlement (all sub-blocks), plus all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to EFS pupils aged 3–10 and 11–15.
4. Figures exclude Education Maintenance Allowance, grants not allocated at LEA level and the pensions transfer to EFS for 2003–04 and 2004–05. For those LEAs in receipt of advance of grant under the transitional support arrangements for 2004–05, advance grant funding is included in the year of payment (2004–05).
5. The pupil numbers used are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC 3-year-olds maintained pupils and estimated 3–4 year olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
6. Per pupil figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
7. Total figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million.
8. 1997–98 figures for LEAs subject to Local Government Reorganisation in that year have been estimated, pro-rata to their post LGR figures.
9. Real terms at 2003–04 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 30 June 2004

GCSEs

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of students in each year from 1997–98 to 2003–04 achieved Grade C or above in GCSE *(a)* mathematics, *(b)* science and *(c)* English. [188830]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils achieving grade C or higher at GCSE/GNVQ

	English	Mathematics	Science
2003	56	48	48
2002	55	49	48
2001	54	48	48
2000	54	46	47
1999	53	45	46
1998	51	43	45

Note:

GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils in England obtained *(a)* fewer than five GCSEs at A*-C grades and *(b)* no GCSEs at A*-C grade in each year since 1990. [188574]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

	Number of 15 year old pupils[1] achieving less than five A*-C grades at GCSE/GNVQ	Number of 15 year old pupils[1] achieving no A*-C grades at GCSE/GNVQ	Total number of 15 year old pupils[1]
2003	292,589	151,641	622,122
2002	293,833	150,480	606,554
2001	301,680	156,699	603,318
2000	294,666	153,121	580,393
1999	302,412	159,382	580,972
1998	308,779	164,741	575,210
1997	321,874	172,907	586,766
1996	329,498	176,887	594,035
1995	326,893	178,998	578,197
1994	301,637	161,798	532,273
1993	307,459	164,635	522,447
1992	335,654	186,462	544,068

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of

pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Learning and Skills Council/HEFCE/Sector Skills Agency

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many staff are employed in administration roles within the *(a)* Learning and Skills Council, *(b)* Higher Education Funding Council for England and *(c)* Sector Skills Agency. [187487]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The overall number of staff in post in each organisation, as at August 2004, is set out in the following table.

Organisation	*Number of staff*[1]
Learning and Skills Council for England	3,871
Higher Education Funding Council for England	256
Sector Skills Development Agency	84

[1] Staff in post figures are expressed as full-time equivalents.

Looked-after Children/Care Leavers

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to extend the funding which was available for the purchase of capital equipment for looked-after children and care leavers in 2002–03 and 2003–04 to future years; and what plans there are for alternative funding. [188994]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* Overall support for capital investment in schools, including buildings and information and communications technology, has risen to £4.9 billion in 2004–05, and will rise to £5.5 billion in 2005–06. Increasingly, we provide this support direct to local authorities, and let them set priorities locally. Looked-after children can benefit from this investment, and we have no plans to extend the specific Quality Protects Information Technology Grant, which ended in 2003–04.

Pupil Funding (Coventry, South)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the most recent figures are for the per pupil funding level for *(a)* schools, *(b)* sixth forms and *(c)* further education colleges in the Coventry South region. [189157]

Mr. Miliband: The total funding per pupil aged 3–15 for 2004–05 in Coventry LEA is £3,920.

The further education funding system is different to schools. Funding is paid for learning aims as well as an entitlement per 16 to 18 payment. Under the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC's) funding formula the basic cost to the public purse of delivering three A-levels in a sixth form college and a further education college to a student in the 2004–05 academic year will be £3,045. This figure comprises £766 for the delivery of each A-level learning aim, and £747 for each student for the entitlement element of their learning programme. Under the LSC's funding formula the basic cost to the public purse of delivering three A-levels to a student at an English maintained secondary school will be £3,212. This figure comprises £785 for the delivery of each A-level learning aim, £750 for each student for the entitlement element of their learning programme, and £107 for each student to meet additional employers' contributions to teachers' pensions.

These figures do not represent all funding that colleges and school sixth forms receive and are not directly comparable. For example the further education funding rates include consolidated funds for pay and staff training that are not reflected in the school sixth form rates. Also, in each case additional funding may also be available to take account of the higher costs of delivering learning in particular geographical areas, in higher cost subjects, or to students with particular disadvantages or individual needs.

Science Education

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether researchers from humanities disciplines focusing on public understanding of science and cultural studies of science will be supported by the funding increases announced in the paper Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–14, published in July; and if he will make a statement. [188079]

Ms Hewitt: I have been asked to reply.

As outlined in the Science and Innovation Investment Framework, the Government intends to increase the scale of its activities in advancing the Science and Society agenda. This includes activities to promote public confidence and engagement in science. Expenditure in this area will be supported through the Office of Science and Technology's Science and Society budget which will, overall, increase from £4.25 million per year in 2005–06 to over £9 million per year by 2006–07. Arts and humanities research clearly provide important theoretical and practical bases for public engagement with science and technology. Applications for financial support for researchers from the arts and humanities disciplines will be treated in the same way as those from the natural and social sciences.

Standard Spending Assessments

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average Standard Spending Assessment/formula spending share funding per head has been for all services in *(a)* England and *(b)* North Somerset in each year since 1997; and if he will estimate the sums that would be available for services in North Somerset if the average SSA/FSS funding per head were the same as the English average. [188659]

Mr. Miliband: The DfES does not hold funding information for all services in England. The recurrent funding allocated by Government for education through SSA/FSS and grants in the DfES departmental expenditure limit for England and North Somerset is set out in the following table.

The formula for the education formula spending share calculation comprises a basic entitlement for each pupil, which is the same across the country, plus a top-up for each pupil with additional educational needs, which is again the same across the country, plus top-ups for areas where it costs more to recruit and retain teachers. Local education authorities with a greater proportion of pupils with additional educational needs or higher average earnings will receive a higher level of funding per pupil.

Per pupil aged 3–19.

	North Somerset (£ per pupil)			*England (£ per pupil)*			*North Somerset Estimated total (£ million)*
	SSA/EFS	*Grants*	*Total*	*SSA/EFS*	*Grants*	*Total*	
1997–98	2,580	110	2,690	2,790	110	2,900	77.8
1998–99	2,670	80	2,760	2,900	60	2,950	80.2
1999–2000	2,740	150	2,890	2,950	130	3,080	84.4
2000–01	2,810	290	3,100	3,030	300	3,330	91.6
2001–02	2,820	370	3,190	3,080	410	3,490	98.1
2002–03	2,660	600	3,260	2,960	620	3,580	102.2
2003–04	2,800	600	3,400	3,100	610	3,710	107.5
2004–05	2,900	590	3,500	3,210	630	3,840	112.5

Notes:
1. The North Somerset estimated totals have been calculated by multiplying the England per pupil total for each year, by the total number of pupils aged three to 19 in North Somerset in the relevant year.
2. 2003–04 and 2004–05 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited. Updates will be available in the autumn.
3. Figures reflect education standard spending assessment/education formula spending settlement (all sub-blocks), plus all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to EFS pupils aged three to 19.
4. Figures exclude education maintenance allowance, grants not allocated at LEA level and the pensions transfer to EFS and Learning and Skills Council for 2003–04 and 2004–05. For those LEAs in receipt of advance of grant under the transitional support arrangements for 2004–05, advance grant funding is included in the year of payment (2004–05).
5. The pupil numbers used are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC three-year-olds maintained pupils and estimated three to four-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
6. Per pupil figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
7. Total figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million.
8. 1997–98 figures for LEAs subject to local government reorganisation in that year have been estimated, pro-rata to their post LGR figures.
9. Real terms at 2003–04 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 30 June 2004.

Stored Publications

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many departmental publications are in storage; and where they are located. [183864]

Dr. Howells: The majority of Departmental publications are stored on sites managed by Prolog—the Department's storage and mailing contractor. There are currently 5,320 titles in storage, the majority of which are located in Nottingham.

The range of publications stored includes materials to support teaching staff in the delivery of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, former Department of Health publications that transferred to this Department as a result the Machinery of Government changes announced in June 2003 and titles in alternative formats, including ethnic languages, Braille, audio tape and large print.

We are working towards reducing the number of publications in storage. The Department has recently taken forward a programme of stock rationalisation in which overstocked and obsolete products were identified and recycled. We have also introduced a 'print on demand' facility, whereby low turnover items are stored electronically and only printed when requested.

Furthermore, we are in the process of rolling out an online ordering system for schools which allows head teachers to access print materials electronically and order them in the multiples they need when they need them.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

September Sittings

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what estimate the Commission has made of the cost to the House arising from the interruption of building work in preparation for the sitting of the House this September. [187938]

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the additional cost to the House is of providing for the September sitting; and what impact the September sitting has had on the *(a)* nature and *(b)* cost of contracts with external contractors. [188128]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: I refer the hon. Members to the answer given to the hon. Member for Salisbury on 9 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1330W.

Unfair Dismissal

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many employees have been dismissed during the past three years; how many of those dismissals have resulted in a claim for unfair dismissal being pursued; how many unfair dismissal claims are current; and if he will make a statement. [189161]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The information requested is as follows for the period 14 September 2001 to 13 September 2004:

	Number
Staff dismissed	21
Claims pursued for unfair dismissal	5
Current claims	2

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

New Opportunities Fund

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will set out the distribution of the New Opportunities Fund over the next three years broken down by main heading, including the Children's Hospice Service. [189070]

Estelle Morris: The following table outlines the New Opportunities Fund's existing commitments until 2006–07. The New Opportunities Fund and the Community Fund have undergone an administrative merger and are now operating as the Big Lottery Fund. Full merger will take place as soon as legislation permits. New funding will be available to the Big Lottery Fund by 2006–07. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State recently announced proposed themes for future funding and the Big Lottery Fund will be consulting on these shortly.

				Forecast grant drawdown[1]		
Initiative	Amount available to distribute (£ million)	Awards committed as at 31 March 2004	Paid out as at 31 March 2004	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
Healthy Living Centres	280.24	267.78	83.37	45.60	43.20	40.80
Cancer prevention, detection, treatment and care	145.28	145.19	122.64	13.80	7.20	0.74
Reducing the burden of CHD, cancer and stroke	202.07	195.18	66.17	57.14	45.00	26.41
Palliative care[2]	79.53	78.14	12.88	19.64	22.80	16.42
Out of school hours learning	214.90	208.26	130.57	45.60	24.86	9.86
Out of school hours child care and child care	389.89	367.70	233.72	71.34	70.61	35.98
Community access to lifelong learning	189.70	188.22	142.26	30.71	14.16	2.92
Small scale grants schemes (Awards for All)	53.00	33.85	33.59	18.29	2.22	—
ICT training and content creation	286.48	286.21	260.02	12.02	—	—
Green spaces and sustainable communities	121.91	116.73	68.55	34.13	12.50	4.41
Fair Share	50.00	50.00	50.00	—	—	—
Transforming communities	150.11	136.99	11.64	30.76	40.45	48.42
Opportunities for young people—PE and sport in schools	811.30	291.77	31.00	145.24	343.50	235.88
Opportunities and activities for young people	64.85	63.13	39.73	21.29	2.20	2.30
Young Peoples Fund	200.00	—	—	Not yet known		
Total	3,239.26	2,429.15	1,286.13	545.59	628.70	424.14

[1] The drawdown of funds to grant recipients is estimated on the forecast rate of spend, and therefore may be subject to change.
[2] Approximately 58 per cent. of these awards are for children's palliative care projects in England.

Aboriginal Artefacts

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the lenders on securing the return of two bark etchings and an Aboriginal ceremonial headdress on loan to the Museum Victoria in Melbourne, Australia; why such items have not been returned; and if she will make a statement. [189148]

Estelle Morris: DCMS has been following this matter with interest and is liaising closely with the British Museum (which has been leading on this issue for the lenders), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Australian High Commission. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has represented the UK Government position directly to the Victorian State Government and to the Federal Government of Australia.

The items in question are currently on loan from the British Museum and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew to Museum Victoria. Their return from Australia has been delayed by two Emergency Declarations imposed by an Aboriginal inspector under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protection Act 1984. The current Declarations expire on 18 September. While a Declaration is in force, the removal of an item contrary to its terms is a criminal offence. Museum Victoria is therefore currently unable to return the items to the British Museum and Kew Gardens.

Like the lenders, we are concerned about the potentially negative impact of this issue upon future loans to Australian museums, and are keen for the loan agreements entered into by Museum Victoria to be honoured.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will prevent further loans of cultural artefacts to Australia in the light of the seizing of Aboriginal etchings recently on loan to that country from the UK. [189149]

Estelle Morris: Decisions on whether or not to loan objects in museum collections are matters for the institution concerned, and the Government has no power to influence this decision. In making any decisions concerning loans of objects overseas, Trustees would obviously want to consider the particular circumstances of the countries to which the items would be sent. The government will take into account the risk that any item will not be returned to this country before granting any application for an export licence in relation to an item which a museum proposes to lend overseas.

Departmental Publicity

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's expenditure was on *(a)* advertising consultants, *(b)* public relations consultants and *(c)* press officers, broken down by grade in (i) 1997–98 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [184346]

Mr. Caborn: The Department did not incur any expenditure on advertising consultants or public relations consultants in either 1997–98 or 2003–04, the latest year for which figures are available. Expenditure on press officers for 2003–04, broken down by grade, was:

Grade	*£*
A	66,124
A/TP	56,325
B	315,021

Information requested for earlier years could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Free TV Licences

Siobhain McDonagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many pensioners in Mitcham and Morden have received free television licences. [189356]

Estelle Morris: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide breakdowns by parliamentary constituency of the number of free licences issued. However, 2001 Census data for Parliamentary constituencies identifies that there are approximately 3,650 people aged 75 or over living in the Tamworth constituency.

Historic Buildings

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many requests in the last three years for which figures are available were *(a)* made and *(b)* granted for the spot listing of buildings of historic or architectural interest threatened with imminent demolition; and of these how many related to industrial premises. [188773]

Mr. Caborn: I regret that there is no facility, within either the English Heritage or DCMS listing databases, to separate out the listing requests made or granted that related to buildings that were threatened with imminent demolition or were industrial premises.

Information and Communication Specialists

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many information and communication technology specialists there are in full-time employment in the Department. [189581]

Mr. Caborn: My Department has three information and communication specialists in full-time employment.

Lottery Grants

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much Lottery money has been granted to Healthy Living centres, breaking down funding by *(a)* distribution body and *(b)* region, when the grants were made; and if she will make a statement. [188748]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund Healthy Living Centres initiative was designed to reduce health inequalities throughout the UK and improve the health of the worst off in society. Between the launch of the initiative in 1999 and the final awards being made in September 2002, a total of £267,775,226 was committed to 351 projects UK-wide.

It is not possible to break down funding in the way requested, but the following table shows total funds committed by the New Opportunities Fund by region:

Region	*£ million*
East Midlands	16.22
Eastern	11.00
London	34.47
North East	18.79
North West	31.37
South East	20.81
South West	14.67
West Midlands	14.23
Yorkshire and the Humber	35.59
England wide	7.62
England total	204.18
Northern Ireland	12.64
Scotland	31.72
Wales	17.65

The number of grants awarded by year in England only is as follows:

	Number
1999	54
2000	157
2001	45
2002	1

Other Lottery distributors may have awarded other grants to Healthy Living Centres, but this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Marine History

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of her time she has spent on work on the marine historic environment in the last 12 months. [189200]

Mr. Caborn: Officials carry out marine historic environment duties on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State. Within the last 12 months various licences have been issued that allow archaeologists and recreational divers access to protected wrecks. In addition the Departments consultation paper "Protecting our Marine Historic Environment: Making the System Work Better" was published in March 2004.

Renaissance in the Regions Programme

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether it is her intention to fund in future the North West Renaissance in the Regions hub for improvements in the delivery of museum services to the same level as the pathfinder hubs in the north east, south west and the Midlands. [189400]

Estelle Morris: As set out in the 2004 Spending Review White Paper, it is our intention to extend the Renaissance in the Regions programme to all nine English regions. Our spending plans for 2005–08, which will be announced later in the year, will strike a balance between that objective and the other spending priorities we have to deliver during the period.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to develop the Renaissance in the Regions programme in the east of England. [189486]

Estelle Morris: As set out in the 2004 Spending Review White Paper, it is our intention to extend the Renaissance in the Regions programme to all nine English regions. Our spending plans for 2005–08, which will be announced later in the year, will strike a balance between that objective and the other spending priorities we have to deliver during the period.

Televised Sporting Events

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what powers she has to insist that recorded highlights of major sporting events including international football matches, are shown on terrestrial television. [188426]

Estelle Morris: None. Provisions of the Broadcasting Act 1996, as amended by the Communications Act 2003, ensure that when rights to live coverage of events on the statutory list are made available they should be offered to the free-to-air broadcasters who reach 95 per cent. of UK audiences (currently BBC1, BBC2, ITV1 and Channel 4), either for live coverage (Category A events) or for delayed coverage or highlights (Category B events). It is a matter for the relevant broadcasters whether they acquire these rights and show the sporting events.

Television Reception

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what discussions she has had with *(a)* the BBC and *(b)* BSkyB on the options that will be available for free-to-view digital satellite television in areas where this is the only practical way of receiving terrestrial stations; [188413]

(2) what plans she has to enhance the affordability of digital television when the only means of access is via satellite. [188416]

Estelle Morris: The Department is in ongoing discussions with broadcasters, including the BBC and BSkyB, and with Ofcom about the further development of digital television services. BSkyB has announced plans to offer a free-to-air satellite service; in their report "Building public value" BBC declared that they "will work with others to develop, market and promote" a free digital satellite service. Ofcom have indicated that they will consider whether regulatory intervention is needed to secure a viable free-to-view satellite proposition before switchover.

Tourism Revenues (Royal Family)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the amount of revenue generated by tourism related to the royal family in summer 2004. [189204]

Mr. Caborn: No estimate is made of the amount of revenue generated by the royal family in relation to tourism. The royal family and its heritage is a major factor in attracting visitors to Britain. They are a key part of Britain's successful tourism industry which is worth £76 billion to the economy. The royal family is very supportive of the tourism industry and their commitment will continue to bring great economic benefits to Britain.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Australian Embassy (Jakarta)

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will make a statement on the level of threat faced by British missions and their staff in South East Asia following the Australian embassy bombings in Jakarta; [189267]

(2) if he will make a statement on the security arrangements in place for British Missions and their staff in South East Asia; and whether those arrangements have been reviewed, following the Australian embassy bombings in Jakarta. [189268]

Mr. Rammell: We take the security of all our staff, both overseas and in the UK, extremely seriously. The level of threat faced by British Missions in South East Asia and other parts of the world is high. Security arrangements for all our Posts are regularly reviewed. We have implemented a number of measures to enhance the security of our Missions in South East Asia in recent years, and have reviewed them again following the bombing outside the Australian Embassy.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to reply to the letter to him dated 20 July from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms. Ruma Begum Churi. [188856]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary replied to my right hon. Friend on 10 September.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what role he has agreed with the Chief Minister of Gibraltar the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will play in the tercentenary celebrations [160695]

Mr. MacShane *[pursuant to his reply, 11 March 2004, Official Report, c. 1701W]*. We are playing a full part in celebrating the warm relationship that we have enjoyed with the people of Gibraltar for the past 300 years. The Government are participating in an extensive programme of commemorative events taking place in both Gibraltar and the UK. The Royal Gibraltar Regiment and military units from the United Kingdom, including the Royal Marines, the Royal Engineers, the Royal Air Force, Royal Navy ships and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary are taking part in a total of more than 20 events throughout the year. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary hopes to attend an event to commemorate the Gibraltar Tercentenary later this year.

Iraq

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1528W, on Iraq, whether the Government have received further clarification on the investigations by the Pentagon Inspector General into the awarding of contracts for the provision of mobile telecommunications in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [188338]

Mr. Rammell *[pursuant to my replies, 15 December 2003, Official Report, c. 734W and 10 March 2004, Official Report, c. 1528W]*: Following inquiries by the British embassy in Washington to the United States Department of Defense, the British ambassador has received notification that the two British citizens originally named in my reply of 15 December 2003 are not under investigation by the US Defense Criminal Investigations Service (DCIS) in this regard. We are not aware of investigations into any other British Citizens. The DCIS had previously been looking into allegations concerning the handling by staff of the Coalition Provisional Authority of the award of licences for the provision of mobile telecommunications services in Iraq.

Our position remains that we are aware of no formal or credible allegations against any British citizens in this connection and, specifically, that we have no reason to doubt the integrity of the British citizens involved in the award of these licences.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the process by which voters will be registered for the parliamentary elections in Iraq.[189075]

Mr. Rammell: The Independent Electoral Commission for Iraq is responsible for producing the electoral role through voter registration. Voter registration forms will be distributed to Iraqis around the country on 1 November enabling voters to register for elections in January 2005.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many voters are registered in Iraq. [189076]

Mr. Rammell: The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq is in the process of taking forward voter registration and the final figure will not be known until shortly before the end of January 2005 when the elections are due.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which body will be in charge of the voter registration process in Iraq. [189077]

Mr. Rammell: The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq is responsible for the organisation, oversight and implementation of the elections including the registration of voters.

Kirsty MacColl

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Mexican authorities in relation to legal proceedings following the death of Kirsty MacColl in a speedboat incident; what discussions he has had with Ms MacColl's family on the outcome of the case; what assistance the Foreign Office provided to the family during the legal process; and if he will make a statement. [188930]

Mr. Mullin: Under international law, the British Government cannot interfere in the legal proceedings of another country. Nevertheless, we have frequently raised our interest in this case with the Mexican authorities, including through ambassador and counsellor meetings with the Minister for Europe in July 2003; the Director General of Consular Protection and the Tourism Minister in November 2003; and the Director General for Europe and the Chief Adviser to the Tourism Minister in August 2004. In addition, the case was also raised during High Level Talks when my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) (Bill Rammell) visited Mexico in October 2003. Consular Directorate also briefed the new Mexican Consul in London last week.

We continue to provide all the consular assistance we properly can. Staff in our Consular Directorate are in regular contact with the 'Justice for Kirsty Campaign'. We have met them twice in London. Embassy staff met the Campaign team and facilitated meetings with local and Government authorities on their trip to Mexico in March 2004.

We hope to raise the case again during Sir Michael Jay's, the Permanent Under Secretary at the FCO, visit to Mexico for High Level Talks later this year.

Poppy Cultivation

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress his Department is making in seeking to meet the targets of reducing poppy cultivation by 75 per cent. by 2003 and eradicating it completely by 2013. [188361]

Mr. Rammell: The UK remains committed to supporting the Afghan government in implementing its

National Drug Control Strategy, which aims for a 70 per cent. reduction in opium poppy cultivation by 2008, and elimination by 2013.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) will publish its annual report on the level of poppy cultivation in the autumn. We anticipate an increase in cultivation levels. Although unwelcome, experience of counter narcotic policies in Pakistan and Thailand, which both had much lower initial levels of production and were more stable countries, shows that cultivation tends to increase before declining.

In the first year of implementation of the strategy, the basic counter narcotics structures have been put in place: drug control legislation, a Counter Narcotics Directorate, the Ministry of Interior's Afghan Special Narcotics Force, the Counter Narcotics Police and a central eradication capability. Work is also in hand to develop alternative livelihoods for farmers dependent on opium poppy cultivation. These measures provide a sound basis for the future development of robust institutions and programmes to combat opium production and trafficking. Progress remains linked to the wider security situation in Afghanistan and to the implementation of other areas of institution building such as policing and judicial systems.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

No Win, No Fee Cases

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether he plans to publish information as to the number of solicitors willing to take on no win, no fee cases. [189155]

Mr. Lammy: The information requested is not collected centrally. But the Law Society in its Solicitors' Firms Business survey 2003 found that, of those solicitors firms that use CFAs, 92 per cent. used them in personal injury cases, 24 per cent. in employment and pension cases, 17 per cent. in clinical negligence and 18 per cent. in professional negligence.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CDC/Actis Capital

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) whether his responsibilities in relation to CDC/Actis Capital have changed with regard to the reorganisation of public shareholder interests under the Shareholder Executive; [188850]

(2) what reserved rights he retains in CDC/Actis Capital with regard to the reorganisation of public shareholder interests under the Shareholder Executive. [188851]

Hilary Benn: My responsibilities for CDC Group plc and Actis Capital LLP have not changed as a result of the involvement of the Shareholder Executive in DFID's shareholder responsibilities. I maintain responsibility for HMG's interests in both CDC and Actis.

The Shareholder Executive now has delegated responsibility for advising me on HMG's interest in Actis. DFID officials retain direct responsibility for advising me on CDC. The Shareholder Executive provides advice to my officials in relation to the discharge of my shareholder responsibilities for CDC.

The reserved rights I retain in CDC Group plc and Actis Capital LLP have not changed as a result of the involvement of the Shareholder Executive in DFID's shareholder responsibilities.

For CDC, the reserved rights that I retain as the owner of 765,036,042 ordinary shares (the remaining one is held by HM Treasury Solicitors) and one special rights preference share are set out in detail in the Commonwealth Development Corporation Act 1999 and the Memorandum and Articles of Association of CDC.

As for Actis, the Members Agreement which I placed in the library of the House on July 14 this year sets out the rights I retain over Actis.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has made to review CDC/Actis Capital investee *(a)* accountability standards and *(b)* compliance procedures. [188966]

Hilary Benn: Since 1999, the conduct of CDC's business has been governed by a set of responsible business principles which set out standards for corporate ethics, accountability, environmental and labour practices etc. Equivalent standards are required from CDC's investee companies. These were monitored by the Business Principles Committee of the CDC board.

As part of the reorganisation of CDC, these principles and requirements were reviewed and it was agreed that they should in future also apply to Actis. They have accordingly been written into the Members' Agreement establishing Actis, a copy of which has been placed in the Library. The Business Principles Committee of the Actis Supervisory Board will now oversee their application.

The business principles are also mandated in CDC's management contract with Actis and CDC will continue to monitor compliance through the CDC board Business Principles Committee.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether a formal environmental impact assessment was carried out regarding CDC's Higaturu Oil Palms investment. [188967]

Hilary Benn: Environmental impact assessments were not the norm when Higaturu was first established in the 1970s. Since then Higaturu has commissioned several environmental studies.

Most recently, in late 2002/early 2003, Higaturu achieved certification to ISO14001 for environmental management: this requires that companies have mechanisms in place for identifying potential environmental impacts and their amelioration or avoidance. Such plans are updated twice a year, and include provisions for incorporating stakeholder feedback. The environmental management system is externally audited at least annually.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the environmental concerns relating to CDC/Actis Capital's Higaturu Oil Palms investment that arose *(a)* in the biannual Investment Valuation Review and *(b)* via the Business Principles Unit; and if he will list the action plans developed in response. [188969]

Hilary Benn: CDC's and Actis' investment reviews are confidential and commercially sensitive. CDC has in place appropriate procedures for monitoring that Actis complies with its Business Principles, including monitoring of the management of the environment by investee companies.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has received regarding investee environmental regulation exemption requests in Papua New Guinea. [188970]

Hilary Benn: I have received no representations regarding investee environmental regulation exemption requests in Papua New Guinea.

For the record, CDC does not ask for or receive exemptions on environmental regulations on investments made on its behalf by any of its managers.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the monitoring visits at Higaturu Oil Palms since 1999 that CDC/Actis Capital has *(a)* directly performed and *(b)* independently contracted. [188971]

Hilary Benn: Monitoring visits commissioned by the Pacific Rim Palm Oil Ltd. (PRPOL) Board have been effectively contracted by CDC as its owner. Since 1999, independent environmental studies have been contracted from at least four expert consultancy firms. There have been two CDC visits focused on environmental issues in 1999 and 2002 as well as a number of general monitoring visits by other CDC staff. There have been two visits by the PRPOL Board including its non-executive directors and by PRPOL's environmental manager.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the criteria for deciding whether CDC/Actis Capital investments are considered of *(a)* high, *(b)* medium and *(c)* low environmental risk; and who performs environmental studies of (i) high, (ii) medium and (iii) low risks. [188972]

Hilary Benn: CDC's practice has been to rate investments as high, medium or low environmental risk in accordance with a matrix similar to that used by the International Finance Corporation.

High risk activities are those which, due to their type, scale or location have the potential for substantial adverse impact on the environment surrounding the facility and/or globally.

Medium risk activities are those which could cause adverse impacts but these are unlikely to be irreversible or persistent. Remedial measures can more easily be implemented, and the impacts are not as diverse or sensitive as in the high risk category.

Low risk activities are those which typically have minimal impact.

For investments involving high risk to the environment, a formal environmental assessment by an external consultant is required. Where the environmental risk is rated medium, an environmental appraisal by an in-house specialist is required. In investments where the environmental risk is low, a routine environmental appraisal is carried out. Going forward, CDC will require Actis and other fund managers it uses to apply similar procedures and maintain similar standards.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many CDC/Actis Capital investment projects have been terminated on grounds of *(a)* environmental risk and *(b)* labour conditions. [188973]

Hilary Benn: Since 1999, there have been no occasions when environmental risks and/or labour conditions have forced an early exit from an investment.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the institutional investors in CDC/Actis Capital by contribution *(a)* amount and *(b)* proportion. [189053]

Hilary Benn: There are no institutional investors in either CDC or Actis.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what CDC/Actis Capital's policy is towards initial public offerings as a method of attracting private capital, broken down by sector. [189054]

Hilary Benn: Initial public offerings (IPOs) are a well-established method of attracting private capital. CDC does not seek to influence Actis or other fund managers it may employ in determining the suitability of an IPO in particular cases, whether by sector or any other criterion.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list CDC investment programmes aside from Actis Capital. [189055]

Hilary Benn: In addition to funds managed by Actis, CDC has funds under management with Aureos Capital, a fund specialising in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries. Aureos is owned 50:50 by Actis and NorFund.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list by *(a)* country, *(b)* sector, *(c)* amount and *(d)* proportion CDC/Actis Capital investments in (i) SME firms and (ii) funds that invest in SME firms. [189056]

Hilary Benn: CDC does not invest directly in Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) but invests in them through Aureos Capital. Data on these investments are not classified by sector. Data on amount, country and the proportion of CDC's investment devoted to SMEs in the relevant country are as follows:

CDC investments held through Aureos funds

	Country	*Amount (£000)*	*Proportion (Percentage)*
Acacia fund	Kenya	1,533	25
Aureos Capital fund	n/a	1,368	50
Aureos Central America fund	Costa Rica	2,187	28
Aureos East Africa fund	East Africa	1,099	20
Aureos South Africa fund	South Africa	307	28
Aureos West Africa fund	West Africa	857	36
Ayojana fund	Sri Lanka	902	50
Central America Venture fund	Costa Rica	6,154	38
Fedha fund	Tanzania	1,019	31
Ghana Venture Capital fund	Ghana	839	34
Indian Ocean Regional fund	Mauritius	2,802	39
Kula fund	Papua New Guinea	1,707	32
Mauritius Venture Capital fund	Mauritius	307	20
Mozambique Investment Company	Mozambique	894	26
NDBVI fund	Sri Lanka	925	50
Takura Investment fund	Zimbabwe	11	31
Tanzania Venture Capital fund	Tanzania	896	33
Zambia Venture Capital fund	Zambia	1,592	20

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has received regarding CDC/Actis Capital investment in Iraq. [189057]

Hilary Benn: I have received no representations about either CDC or Actis in respect of Iraq. There are currently no CDC investments in that country.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what resources CDC/Actis Capital *(a)* has directed and *(b)* will direct to small and medium enterprises in (i) Iraq and (ii) Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [189058]

Hilary Benn: CDC has directed no resources towards Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in either Iraq or Afghanistan. It will consider propositions to do so in future on their merits.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations he has received from Rwandan officials regarding the transfer of its equity interest in the Commercial Bank of Rwanda to CDC/Actis Capital. [189060]

Hilary Benn: The Rwandan Minister of Finance, Dr. Donald Kaberuka, made an oral request at the UK—Government of Rwanda Partnership Talks, 1–2 May 2003, that DFID finance a forensic audit of the sale of Banque Commerciale du Rwanda (BCR). The sale had not been advertised at that time and CDC was not mentioned as a potential bidder.

Minister Kaberuka wrote to DFID in July 2004 after CDC were selected as the preferred bidder and requested that the forensic audit be carried out. DFID is currently carrying out a limited tender for the work and exploring options to ensure that the audit will be seen as properly independent.

The successful bid for an equity interest in BCR by Actis (having now taken over this function from CDC) was entirely independent of any contacts between DFID and Rwanda officials. It is not our policy to intervene or interfere in any way with the commercial judgment of Actis.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list CDC/Actis Capital holdings in funds *(a)* solely managed, *(b)* joint managed and *(c)* not managed by CDC/Actis Capital; and how much capital has been in each fund since 2002. [189062]

Hilary Benn: CDC invests all its funds through fund managers, whose performance it directs and monitors; to that extent, all CDC's investments are solely managed. The following data, which are at cost, relate exclusively to Actis:

£000

	December 2002	*December 2003*	*June 2004*
(a) Funds solely managed by Actis			
Commonwealth Africa Investment Fund	13,873	13,873	13,873
South Asia Regional Fund	31,965	31,603	24,784
Nandi	18,566	10,050	3,695
Actis Fund 1	1,203,583	1,239,787	1,163,623
Actis Fund 2	—	—	988
(b) Funds jointly managed by Actis with Norfund			
Aureos SME Funds	27,002	24,029	25,400
(c) Fund investments managed by Actis on behalf of CDC			
Capital Alliance Private Equity	1,887	2,340	2,340
Gujarat Venture Capital	1,296	1,243	1,216
H&Q Asia Pacific	3,877	3,854	3,811
Nusantara Investment Fund	3,025	3,025	3,025

£000

	December 2002	December 2003	June 2004
Praxis Active Equity Fund	3,316	3,431	3,489
South Africa Franchise Equity Fund	421	460	460
Total invested portfolio at cost	1,308,810	1,339,630	1,246,702

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the status is of CDC/ Actis Capital's Aureos investment; and what its returns have been since 2001. [189063]

Hilary Benn: Aureos is a fund jointly established by CDC and Norfund (the Norwegian Government's investment fund). CDC's investments under management with Aureos Capital amount to £25 million. As Aureos has attracted some 50 other investors into its funds, it would be a breach of their commercial confidentiality to disclose return rates on these investments.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the status of CDC/ Actis Capital's partnership with CGU in China is; and if he will list its *(a)* holdings, *(b)* projects and *(c)* quarterly returns since 1997. [189064]

Hilary Benn: CDC operates an investment partnership in China with Aviva, as CGU is now known. The holdings, projects and returns of that partnership are a matter of commercial confidentiality.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what debt is owed to CDC/ Actis Capital. [189065]

Hilary Benn: Total debt owed to CDC at cost as at 30 June 2004 was £411 million. The breakdown by borrower and amount of this debt is commercially sensitive information.

Iraq

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to promote economic development in Basrah.[188345]

Hilary Benn: Iraq's economic growth will depend not only on extensive reconstruction to make good the dilapidation of infrastructure under Saddam-Hussein, but also on wide-ranging economic reforms to promote private sector growth. We are encouraging the Iraqi Interim Government to agree an IMF programme, and debt reduction through the Paris Club.

The international community pledged over US$32 billion for reconstruction at the Madrid Donors' Conference in October 2003. The UK and the US are also leading the G7 in pushing for generous relief of Iraq's debt. Iraq's oil revenues, currently estimated at over $20 billion per year (and with the capacity to rise substantially in the future) will, of course, be a major source of finance for growth. The Interim Government have asked for help with public administration and economic policy reform and DFID is helping with both. The aim is to strengthen planning and budgeting and to plan economic reforms that will help all of Iraq, but particularly the poorer areas such as Basra.

In southern Iraq, DFID has funded an Emergency Infrastructure Programme that has helped to stabilise and improve infrastructure. We are starting to implement a £20.5 million project for Capacity Building for Southern Iraq Governorates (including Basra). The project will focus on strengthening planning and budgeting in the governorates so they are better able to support to the local economy and community. We are also funding a £16.5 million programme to promote employment and sustain infrastructure.

TRANSPORT

A13

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects road works on the A13 at Pitsea in Essex to be completed and diversions removed. [189303]

Mr. Jamieson: This section of the A13 is the responsibility of Essex county council, the local highway authority. The council is carrying out the repair works which are scheduled for completion by the middle of November 2004.

Ambulances

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many road traffic accidents involving Mercedes Sprinter style ambulances there were in the last two years in England; and if he will make a statement; [188376]

(2) how many of the total ambulance accidents in the last two years in England were attributed to *(a)* driver error and *(b)* mechanical failure; and if he will make a statement; 188377]

(3) how many road traffic accidents involving Mercedes Sprinter ambulances in the last two years in England were attributed to *(a)* driver error and *(b)* mechanical failure; and if he will make a statement. [188378]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is not held centrally.

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a Written Ministerial Statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188192]

(2) if he will make a Written Ministerial Statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states

that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188193]

Mr. Jamieson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 13 September by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs *Official Report*, column 1451W.

Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to encourage the greater use of electrically assisted pedal cycles in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [188577]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 15 September 2004]*: Electrically assisted pedal cycles complying with the requirements in The Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles Construction and Use Regulations 1983 are able to use facilities provided for ordinary bicycles. The Government are committed to encouraging more cycling as a healthy, useful and enjoyable means of travel.

Our White Paper, "The Future of Transport", confirmed our long-term aim to increase levels of cycling and followed the publication in June of "Walking and Cycling: an action plan". That plan includes more than 40 practical actions from across Government to encourage and promote walking and cycling through improved facilities, training, education and promotion.

Electronic Consultation Papers

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his recent consultation paper, Driving at Work, is available in paper as well as electronic versions; how many pages long it is when printed out; and if he will issue a printer friendly version of this and other electronic consultation papers. [188496]

Mr. Jamieson: "Driving at Work" is a guidance leaflet published by the Department and the Health and Safety Executive in September 2003. It is available in paper form from HSE Books and can be printed from the electronic version at http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg382.pdf. Both versions are 24 pages long.

The Department's consultation papers are available in hard copy from and can also be printed from our web-site using the PDF and Word format icons at the top of each document.

Eurostar

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what free capacity will be generated by the relocation of Eurostar services from Waterloo station. [186724]

Mr. Darling: Any relocation of Eurostar services from Waterloo station is a matter for Eurostar. The most effective use of track capacity is kept under review by the rail industry.

Farnborough Airfield

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether Farnborough Airfield will be included in his strategy for dealing with the future needs of airport capacity in the UK. [189116]

Charlotte Atkins: The White Paper "The Future of Air Transport" recognises the potential of small airports, including Farnborough Airfield, to cater for business aviation demand, which is necessary due to capacity constraints at the main South East airports.

However, it is for the operator of Farnborough Airfield to bring forward any development plans, which will need to be considered through the planning system in the normal way.

Highways Agency

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of the Highways Agency's four-stage complaints procedure; and what plans he has to review its structure and operation. [188802]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency is conducting a review of its complaints procedure that is due to be completed during the current financial year.

Oxford/Cambridge Motorway

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of the need for a motorway between Oxford and Cambridge. [189246]

Mr. Jamieson: The Secretary of State has made no assessment of the needs for a motorway between Oxford and Cambridge.

Ports

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the outstanding UK deep sea container terminal development applications *(a)* which have been referred to his Department prior to formal planning applications being submitted in the form of HRO, HEO, TWAO or a standard planning application, *(b)* which have been subject to a scoping study and are awaiting or in the process of a public inquiry and *(c)* for which he has received the inspector's report following a public inquiry; and in each case when he (i) received the report and (ii) expects to announce his decision. [189097]

Mr. Jamieson: There are three outstanding applications for deep sea container terminal developments requiring approval by the Secretary of State. The positions on each are as follows:

The inspector's report into P&O's application for a Harbour Empowerment Order to construct a port at Shellhaven (London Gateway) was received in the Department on 26 February 2004. A decision will be announced when Ministers have completed their consideration of the report and all relevant issues.

The application by Hutchison Ports to construct a port at Bathside Bay is currently at a public inquiry which I understand is due to close this week.

The application by Hutchison Ports for a further container terminal at Felixstowe South is due to be considered at a public inquiry starting on 26 October.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he expects the proposals for major container port developments at Hunterston and Scapa Flow to be taken through the decision process by the

autumn 2005 deadline set out in paragraph 7.28 of the Government's White Paper entitled the Future of Transport: A network for 2030. [189098]

Mr. Jamieson: The timing of these decisions is a matter for the Scottish Executive, to whom the applications for approval would be made.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's interpretation is of the alternative test required by the Habitats Directive when assessing environmental damage that may be created by a deep sea container terminal development proposal. [189105]

Mr. Jamieson: In line with the European Commission's methodological guidance on the assessment of plans or projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites we take the view that consideration of alternatives is not confined to alternative local sites.

Public Transport (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much the Government have provided to City of York Council in grants and other funding for public transport in each year since the unitary council was formed. [188950]

Charlotte Atkins: The table as follows details the funding City of York Council has received for all transport related issues in each year since the formation of the unitary council in April 1996.

£million

	Transport Policies and Programme/ Local Transport Plan Capital Funding	*Rural Bus Subsidy Grant*	*Rural Bus Challenge*	*Countryside Agency*	*Strategic Rail Authority*
1996-97	3.340	0	0	0	0
1997-98	2.212	0	0	0	0
1998-99	1.127	0.073	0.180	0	0
1999-2000	1.983	0.073	0	0	0
2000-01	2.262	0.073	0.236	0	0
2001-02	5.995	0.093	0	0	0
2002-03	6.155	0.107	0	0.007	0
2003-04	7.881	0.109	0	0.044	0
2004-05	6.302	0.123	0	0.041	1.600
Total	37.257	0.651	0.416	0.092	1.600

Notes:

1. The Transport Policies and Programme/Local Transport Plan Capital Funding covers all aspects of transport (e.g. maintenance, road safety and public transport). There is no specific allocation within these figures for public transport; it is for the local authority to set priorities and allocate funds accordingly from its Single Capital Pot budget.
2. The Rural Bus Subsidy Grant; Rural Bus Challenge, Countryside Agency and Strategic Rail Authority monies are all allocated solely to public transport.
3. In addition, the local authority receives Revenue Support Grant (RSG) from the Government each year. This is a block allocation for all council services, which includes support for public transport. However, it is not possible to identify any specific allocations for public transport from within the RSG allocation.

Royal Train

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many journeys were made by the Royal Train in each of the last five years. [189218]

Mr. McNulty: During the last five years, the Royal Train has made the following number of journeys:

1999-2000: 24

2000-01: 17

2001-02: 15

2002-03: 19

2003-04: 18

More detailed information about these journeys is published in the Annual Reports on the Grant-in-Aid for Royal Travel by Air and Rail. Copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House.

Transport-related Emissions

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the percentage contribution of transport-related emissions to overall UK greenhouse gas emissions. [188478]

Mr. Jamieson: The precise percentage contribution of transport-related emissions to overall UK greenhouse gas emissions depends on how broadly transport-related emissions are defined. In particular, it varies according to how emissions from domestic and international aviation are treated, and whether, on the rail side, a share of the total emissions from power stations is included. The Government regularly publish estimates of the breakdown of greenhouse gas emissions between sectors. The most definitive source of this information is the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (available at www.naei.org.uk), which estimates that in 2002 (the most recent year for which data are available) some 20 per cent. of total UK greenhouse gas emissions came from the transport sector. Details of how this figure was calculated are set out in the NAEI.

Type Approval

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his Department's process of Type Approval; and what assessment he has made of the recent EU judgment on its operation. [188803]

Mr. Jamieson: Following the European Commission reasoned opinions the agency is producing new performance specifications for self-certification as part of an established programme for traffic control equipment Type Approval.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Doorstep Cold Calling

10. **Mr. Truswell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to achieve a cross-departmental approach to combat crime and unscrupulous trading associated with doorstep cold calling. [189179]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry launched a public consultation on the market study report by the Office of Fair Trading on 14 July. Consultees include relevant Government Departments and enforcement authorities.

We have proposed a cross-departmental ministerial group to encourage a more joined-up approach. Ministerial colleagues take this matter very seriously and will be meeting at the earliest opportunity

The result of the public consultation will inform consideration of the issues by the group.

Post Office Closures

11. **John Barrett:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many urban post offices have closed in the last 12 months. [189180]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I understand from Post Office Ltd. that in financial year 2003–04 there were a total of 1,129 urban post office closures, including 1,109 under the urban network reinvention programme. In the first quarter of this financial year, to the end of June, there were 246 urban post office closures. 206 of those closures were under the urban network reinvention programme.

14. **Mr. Pike**: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations she has received on the sub-post office urban closure programme. [189183]

Mr. Sutcliffe: DTI Ministers and officials regularly receive representations on a wide range of postal services issues, including the urban network reinvention programme.

Mr. Michael Jabez Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many Post Office branches have been proposed for closure by the Post Office under the Post Office reinvention programme; and how many have been subsequently confirmed for closure after the consultation process has been completed. [187843]

Mr. Sutcliffe: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply to the hon. Member.

EU Emissions Directive

12. **Mr. Illsley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to minimise any adverse impact of the EU Emissions Directive on industry. [189181]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The EU emissions trading scheme is a cost effective and market friendly way of reducing CO_2 emissions. Industry's views have been taken at every stage of the process; there have been five consultations so far. The plans for implementation are well developed and will be finalised shortly.

Mass Marketing Scams

13. **Mr. Blizzard**: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will ask the Office of Fair Trading to investigate mass marketing scams. [189182]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) does investigate mass marketing scams. Most mass marketing scams operate from outside the UK. The OFT works with the network of enforcement agencies called ICPEN (International Consumer Protection Enforcement Network) to investigate and take action against cross-border scams.

The OFT have taken a lead within Europe in taking action against scam mail under new powers provided by the Injunctions Directive and the Enterprise Act 2002 ('Stop Now Orders').

Offshore Wind Farms

16. **Mr. Chaytor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the development of offshore wind farms. [189185]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK has some of the best wind resources in the world. It is important that these resources are properly utilised to ensure that the United Kingdom's targets for generating electricity from renewable energy sources can be met. The development of offshore wind farms can potentially provide a major contribution to those targets and the Government are committed to ensuring that the right framework is in place to enable projects to proceed where an assessment of their impacts indicates they are acceptable.

There have been two competitive rounds of site leasing for offshore wind farms. Round 1 has resulted in 11 projects receiving development consents with two of these generating electricity and another at an early stage of construction. Government was able to announce last December that Round 2 will involve projects of a much bigger scale with the potential to provide electricity for up to £4 million homes. The developers of Round 2 projects are currently undertaking the assessment work necessary prior to submission of consent applications.

Business Support (London)

17. **Linda Perham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assistance her Department provides to businesses in London. [189186]

Jacqui Smith: Assistance to business is delivered via a number of different agencies, including the London Development Agency (LDA). In financial year 2003–04, Business Link for London exceeded its key performance targets set by the DTI/Small Business Service, achieving:

Market Penetration—82,915 businesses assisted/advised;

Customer Satisfaction—86 per cent.;

Intensive Assistance—5,160 businesses intensively supported.

The DTI's Grant for Research & Development (GranD) is aimed at individuals planning to start-up businesses in England and at small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) already operating in England. The

grants are offered at the discretion of Government, to help businesses carry out research and development work that will lead to technologically innovative products or processes.

During 2003–04, the DTI/Small Business Service made offers of grant to 145 London start-ups/SMEs. This represented funding in total of just under £9.5 million.

The planned restructuring of business support arrangements in London, that includes the transfer of BL4L contract management and direct delivery of GranD to the London Development Agency from April 2005, will further improve DTI services to customers within the Capital.

In 2003–04, the LDA, which is primarily funded by the DTI:

Created or safeguarded 18,017 jobs (including those attributable to foreign direct investment and regional selective assistance);

Set up or attracted 1,333 businesses to London;

Provided support or advice to 26,937 businesses; and

Created 26,683 learning opportunities

In 2003–2004 the LDA invested over £350 million to create jobs, get people into work, support new and existing businesses and create space for businesses, homes and community facilities.

London businesses can also access a small suite of grants, loans guarantees and subsidised consultancy to address a range of business issues provided by the DTI. These include:

Succeeding through innovation:

Providing practical support for the key stages of innovation or research and development. Initiatives include the Technology Programme, which provides some funding and shares some of the risks in taking new technologies to market.

Raising finance:

Supporting small or high growth companies to obtain investment through the Small Firms loan Guarantee, which guarantees loans from banks and other institutions for small businesses with viable proposals. London businesses can access £50 million via the Regional Venture Capital Funds (RVCFs) o provide risk capital finance in amounts up to £500,000 to Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) who demonstrate growth potential.

Regional investment:

Encouraging investment in specific areas of England to promote economic regeneration. Selective Finance for Investment is designed for businesses that are looking at the possibility of investing in assisted areas. The programme is discretionary and invariably takes the form of grants or occasionally a loan.

The Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) in London offers an integrated service providing free information and advice for manufacturers large and small, although diagnostic services undertaken by highly professional MAS practitioners will be targeted on small and medium sized firms.

Renewable Energy

18. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the Renewables Obligation Order 2005. [189187]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government last week published a consultation paper proposing a number of detailed changes to improve its operation. These include increasing the level of the obligation in the period between 2010–11 and 2015–16. Following the current consultation, the Government plan to lay an order before Parliament early next year.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment she has made of the contribution of renewable energy to UK energy needs; and if she will make a statement. [189184]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Renewable energy will make a significant contribution to our energy mix. We have a target for 10 per cent. of our electricity to come from renewable sources by 2010, and our aspiration is to have 20 per cent. of electricity from renewables by 2020.

Age Discrimination

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate the Government have made of the cost of age discrimination to the UK economy in each year since 1997. [186927]

Jacqui Smith: The DTI has not made an estimate of the cost of age discrimination to the UK economy. A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) accompanied the July 2003 'Age Matters' consultation on proposals for legislation to outlaw age discrimination in employment. and vocational training. It estimated that, excluding the positive impact of a likely increase in the labour supply, the economy would benefit by about £600 million over the first 10 years of the legislation taking effect. The RIA is available on: www.dti.gov.uk/er/equality/age.htm As far as the impact of an increase in the labour supply is concerned, "Winning the Generation Game" (Performance and Innovation Unit, April 2000, www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/innovation/2000/wirining/generation.pdf) on the impact of ageing on the economy put the cost of early and involuntary exit from the labour market at about £16 billion each year. Some of this is attributable to age discrimination.

Agency Workers Directive

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the Agency Workers Directive. [186338]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Our position on the Agency Workers Directive remains that we support the principle of the directive but the text needs to be changed to meet the concerns of all member states. We are committed to using our best endeavours to reach an early settlement.

Airbus

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost was of support by the UK Government for the Airbus family of projects in each year since 1997–98 *(a)* gross and *(b)* net after loan repayments. [188599]

Jacqui Smith: The Government are a strong supporter of Airbus and have provided financial support in the form of launch investment since 1984.

The payments by HMG to Airbus and receipts from Airbus to HMG since 1997–98 are set out as follows:

(£ million actual)

	Payments	*Receipts*
1997–98	0	85.4
1998–99	0	134.6
1999–2000	0	167.4
2000–01	0	119.7
2001–02	136	103.4
2002–03	139	88.7
2003–04	255	78.3

Coalminers' Compensation Scheme

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects to reach the last decile of registered coal compensation claims for *(a)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and *(b)* vibration white finger for former miners or their widows or families in the east Midlands. [189188]

Nigel Griffiths: The Department is currently holding detailed discussions on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and plans to report progress to Sir Michael Turner, the judge who oversees the respiratory scheme, later this month when he visits the DTI's claims handlers. On claims for VWF, the Department aims to have completed all general damages offers by the end of 2004, and to have all claims settled by the end of 2005.

Consumer Codes

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many consumer codes are awaiting approval by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Office of Fair Trading. [R] [188823]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI has no role in the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) Consumer Codes Approval System.

We are advised by the OFT that six codes have completed the first stage of the process and are working towards OFT approval. In addition, OFT have received approaches from a further 40 organisations and of these 13 have already made formal applications.

Cross-channel Ferries

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent investigations have been carried out into the competitive nature of cross-channel ferries; and if she will make a statement. [188910]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The European Commission is conducting an investigation into cross-channel transport services, to ascertain whether there is evidence of suspected cartel agreements and related illegal practices concerning fixing of prices and trade conditions for cross-channel transport services; and evidence of suspected market sharing agreements in relation to the provision of ferry services to and from the UK.

It is for the independent competition authorities in the UK, and for the European Commission if there is an effect on inter-state trade, to investigate competition in markets and the effects of mergers on competition in markets.

Export Support

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the lowering of the target rate in the public service agreement indicator for UK Trade and Investment to show positive assistance to new-to-export firms indicates a decreasing level of support to such businesses; and if she will make a statement. [189294]

Mr. Alexander: The target has been raised not lowered. A new PSA indicator, agreed in the recent Spending Review, requires at least 40 per cent. of new to export firms funded by UK Trade and Investment to improve their business performance within two years. The previous target was 30 per cent. Although the overall level of resources being allocated to trade development will be reduced following the spending review, UK Trade and Investment is committed to increasing by 30 percentage points the proportion to trade development resources focused on new to export firms.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry why her Department has lowered the minimum target rate to be achieved in 2004–06 from that most recently achieved by UK Trade and Investment in assisting new-to-export firms to improve their business performance. [189315]

Mr. Alexander: The target rate has been raised not lowered for the 2005–06 to 2007–08 period.

Foreign Direct Investment

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* five countries and *(b)* industries accounted for the greatest amount of foreign direct investment in the United Kingdom in each of the past five years. [188921]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* According to figures recorded by UKTI the five countries that accounted for the greatest amount of foreign direct investment in the United Kingdom in the last five years is:

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
1.	US	US	US	US	US
2.	Germany	Germany	Japan	Canada	France
3.	Japan	Canada	Canada	Germany	Japan
4.	Canada	Japan	France	Japan	Canada
5.	France	France	Germany	France	Germany

According to figures recorded by UKTI the five industries that accounted for the greatest amount of foreign direct investment in the United Kingdom in the last five years is:

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
1.	IT, internet and e-commerce	IT, internet and e-commerce	Software	Software	Software
2.	Automotive	Software	IT, internet and e-commerce	IT, internet and e-commerce	IT, internet and e-commerce
3.	Electronics	Electronics	Automotive	Automotive	Electronics
4.	Engineering	Automotive	Electronics	Electronics	Pharmaceuticals and biotechnology
5.	Telecoms	Telecoms	Telecoms	Finance	Management

These figures are based on information provided by companies at the time of the announcement of the decision to invest in the UK. The figures take no account of subsequent developments.

There is no requirement to notify UKTI and so the figures include only those projects where UKTI's Inward Investment Group and its regional partners were involved or which have come to their notice.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which 10 foreign companies invested the greatest amount directly in the United Kingdom in each of the past five years. [188993]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 14 September 2004]*: Individual statistical returns companies make to the Office for National Statistics and other Government organisations for all surveys, including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), are confidential, and therefore the information cannot be published.

Insolvency

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the appointment of the insolvency adjudicator. [189153]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Dame Barbara Mills DBE QC was appointed to act as the Independent Complaints Adjudicator for The Insolvency Service from 1 April 2003.

Dame Barbara will consider complaints about the way in which The Insolvency Service has dealt with its users including bankrupts, directors of failed companies and creditors. She will consider whether the complaint is justified and recommend what, if anything, The Insolvency Service should do to put things right.

The Adjudicator's recommendations are independent and her services are free to complainants.

Dame Barbara also investigates complaints about the Inland Revenue, HM Customs and Excise, and the Public Guardianship Office.

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost has been of the review of insolvency practitioners regulations. [189154]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The current review of insolvency practitioners regulations commenced in November 2003 and is on-going.

The cost to date is estimated to be in the region of £7,367.

International Atomic Energy Agency

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proposals the United Kingdom ambassador to the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plans to make to the next annual general conference of the IAEA; whether the United Kingdom will be participating in the scientific forum being held as part of the IAEA general conference, on 21 to 22 September; and who the members of the UK delegation to the conference will be. [189109]

Nigel Griffiths: The UK will, as usual, be represented at the Agency's General Conference by a team of officials from different Government Departments, led by the UK's Governor to the IAEA. Throughout the week the UK will be negotiating and working with other member states on a wide range of issues relevant to the Agency's activities: these include nuclear safety and security, nuclear verification safeguards, and promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. Copies of the UK's statement to the Plenary and resolutions, which have been agreed at the conference, will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

At present, the UK has no plans to participate in the scientific forum being held on 21–22 September, as part of the IAEA General Conference.

Marine Aggregates

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the amount of marine aggregates in cubic metres dredged off the British coast in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [188480]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply

The Crown Estate has provided the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister with the following figures for the

extraction of aggregates from British waters over the past 10 years:

	Tonnage extracted	*Cubic metres extracted*[1]
1994	22,064,768	13,374,690
1995	26,122,576	16,068,640
1996	26,613,578	16,496,250
1997	24,876,508	15,301,780
1998	22,866,580	13,928,970
1999	23,678,572	14,442,100
2000	23,656,885	14,042,140
2001	22,689,280	13,771,780
2002	21,875,086	13,273,720
2003	22,226,070	13,525,340

[1] Approximate conversion.

Parental Leave

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to increase paid parental leave; and if she will make a statement. [186334]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government introduced a substantial package of laws for working parents in April 2003, including increasing paid maternity leave, and a new right to paid paternity and adoption leave.

The Government are committed not to make any changes to the laws for working parents before 2006, after the impact of the existing legislation has been reviewed.

The DTI is taking forward a programme of work to explore what additional support could be provided to people balancing work and caring responsibilities, in ways that meet both individual and business needs. The work has included a series of roundtables in England, Scotland and Wales and a Citizens' Jury.

Post Office Card Accounts

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what revised guidance has been issued to post offices on the marketing of Post Office Card Accounts during the last three months. [188452]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Guidance and training for subpostmasters on the procedures associated with the Post Office Card Account (POCA) are operational matters for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to respond directly to the hon. Member.

Postal Services

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints she has received in the last 12 months regarding the postal service in postal districts RM1, RM2, RM5, RM7, RM11 and RM12; and what the figures are for all other London postal districts. [187732]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Complaints regarding the postal service are an operational matter for Royal Mail Group and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Proposed EU Patentability Directive

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the differences are between current UK copyright law and the draft of the proposed EU directive on software patentability for which the Minister of State for Industry and the Regions voted at the EU Competitiveness Council meeting on 17–18 May. [189316]

Ms Hewitt: Present UK copyright law protects an original computer program that has been recorded in some form, but does not protect the idea behind the program. The current draft of the directive does not alter copyright protection, but confirms that innovators can gain patent protection for inventions involving the use of computer programs, providing they meet existing patentability requirements, which include making a technical contribution.

Research Councils

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the proportion of Research Council grants that will go to staff costs when research councils move to funding the full economic costs of research. [189031]

Ms Hewitt: On currently available data, Research Councils estimate that staff costs, including staff directly employed on the grant such as research assistants, make up approximately 40 per cent. of the Full Economic Cost (FEC) of current grants. Permanent academic staff (Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators) represent approximately one third of this figure.

The Government have allocated an additional £200 million per year from 2007–08 (£120 million from 2005–06) to pay more for each Research Council project. As stated in the "Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–14", the Government intends that Research Councils should pay close to 100 per cent. of the FEC of their grant funded research, taking account of capital funding streams, by the beginning of the next decade.

Science Budget

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money from the Government's science budget had been spent *(a)* in total, *(b)* in Yorkshire and the Humber and *(c)* in the City of York in each year since 1997. [188951]

Ms Hewitt: Total science budget expenditure in each year from 1997–98 to 2002–03 was as follows:

	Science budget (£ million)
1997–98	1,331
1998–99	1,334
1999–2000	1,394
2000–01	1,514
2001–02	1,707
2002–03	2,032

Research Council grants allocated to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Yorkshire and

Humber and the City of York from 1997–98 to 2002–03 were as follows:

£ million

	Total UK Research Council grants	Yorkshire and Humber	York
1997–98	534	39.6	6.5
1998–99	560	44.1	7.1
1999–2000	604	50.2	7.4
2000–01	695	57.1	8.7
2001–02	805	65.0	10
2002–03	820	66.5	11.6

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency—Resources of Higher Education Institutions

In addition, over this period, HEIs in Yorkshire and Humber received £117 million (of which £31 million went to the City of York) in infrastructure and knowledge transfer support, which was co-funded from the DfES and the OST science budget.

Small Mines (Compensation)

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Government's claims handlers expect to settle outstanding issues in relation to small mine employment and occupational respiratory disease issues. [189156]

Nigel Griffiths: Following agreement in principle in February 2004 good progress has been made in operational planning for the issuing of offers to small mines claimants. Software development scheduled for completion toward the end of September will allow the calculation of full and final offers to commence.

Sunday Trading

Ms Coffey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to deregulate Sunday trading. [188757]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* We have no plans to do so.

Tissue Products

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the cost to public service provider purchasing departments of inaccurate labelling of tissue products in the last year for which figures are available. [188105]

Mr. Sutcliffe: None.

Trading Standards

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support she will give to local trading standards authorities seeking to protect the public from mass marketing scams. [188450]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We have provided funding to Trading Standards to support and encourage more joined up effective enforcement; the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has also assisted Trading Standards Departments by providing training to around 2,500 Trading Standards Officers over the past year.

Most mass marketing scams operate from outside the UK. The OFT works with the network of enforcement agencies called ICPEN (International Consumer Protection Enforcement Network) to investigate and take action against cross-border scams.

UK Trade and Investment Website

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to introduce *(a)* new and *(b)* increased charges for information, advice or assistance obtained by British businesses through the website of UK Trade and Investment. [189317]

Mr. Alexander: Arising from the Spending Review 2004 settlement, UK Trade and Investment are seeking to achieve efficiency gains through consideration of greater cost recovery for its services. Officials are considering options on how best to achieve this.

Unsolicited Goods and Services Act 1971

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints have been made under the terms of the Unsolicited Goods and Services Act 1971 *(a)* since the introduction of the Act and *(b)* in each of the last five years. [188663]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* The Department of Trade and Industry does not collect statistics relating to the number of complaints made under the Unsolicited Goods and Services Act 1971.

Local authority trading standards departments are responsible for enforcement of the Act and will each record their own complaints data.

Working Hours

Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her estimate is of the percentage change in the hours worked per capita in the UK in *(a)* 1970 to 1980, *(b)* 1981 to 1997 and *(c)* 1998 to the latest available year. [184353]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information is as follows:

(a) Unfortunately no data for this time period is available on the Labour Force Survey.

(b) The Labour Force Survey reweighted data starts from 1992. The change in hours worked (that is total hours worked and excluding overtime) from spring 1992 to spring 1997 is 0.08 per cent.

(c) The change in hours (that is total hours worked and excluding overtime) worked from spring 1998 to spring 2004 is 0.59 per cent.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Children in Poverty

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate the Government have

made of *(a)* how many and *(b)* what percentage of children lived in poverty in (i) St. Helens and (ii) the UK, broken down by region, in each year since 1997; [186825]

(2) what estimate the Government have made of *(a)* how many and *(b)* what percentage of children lived in low-income households in (i) St. Helens and (ii) the UK, broken down by region, in each year since 1997; [186824]

(3) what the Government's performance has been against each of its child poverty reduction targets in *(a)* St. Helens and *(b)* the UK, broken down by region, since 1997. [186806]

Mr. Pond: Poverty and social exclusion are complex and multi-dimensional issues, affecting many aspects of peoples' lives—including their living standards, health, housing, the quality of their environment—and not just low income. The sixth annual "Opportunity For All" report (Cm 6329) sets out the Governments strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and presents information on the indicators used to measure progress against this strategy.

Specific information regarding low income for Great Britain and the United Kingdom is available in "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2002–03". Data are not available below regional level.

"Measuring Child Poverty", published in December 2003, outlines the Government's measure of UK child poverty for the long term. This new measure will begin from 2004–05.

All publications listed are available in the Library.

Benefit Claimants (Faversham)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people in Faversham are claiming *(a)* jobseeker's allowance and *(b)* incapacity benefit or their equivalents; and how many were doing so in 1997; [189333]

(2) how many people in the Faversham and Mid-Kent constituency are claiming *(a)* jobseeker's allowance and *(b)* incapacity benefit or their equivalents; and how many were doing so in 1997. [189334]

Mr. Pond: The available information is in the tables.

Incapacity benefits claimants: May 1997 and May 2004

	Thousand
May 1997	
Great Britain	2,739.3
Swale local authority	4.3
Faversham and Mid-Kent parliamentary constituency	2.5
May 2004	
Great Britain	2,708.7
Swale local authority	5.1
Faversham and Mid-Kent parliamentary constituency	3.1

Notes:
1. "Incapacity benefits claimants" includes all incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants, including those receiving national insurance credits only.
2. Figures are shown in thousands and are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. samples.

Jobseeker's allowance claimants: May 1997 and May 2004

	Swale local authority	*Faversham and Mid-Kent parliamentary constituency*
May 1997	3,508	1,715
May 2004	1,450	634

Source:
Count of unemployment-related benefits, Jobcentre Plus computer systems.

Benefits

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost of benefits paid was in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* the most recent year for which figures are available. [188592]

Mr. Pond: The total benefit expenditure for Great Britain, in nominal terms, in 1997–98 was £93,342 million; in 2002–03 it was £110,282 million.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have *(a)* nominated agents to collect state benefits on their behalf and *(b)* made formal appointments for third parties to receive and handle the administration of benefits on their behalf on account of their lack of mental capacity. [188231]

Mr. Pond: The only information available is for pension credit and income support.

In Great Britain, as at February 2004, there were 100,400 pension credit claimants and 53,200 income support claimants with an agent.

In Great Britain, as at the end of February 2004, there were 174,700 pension credit and 118,200 income support claimants with appointees.

It is not possible to state how many people have appointees in cases of lack of mental capacity as this information is not collated centrally.

Bereavement Benefits

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to change the operation of the bereaved parents allowance. [188405]

Mr. Pond: Bereavement benefits were introduced on 9 April 2001, and for the first time extended support to both widows and widowers following the death of a spouse. These new benefits concentrate the help available where it is most needed; on immediate needs and on families with children.

Widowed parent's allowance is a weekly benefit payable to widowed parents who satisfy the qualifying conditions. The bereavement payment is a lump sum payment of £2,000 payable immediately to help with costs arising on bereavement. In addition, bereavement allowance is a weekly benefit payable, for 52 weeks following widowhood, to widows and widowers aged 45 and over without dependant children.

We have no plans to change these arrangements.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will provide a Written Ministerial Statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188202]

(2) if he will provide a Written Ministerial Statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188203]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer given by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1451.

Mrs. Dean: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what training is provided to staff of his Department to enable them to give sufficient advice to those who are bereaved on what benefits are available to them. [188268]

Maria Eagle: Staff who deal with bereavement benefits claims have extensive technical training on those benefits before commencing their job. The training includes both classroom lessons and computer based material. Although primarily aimed at staff who process benefit claims, the training can also assist Personal Advisors and Financial Assessors in gaining a comprehensive understanding of these benefits.

Additionally, further computer-based learning on the availability of bereavement benefits can be accessed by all staff who are likely to come into contact with, and give advice to, recently bereaved customers.

All staff dealing with customers have access to benefit guides, including guides on bereavement benefits.

Canteen Facilities

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of running his Department's canteen facilities was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [185529]

Maria Eagle: DWP was formed in June 2001 from the former Department of Social Security (DSS), and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) including the Employment Service. The first year for which figures for the cost of running the former DSS canteen facilities are available is the financial year 1998–99 for which the cost was £2.7 million. The most recent figures available for DWP are for the financial year 2003–04 for which the cost was £3.7 million. Information is not available centrally for the former DfEE.

Child Support

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what targets his Department has set for the number of errors reported in Child Support Agency cases next year. [187944]

Mr. Pond: The Child Support Agency's targets are published within its annual Business Plan.

The target for the current year is that by 31 March 2005 accuracy on the last decision for all maintenance calculations checked to be correct to the nearest penny in at least 90 per cent. of cases.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will make arrangements to pay the money owing to Jennifer Oakes of Noctorum Avenue, Birkenhead, paid to him in error by the Child Support Agency. [189282]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Mike Isaac to Mr. Frank Field, dated 16 September 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As he is currently on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he will make arrangements to pay the money owing to Jennifer Oakes of Noctorum Avenue Birkenhead paid to him in error by the Child Support Agency.

As individual cases are confidential, I will write to you separately about this case. This is in line with paragraph 12, part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the change in the number of errors reported under the new Child Support scheme. [187943]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Mike Isaac to Anne McIntosh, dated 16 September 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As he is currently on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make a statement on the change of the number of errors reported under the new Child Support Scheme.

In the year to 31 March 2003 the Agency's accuracy rate in calculating child maintenance assessments was 83.8 per cent. against a target of 80 per cent. This tested that the assessment was accurate to the nearest penny. In the year to 31 March 2004 the accuracy rate was 85.7 per cent. for old scheme cases against a target of 82 per cent. and 82 per cent. for new scheme cases against a target of 90 per cent. The new scheme was only introduced on 3 March 2003.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures his Department is taking to ensure that the number of Child Support Agency cases containing errors is reduced. [187945]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Mike Isaac to Miss McIntosh, dated 16 September 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As he is currently on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what measures his Department is taking to ensure that the number of Child Support cases containing errors is reduced.

The Agency has processes in place to regularly check the accuracy of its work. The teams responsible for that activity provide regular feedback to its operational teams so that they can learn from and remove identified causes of error. This is reinforced by a continuing education programme and regular team meetings at which quality is discussed.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to assess all Child Support Agency cases under the new criteria. [187963]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the Written Answer I gave him on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the operation of the Child Support Agency's computer systems. [187971]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Mike Isaac to Mr. Bob Spink, dated 16 September 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive. As he is currently on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make a statement about the operation of the Child Support Agency's computer systems.

Mr. Smith has made regular reports to Parliament on the implementation of Child Support Reform on the 16 July 2003, 18 November 2003, 12 February 2004, 21 April 2004 and 22 July 2004.

The Agency is currently supported in its work by two computer systems: CSCS which is supported and maintained by EDS; and CS2 which is provided as a managed service by EDS. CSCS provides support to those clients whose applications were received before March 2003. CS2 provides support in handling both clients whose applications were received after 3 March 2003 or whose cases are in some relevant way linked to applications made after that date. EDS is meeting its contracted levels of service for CSCS. However, there are well documented defects within CS2 that have caused difficulties for clients. We are consequently withholding a proportion of the monthly payments for the service offered by CS2, under the terms of our contract with EDS. EDS is currently part way through a recovery programme intended to remove those defects.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether his Department has set a timetable for the transfer of existing child support agency customers to the new system; [188427]

(2) when existing Child Support Agency claimants will be transferred to the new system for calculating child maintenance; and if he will make a statement. [188444]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the Written Answer I gave the hon. Member for Castle Point (Bob Spink) on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Civil Service Recruitment

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact on services of the proposals to reduce civil service jobs in his Department. [189128]

Maria Eagle: The Department's plans to reduce its staffing levels are part of a four year programme of modernisation made possible by a significant investment of public money. The investment has enabled the Department to streamline its processes, modernise its IT and improve its service to customers as a result. The first phase of these plans designed to increase the efficiency of benefit processing was announced to the House on 29 June. The latest phase of the Department's continuing modernisation programme was announced by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State in a written ministerial statement earlier today.

CSA

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects all absent parents to be assessed under the same criteria for Child Support Agency payments; and if he will make a statement. [186530]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave him on 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1092W.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department and its predecessor Department spent on *(a)* mobile phone costs, *(b)* hospitality and *(c)* taxi costs in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [185530]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security (DSS), Employment Service (ES), and parts of the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) were added in 2002–03.

Information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure on taxis is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Such information as is available on: *(a)* mobile phones; and *(b)* hospitality is set out in the following table:

	£ million
(a) Mobile phones	
1996–97[1]	1.258
2003–04 (DWP)	3.769
(b) Hospitality	
1996–97[2]	0.147
2003–04 (DWP)	0.123

[1] Figures available for former DSS only.
[2] All DWP components.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff were employed in the Department in each of the last three years; and how many were employed on short-term contracts in each year. [188983]

Maria Eagle: Information on the number of staff awarded short term contracts within a given period is not held. Information on the number of staff employed on short term contracts at specific dates over the last three years is in the table.

At 31 March	*Number of staff*
2002	4,206
2003	2,788
2004	4,621

Notes:
Figures are point in time at the date shown.
Figures are expressed in headcount terms.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the turnover rate of staff in the Department and each of its agencies was in the last year for which figures are available. [188984]

Maria Eagle: Information on turnover in the Department and each of its Agencies for the year ending 31 March 2004 is in the following table.

	Turnover Rate (percentage)
Appeals Service	6.0
Child Support Agency	8.9
Jobcentre Plus	5.7
The Pension Service	7.6
The Department	4.4
Total Department for Work and Pensions	6.1

Destination of Benefit Leavers Survey

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost is of carrying out the Destination of Benefit Leavers Survey; what information he expects to obtain from it; and if he will make a statement. [188912]

Mr. Pond: The 2004 Destination of Benefit Leavers Survey is currently being carried out. The estimated cost of the survey is £488,000. Plans are in place to publish the key findings from the 2004 Destination of Benefit Leavers Survey in early 2005.

The research aims to collect information on the immediate destinations of around 20,000 income support, incapacity benefit or jobseeker allowance (JSA) unknown destination benefit leavers. Specifically, we are looking to obtain information on why the claimant has left benefit (for example, they have moved into work, training or education); details of hours worked and earnings (if the destinations is into work); current activity (at the time of interview); and demographic information not already held administratively by the Department.

This is a repeat of the 2003 survey. A copy of the report (2003 Destination of Benefit Leavers in-house research report No. 132) is available in the Library.

At present, comprehensive information on immediate destinations is collected for JSA recipients only. The information gathered via the destination survey is, therefore, an important and significant development to the Department's analytical evidence base and will enable the Department to monitor and evaluate the number of claimants flowing off benefits and into work from the three key working age benefits.

The survey is part of a wider package of work that is being carried out to improve our information and is an interim measure for collection of destinations data until future income support and incapacity benefit administrative solutions are introduced in late 2004/ early 2005.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what plans he has to allow people to claim disability living allowance if they become ill after the age of 65; and if he will make a statement; [188903]

(2) what the upper age limit is for claiming disability living allowance; for what reason *(a)* there is an upper age limit and *(b)* the limit is set at that age; and if he will make a statement. [188904]

Maria Eagle: It is normal for social security schemes to contain different provisions for people at different stages of their lives, and we have no plans to change the rules which preclude people aged 65 or over from entitlement to disability living allowance unless they claimed and qualified for it before reaching that age. This is because the benefit is focussed on providing help with the disability-related extra costs of people who are severely disabled early, or relatively early, in life. Help with those costs for people for whom the onset of disability comes with old age is provided by attendance allowance as part of the wide range of support that the Government make available to older people so that they can have a decent and secure income in retirement and share fairly in the rising prosperity of the country.

Disabled People

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the major initiatives since 1997 that the Government has taken to *(a)* advance the cause of disabled people and *(b)* highlight disability, especially with regard to overcoming discrimination. [188327]

Maria Eagle: Since 1997, we have introduced a wide range of significant measures that have improved civil rights and opportunities for disabled people, including:

	Major initiatives
December 1997	The Government set up the Disability Rights Task Force to consider how best to secure our 1997 Manifesto commitment to look at comprehensive and enforceable civil rights for disabled people.
December 1998	Employment provisions of Disability Discrimination Act extended to employers with 15 or more employees (previously 20 or more).
January 1999	All new rail vehicles have to comply with Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998.
June 1999	"See the person" information campaign which aimed to challenge negative stereotypical thinking about disability and disabled people, to raise awareness of the DDA requirement (coming into effect from October 1999) on service providers to consider reasonable adjustments to the ways they deliver services.
July 1999	Disability Rights Commission Act 1999 gains Royal Assent.

	Major initiatives
October 1999	Further DDA rights of access to goods and services came into force, meaning service providers have to alter a policy, practice or procedure which prevents a disabled person accessing a service, or to provide an auxiliary aid or service, or provide a service by a reasonably alternative means.
February 2000	Direct Payments were extended to older disabled people.
April 2000	Disability Rights Commission commenced activity.
June 2000	Attendance Allowance and the care component of Disability Living were extended to an estimated 2,000 self-funders in local authority owned/managed residential care homes.
June 2000	The day of discharge from hospital has been treated, for the purpose of payments of Attendance Allowance and the Disability Living Allowance care component, as being a day out of hospital. This is benefiting an estimated 50,000 people per year.
September 2000	Department of Health began to undertake a project to Modernise Hearing Aid Services. In the first 18 months, 20 sites piloted provision of a service which assessed patients' more thoroughly, providing binaural aids where indicated, and digital hearing aids where this provides the best solution to the patient.
October 2000	Government agrees the EU Article 13 Employment Directive to combat discrimination in employment and vocational training on grounds of disability, age, religion/belief, sexual orientation.
October 2000	The "What have you got to offer?" campaign which targeted SME business sector in particular, and used straightforward examples of the kinds of changes under the DDA, which make services accessible to disabled customers.
December 2000	Public Service Vehicle Regulations 2000 became applicable to all new buses and coaches with more than 22 passengers used on local and scheduled services.
March 2001	Regulations introduced requiring licensed taxi drivers to accept assistance dogs and to carry them free of charge.
March 2001	'Valuing People' was published. This is the first White Paper on learning disability for thirty years.
April 2001	Launch of WORKSTEP programme providing support in jobs for disabled people.
April 2001	The Disability Living Allowance higher rate mobility component was extended to severely disabled three and four year old children who are unable, or virtually unable, to walk. This change provides extra help worth £41.05 a week to the families of over 7,000 severely disabled children.
May 2001	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) gains Royal Assent. The Act brings within scope of the DDA's discrimination provisions, disabled pupils and students.
June 2001	Introduced statutory minimum requirement for concessionary travel, ensuring that certain groups of disabled people have access to half-fares on local buses.
July 2001	National Extension of New Deal for Disabled People.
August 2001	'Valuing People' Implementation Guidance was published.
December 2001	The Learning Disability Task Force held their first meeting. The Learning Disabilities Taskforce is a team of academic experts, representatives of voluntary organisations, health and social care professionals, family carers and people with learning difficulties charged with finding ways to turn the ideas in Valuing People, into reality.
December 2001	The Mencap helpline was launched. It is funded by the Department of Health and Mencap. They offer advice on learning disability issues.
January 2002	The "Open to Change" campaign which was aimed at encouraging SMEs to find out more about what reasonable adjustments should be made under the DDA, to ensure their services were available to disabled customers.
February 2002	The Valuing People Support Team became fully operational. The team works to improve services for people with learning disabilities through regional programmes of events, networks and support to groups and partnership boards.
April 2002	The Learning Disability Development Fund (LDDF) was introduced. It provides central support for key aspects of 'Valuing People.'
September 2002	First duties of SENDA came into force in September 2002.
October 2002	The Direct Payments Development Fund (DPDF) was announced, to encourage investment in direct payments support services. This money (£9 million over the next three financial years) is being targeted at national, regional and local voluntary organisations, in partnership with local councils, to enable them to play a significant role in the development and promotion of direct payments.
November 2002	The Wheelchair Collaborative was launched to bring about significant improvements in services. It was developed in partnership with the NHS Modernisation Agency, the Department of Health and the Audit Commission.
December 2002	Department of Health Ministers appointed a multidisciplinary External Reference Group to provide advice on issues which the National Service Framework for Long-Term Conditions should cover. This National service Framework focuses on improving the standard and quality of services for people with neurological conditions and addressing some of the common issues that can promote independence for people with long term conditions, like information and support for families and carers, and access community equipment and wheelchairs.
October 2002	Legislation requiring drivers of regulated buses and coaches to provide reasonable assistance to disabled people.
2001–2003	Produced a series of TV 'fillers' to tackle discrimination by using positive portrayals of disabled people in a range of roles and settings. These have generated millions of pounds worth of coverage.
January 2003	Government announced intention to publish a draft Disability Discrimination Bill.
March 2003	Regulations introduced requiring licensed private hire vehicle operators and drivers to accept assistance dogs and to carry them free of charge.
April 2003	The Disability Discrimination (Blind and Partially Sighted Persons) Regulations 2003 came into force. People who are certified as blind or partially sighted, or registered as blind or partially sighted by a local authority, automatically deemed disabled for DDA purposes.
April 2003	Regulations came into force requiring councils to offer direct payments to people using community care services who can choose to have them.
July 2003	DDA 1995 (Amendment) Regulations 2003 approved by Parliament. These include significant measures that will bring over one million additional employers, and a further seven million jobs, within the scope of the DDA. Measures come into effect in October 2004. They implement disability provisions of the Article 13 Employment Directive.
October 2003	Start of the first three Pathways to Work pilots.
November 2003	Began public consultation on setting an end date for rail vehicle accessibility and for refurbishment of rail vehicles.
November 2003	Laid Regulations to give effect to the Article 13 Directive's requirements as they affect occupational pension schemes for disabled employees. Measures come into effect in October 2004.
December 2003	Draft Disability Discrimination Bill published.
April 2004	Information campaign to tell Small to Medium Sized Enterprises about the changes they need to consider under the new October 2004 duties of the DDA. The campaign used Direct mail, radio, press and email to communicate with businesses.
May 2004	The disabled people and carers section of the new Direct.gov site, provides information of practical, personal relevance to disabled people including information on government services, and steps to find out more about those services.
May 2004	The draft bill underwent a thorough pre-legislative scrutiny process by a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament. The Committee published its response to Government on 27 May, containing 75 recommendations.

	Major initiatives
July 2004	The Government's response to the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations published. The Bill will further extend disabled people's civil rights in respect of the public sector, transport, premises, private clubs and the definition of disability.

We have also announced future measures to improve and broaden civil rights for disabled people:

	Major initiatives
October 2004	Final rights of access to goods and services in DDA come into effect, which mean that service providers have to, where reasonable, remove, alter or avoid physical features which act as barriers to disabled people accessing their services.
September 2005	SEN DA duty to remove or alter physical features in post-16 education sector comes into force.
January 2005	New buses up to 7.5 tonnes and coaches will have improved access for wheelchair users.
January 2015	All buses up to 7.5 tonnes will be fully accessible.
January 2016	All full size single deck buses over 7.5 tonnes will be fully accessible.
January 2017	All double deck buses will be fully accessible.
January 2020	All coaches will be fully accessible.

Exceptions Service

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidance is given to local job centre offices on responding to inquiries made by recipients of benefits and retirement pension who wish to continue collecting their payments by cash rather than direct payment; what the eligibility criteria will be for those who wish to join the Exceptions Service; and if he will make a statement. [189127]

Mr. Pond: Direct payment is now the normal method of payment. The Department provides Jobcentre Plus staff with the factual information they need to give to customers, in order for customers themselves to choose the account which best meets their needs and circumstances.

All existing customers, not yet paid by direct payment, are being contacted to invite them to provide account details. Customers who advise the Department that they are unable to open or manage an account will be paid by cheque payment.

The cheque payment is only intended for those customers who we cannot pay by direct payment; it is not an alternative payment option.

Hepatitis C

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the Answer of 10 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1337–9W, on Hepatitis C, whether the proposed housing benefit and council tax benefit regulations to which he referred have been laid before Parliament. [189321]

Mr. Pond: The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 2) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument 1141 of 2004) were laid before Parliament on 21 April 2004 and came into force on 12 May 2004.

As a result, payments made under the Hepatitis C Ex-Gratia Payment Scheme to people who are infected with Hepatitis C are now disregarded fully when calculating entitlement to housing benefit and council tax benefit.

Housing and Council Tax Benefits

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the value of housing and council tax benefit fraud and error detected in *(a)* each local authority and *(b)* total in 2002–03. [189122]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 15 September 2004]:* The information is not currently available. The Department is currently developing a methodology that will enable us to produce robust estimates of the value of fraud and error detected.

However, the latest report on estimated Fraud and Error in Housing Benefit, April 2002 to September 2003, was published on 12 August. The findings about the overall levels of housing benefit (HB) fraud and error, in 2002–03, are that around £550 million (5.0 per cent.) of HB expenditure within the scope of the Housing Benefit Review (HBR) sample is estimated to have been overpaid due to fraud or error; and a further £150 million is estimated, via the use of a rough extrapolation, to have been overpaid in HB expenditure outside the scope the HBR sampling.

Copies of the report are available in the Library.

Laryngectomies

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to review the classification of disabled people who have had laryngectomies. [188887]

Maria Eagle: People who have had laryngectomies can qualify for the full range of social security benefits and pensions if they satisfy the rules which govern entitlement. They can also be disabled persons for the purposes of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 if they experience a long-term substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Means-tested Benefits

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* households and *(b)* people in receipt of means-tested benefits. [186545]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Income related benefit recipients, Great Britain: May 2002

	Income-related[4] benefit recipients
Claimants	6,250,000
Total adult beneficiaries	7,440,000
Total beneficiaries	10,330,000

Notes:

1. The figures are based on 1 per cent. and 5 per cent. samples and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. Due to the procedures used to remove overlaps between the figures, the figures are rounded to the nearest ten thousand.
3. Council tax benefit data excludes any Second Adult Rebate cases.

4. Housing benefit data excludes any Extended Payments.
5. Income related benefits are classed as income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, housing benefit and council tax benefit.
6. "Claimants" are benefit units in which the customer and/or partner are in receipt of income related benefits.
7. "Total adult beneficiaries" refers to the sum of all customers and partners in receipt of income related benefits.
8. "Total beneficiaries" refers to the sum of all customers, partners and dependants in receipt of income related benefits.
9. Benefit units may be a single person, couple or family.
10. Overlaps between benefits have been removed.

Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Annual 1 per cent. sample, taken in May 2002. DWP Information Centre, per cent., sample (IS/JSA).

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on benefit entitlement for those diagnosed with myasthenia gravis. [188633]

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on benefit entitlement for individuals diagnosed with myasthenia gravis. [189132]

Maria Eagle: We do not pay benefits based on medical diagnosis.

Incapacity benefit is intended to provide a source of income for sick and disabled people of working age who are unable to work.

Entitlement to disability living allowance is based on walking difficulties and/or the need for personal care which results from severe disability. The customer's medical condition is not, necessarily, the key factor. Rather it is the disablement that results from it and the effects of that disablement.

We are ensuring that the benefit system encourages and promotes work where possible. However, we recognise that those with the most severe conditions may never be able to work, and benefits provide security for those for whom work is not an option.

New Deal for Disabled People

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether organisations who have contracts to help deliver the New Deal for Disabled People will be paid for getting unemployed disabled people into work above the targets which those organisations have been set for so doing. [188597]

Jane Kennedy: Target levels for organisations supporting the delivery of the New Deal for Disabled People are agreed and specified within the Department's contracts with them. Any variation of those contracts is at the discretion of the Department and subject to our agreement through contract re-negotiation.

Pension Collection (Giros)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will arrange for those pensioners who continue to draw their pensions by way of Giros to have the option of having the Giros sent to the local Post Office where they will be cashed. [189281]

Mr. Pond: Under normal arrangements when customers are paid by cheque, payment is sent to their home address.

Cheques can be paid into bank/building societies as well as being cashed at Post Offices; however, all cheques over the value of £350 have to be paid into a bank/building society account.

Sending cheques directly to the Post Office does not provide the same opportunity for casual agent encashment.

There are no plans in place to change these existing arrangements.

The same outcome would be achieved if customers choose to have their pension or benefit paid by Direct Payment into an account which is accessible at the Post Office. Many current accounts, basic bank accounts as well as the Post Office Card Account offer this facility.

Payment by Direct Payment would also provide customers with additional benefits. Depending on the account they choose, customers will be able to take advantage of all financial services available including:

discounts on some bills paid by direct debit;

a cheque-book and a debit card;

and they will be able to withdraw as much or as little of their money as they want at any one time.

Pension Credit

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many inquiries have been received by the pension credit application line in each calendar month since creation. [188683]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of calls to the application line in each month between April 2003 and July 2004 is shown in the table.

Calls to pension credit application line, April 2003 to August 2004

	Calls received by application line (total)	*Calls in which an application was taken over the line*	*Calls in which the customer asked for a paper application form*	*Other calls*
2003				
April	20,810	6,110	170	14,530
May	32,750	11,630	460	20,660
June	60,240	29,790	850	29,600
July	118,220	60,180	2,050	55,990
August	181,860	87,460	4,730	89,670
September	427,900	140,430	17,570	269,900
October	482,780	146,680	31,240	304,860
November	318,280	94,630	21,060	202,860
December	193,560	57,600	14,130	121,830

Calls to pension credit application line, April 2003 to August 2004

	Calls received by application line (total)	Calls in which an application was taken over the line	Calls in which the customer asked for a paper application form	Other calls
2004				
January	495,560	138,870	26,140	330,550
February	433,790	136,980	11,420	285,390
March	430,070	136,310	13,400	280,360
April	346,890	105,380	12,630	229,150
May	234,580	37,780	9,640	187,160
June	315,200	60,220	9,960	245,020
July	239,990	28,880	8,910	202,200
August	151,540	53,210	6,420	91,910

Notes:
1. Numbers of calls are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. 'Other calls' include a small number which received the engaged tone or a recorded message.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of residents of Dumfries and Galloway are in receipt of pension credit. [188684]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of individual recipients of pension credit in Dumfries and Galloway at the end of August represented approximately 7.1 per cent. of the total population and 27.2 per cent. of the population aged 60 or over.

Pension Service

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many local pension centres there are; and how many staff are employed in each. [188982]

Mr. Pond: There are currently 26 pension centres in addition to the centre at Tyne View Park which comprises of the National Pensions Forecasting Telephone Centre, the International Pension Centre and the National pension centre.

Details of staffing are set out in the table.

August 2004

Pension Centre	Number of staff
Bath PC	400
Birmingham PC	366
Blackpool PC	187
Burnley PC	506
Cwmbran PC	238
Dearne Valley PC	372
Derby PC	290
Dundee PC	494
London PC (Glasgow)	484
Leicester PC	280
Liverpool PC	253
Motherwell PC	499
London PC (Newcastle)	584
Norwich BH PC	255
Norwich KH PC	308
Nottingham PC	238
Plymouth PC	360
Seaham PC	371
Stockport PC	688
Stockton PC	317
Swansea PC	529
Walsall PC	253
Warrington PC	483
Wolverhampton PC	378
Wrexham PC	382
York PC	285
Pension Centres Total	9,800
IPC	997
NPC	986
NPFTC	700

August 2004

Pension Centre	Number of staff
Tyne View Support Team	123
Management and Support	19
Tyne View Park Total	2,825
Total Pension Centres	12,625

Notes:
1. Tyne View Park (Newcastle) is often considered as one Pension Centre incorporating National Pension Centre, International Pension Centre and National Pension Forecasting Telephone Centre. However for the purpose of this response a breakdown of these areas, in addition to Management and Support staff is provided.
2. The table shows the number of core processing and Management and Support staff in post at the end of August 2004. Staff working on Local Services, Projects and Central Functions are not included.

Pensioners

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is on home visits to pensioners; and how many home visits were carried out in each quarter since the introduction of pension credit. [188988]

Malcolm Wicks: The Local Service of The Pension Service aims to provide a home visit if a pensioner requires one. The vast majority of queries can be dealt with quickly and effectively by a telephone call to a pension centre or to the pension credit application line. Those receiving home visits are typically the most vulnerable and the Local Service aims to provide help for such pensioners when they need it. During a home visit, the Local Service will offer information on pension credit and other entitlements and on other social care issues. The number of home visits carried out since April 2003 is set out in the table.

Home visits by The Pension Service, April 2003 to August 2004

Quarter	Number of visits
2003	
April to June	67,464
July to September	92,557
October to December	112,183
2004	
January to March	148,033
April to June	131,491
July to August[1]	83,504

[1] Latest available.

Siobhain McDonagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Mitcham and Morden received the higher rate of winter fuel allowance for over 80s in winter 2003–04. [189349]

Mr. Pond: In winter 2003–04, the number of pensioners in Mitcham and Morden who received the higher rate winter fuel payment for those aged 80 or over was 2,895.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

Siobhain McDonagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Mitcham and Morden received winter fuel allowance in winter 2003–04. [189350]

Mr. Pond: The number of pensioners in Mitcham and Morden who received a winter fuel payment in winter 2003–04 was 14,220.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

Siobhain McDonagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Mitcham and Morden are receiving an additional £100 in 2004–05 to help pay for increases to council tax. [189357]

Mr. Pond: The information requested is not available. For winter 2003–04, there were 7,915 pensioners aged 70 or over in Mitcham and Morden who received a winter fuel payment. We expect a similar number to benefit from the one-off 70+ payment.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest five.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

Pensions

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment has been made by *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials of his Department of the research published by the TUC in June on pension take-up, with particular reference to Wales. [189107]

Mr. Pond: The TUC has published new research showing which groups of employees have been the most likely to lose membership of a pensions scheme. We welcome the research that the TUC has undertaken on membership of occupational pensions. This draws substantively on data produced by the Government and underscores the importance of the measures we are taking forward through our pension reforms.

The Pensions Bill will rebuild confidence in occupational pensions, it will strengthen the partnership between employers, individuals and the state in pension provision. The introduction of the Pension Protection Fund (supported by a Pensions regulator) will enhance protection for pension scheme members. The Bill also protects employees transferring from one employer to another with a minimum level of pension provision. In addition it will encourage individuals to build up pension savings by offering a cash transfer sum when leaving a pension scheme.

Through our informed choice agenda we will work with our pension partners to explore and test different approaches aimed at maximising membership of employer-provided schemes. One of these is automatic enrolment where new employees automatically become members of their employer's pension scheme unless an individual opts out.

The TUC research does not contain specific information relating to Wales. However, based on the data that is available, Wales does not appear to be significantly different to the rest of the United Kingdom in terms of trends in occupational pensions.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the operation of the new direct payment scheme for pensioners; and if he will make a statement. [189134]

Mr. Pond: Independent research commissioned by DWP which is soon to be published shows that there are very high levels of satisfaction among benefit and pensions customers who have transferred to direct payment and those who have started claiming and chose to receive direct payments. Overall 91 per cent. of customers were happy with the process of setting up direct payments (the figure for pensioners was 88 per cent.). Similarly, overall 93 per cent. of customers were happy with the process of having payments made into an account (the figure for pensioners was 92 per cent.).

The main benefits of direct payment were seen to be the increased convenience and security. Some people also feel it helps them manage their money more effectively. Most customers felt there were no disadvantages to receiving their benefit or pension by direct payment.

The full research report will be published shortly.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what arrangements are being made to ensure that carers with an existing power of attorney may continue to withdraw pensions from the Post Office. [188004]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* Payment direct into a bank or building society account including Post Office card account is the normal method of payment for benefits, pensions and allowances.

The Post Office has arrangements with a wide variety of banks and building societies and depending on the account held, customers including those with power of attorney, are able to withdraw money across the counter at any post office branch.

The Post Office card account is also available for the payment of pensions but does not support power of attorney. A power of attorney is unable to open a card account in their own name to receive pensions. However they can make use of the DWP appointee procedure to obtain pension as the carer.

The Department is in the process of contacting all customers, including those with an existing power of attorney, who have not provided account details and asking them to do so. Customers including those

holding power of attorney are being provided with all the information they need on all of their account options, including which accounts can be used at post office branches. It will be for them to decide which type of account best suits their individual needs and circumstances.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time taken to process pension payments through the use of the Post Office card account is. [188609]

Mr. Pond: Information is not available in the format requested.

Payments made through the Post Office card account use the same process as all payments direct to bank accounts. Payments are sent to BACS Ltd. in advance of the relevant three-day payment cycle. The process is designed to ensure that a payment is available for collection; in the case of the Post Office card account, by 9.00 am on the date it is due.

Statutory Appointees for State Benefits

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what formal obligations are imposed on statutory appointees for state benefits to act in the best interests of those entitled to them; and what sanctions are taken against those who fail to meet those obligations. [188230]

Mr. Pond: Applicants to become an appointee are interviewed and are required to sign a declaration (on form BF56).

This requires them to spend any money they receive from social security benefits, pensions and allowances and Inland Revenue tax credit, on behalf of, and in the interests of the benefit customer.

They are required to sign that they have read, understood and accept the conditions of being an appointee.

If the appointment is confirmed, the appointee is given form BF57 which repeats the message given in the BF56.

If an appointee fails to meet their obligations, the Secretary of State may, in addition to any further action that might be appropriate, revoke the appointment.

Transitional Protection Scheme

Mr. Purchase: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 725W, on the Transitional Protection Scheme, whether local authorities will be provided by 1 January 2005 with *(a)* an estimate at an individual local authority level, based upon local authority certified estimate returns submitted to the Department by 31 August, of the likely financial consequences in the current financial year of the impact of the Transitional Protection Scheme and *(b)* estimates at an individual local authority level of the potential financial implications for the 2005–06 and 2006–07 financial years of the impact of the Transitional Protection Scheme. [188780]

Mr. Pond: The amount of transitional protection to be provided to local authorities will not be known until after the end of the financial year when authorities have their subsidy claims audited.

Further advice and information has been issued to local authorities enabling them to estimate the potential gains/losses under the new subsidy system and consequently whether they may be affected by the transitional protection arrangements. HB/CTB circular S11/2003 gave further detailed information specifically on the transitional protection scheme. HB/CTB S2/2004 notified local authorities of the change to the transitional protection scheme which increased the level of protection for local authorities. Copies of both circulars are available in the Library.

Officials will be consulting shortly with local authority representatives to progress the details of how the transitional protection scheme will operate in practice.

HEALTH

Ambulances

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans his Department has to commission an independent inquiry into the operation of the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service. [188806]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has no plans to commission an independent inquiry into the operation of the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what resources his Department provides to regional ambulance services; and what assessment he has made of current levels of demand on regional ambulance services. [188807]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are 31 national health service ambulance trusts in England. Primary care trusts (PCTs) commission health services to meet the needs of their local population, in partnership with strategic health authorities (SHAs) and other local stakeholders. In line with "Shifting the Balance of Power", it is the responsibility of PCTs to determine how best to use their overall allocations to meet national and local priorities. In calculating overall budget allocations for PCTs, the Department takes into account a range of factors, including changes in demand-led activities such as ambulance journeys.

The annual number of incidents attended by ambulance services increased by seven per cent., in 2003–04. As part of the review of ambulance policy and services currently underway, we are examining the possible reasons for this increase.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* performance and *(b)* emergency response provision of the Merseyside Regional Ambulance Service; [188808]

(2) what progress has been made by the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service in achieving national performance targets; and if he will make a statement. [188809]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested on performance of the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service can be found in the statistical bulletin, "Ambulance Services, England": 2003–04. A copy of the bulletin is available in the Library and can also be found on the Department's website at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0411.htm.

Asperger's Syndrome

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans he has to review the practice guidelines for assessing the ability of people with Asperger's syndrome to live independently; [188883]

(2) what assessment he has made of the reasons a low percentage of adults with Asperger's syndrome are living fully independent lives; [188884]

(3) what assessment he has made of the assistance people with Asperger's syndrome need to live fully independent lives; [188885]

(4) for what reason people with Asperger's syndrome are referred to as presenting a low risk to independence in the Department's publication Fair Access to Care 2003. [188886]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no plans to review the "Fair access to care services" practice guidance, which was updated in March 2003.

It is a matter for social services to assess the needs of people including those with Asperger's syndrome. Each individual, regardless of any underlying condition is assessed on individual need and in the light of local eligibility criteria.

The example in "Fair access to care services" does not mean that everyone with Asperger's syndrome has low support needs.

Breastfeeding

Ms Drown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will raise with *(a)* Cow & Gate and *(b)* Milupa Department of Health guidance on breastfeeding to prevent encouragement of weaning before six months. [188455]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has widely published advice on ideal ways of weaning. However, current European legislation, implemented in the United Kingdom, provides that weaning foods may be labelled as suitable for infants from four months of age. The European Commission has indicated that it intends to review the labelling of these foods. When this review takes place, the Department and the Food Standards Agency will work closely to ensure that the labelling of weaning foods supports the Department's advice.

Carers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what further assistance and sources of advice he intends to provide for carers; and if he will make a statement. [189072]

Dr. Ladyman: This Government are the first ever to recognise the contribution and concerns of carers. It developed the national carers' strategy in 1999 with carers and the organisations that represent them.

The carers grant was introduced in 1999 to support councils in providing breaks and services for carers in England. The grant has been increased annually and has provided an extra £325 million over the last five years. It is worth £125 million this year and will continue at least until 2005–06, by which time it will be £185 million.

The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act received Royal Assent on 22 July 2004. The Act will ensure that carers are able to take up opportunities which those without caring responsibilities take for granted.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister launched the Beacon Council scheme on 7 July 2004. Supporting carers is one of the themes for the forthcoming round.

To support carers' access to information the Department is funding Carers UK to provide advice and information in a variety of formats.

Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many employees the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health has; and when their contracts will end. [188108]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) has a full staffing complement of 197 whole-time equivalent (wte) posts. At present, the CPPIH has 141.5 wte posts and 40.5 posts filled by temporary staff, including individuals on fixed term contracts and agency staff.

The impact of the abolition of the CPPIH on staff contracts will be assessed on an individual basis with staff, as the details of the new arrangements are developed.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on offices for the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by region. [188109]

Ms Rosie Winterton: During the 2003–04 financial year, the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health spent £1.1 million on accommodation.

The following table shows a breakdown of costs by region.

	£
National centre	338,779
North East regional office	71,302
North West regional office	70,999
Yorkshire regional office	80,579
East Midland regional office	61,025
London regional office	125,282
South East regional office	126,562
South West regional office	53,928

Community Health Councils

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who devised the community health councils' replacement systems. [188238]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The arrangements that have replaced community health councils were developed by the Government in consultation with the public, parliamentarians, the national health service, the voluntary sector and many more interested stakeholders.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to publish an assessment of the benefits of replacing community health councils. [188239]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are no plans to publish an assessment of the benefits of replacing community health councils.

Continuing Care

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people received fully funded NHS continuing care in each year since 1997, broken down by strategic health authority; and if he will make a statement. [185996]

Dr. Ladyman *[pursuant to his reply, 7 September 2004, Official Report, c. 1072W]:* I regret that my previous reply was incorrect. It should read as follows:

The number of people receiving national health service continuing care in 2002–03 and 2003–04, broken down by strategic health authority (SHA), is shown in the following table. The move to SHA took place in 2002. Therefore, it is not possible to provide data broken down by SHA preceding this date.

Strategic Health Authority	*Number of people receiving continuing NHS healthcare* 2002–03	2003–04
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority	927	741
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority	700	830
Birmingham and the Black Country Strategic Health Authority	1,165	1,107
Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority	1,084	1,074
County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority	904	1,374
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Strategic Health Authority	561	690
Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority	343	376
Essex Strategic Health Authority	834	698
Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority	1,039	984
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority	673	530
Kent and Medway Strategic Health Authority	770	770
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority	137	215
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority	127	435
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Strategic Health Authority	410	705
North Central London Strategic Health Authority	294	320
North East London Strategic Health Authority	812	733
North West London Strategic Health Authority	500	1,468
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic Health Authority	461	1,081
Shropshire and Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority	673	663
Somerset and Dorset Strategic Health Authority	94	241
South East London Strategic Health Authority	635	580
South West London Strategic Health Authority	232	433
South West Peninsula Strategic Health Authority	239	516
South Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority	216	192
Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority	1,047	719
Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority	259	632
Trent Strategic Health Authority	509	928
West Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority	1,374	688
England	17,019	19,723

Source:
Service and Financial Framework Return, Local Delivery Plan Return.

Dentistry

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in East Lancashire have *(a)* wholly private, *(b)* wholly NHS and *(c)* mixed lists. [188568]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not collect information on dentists with wholly private lists, nor on the private work of dental practices doing national health service work.

The number of general dental services (CDS) and personal dental service (PDS) practices in the East Lancashire area is shown in the table.

Primary care trust	*Number of CDS and PDS dental practices*
Blackburn with Darwen	25
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale	44
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley	22

Source:
Department of Health statistics.

Digital Hearing Aids

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in providing the latest digital hearing aids in Essex; and if he will make a statement. [189071]

Dr. Ladyman: Since September 2000, the modernising hearing aid services project has been retaining audiologists and generally modernising services in a

phased way to enable them to offer digital hearing aids to people who would benefit from them. The roll-out will be complete by April 2005.

Digital hearing aids require different service delivery models as they incorporate information technology-based assessment and fitting procedures. A total of £30.75 million was made available from 2000 to 2003 for this project and a further £94 million will be available from 2003 to 2005.

I am informed that the audiology department at Southend Hospital National Health Service Trust is now fully funded and up and running. All new patients are fitted with digital hearing aids. There is a programme in place for patients who have an analogue hearing aid to have appointments to have the digital aid fitted if they want one.

Food Labelling

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will ask the Food Standards Agency to publish good practice guidelines for the use of the term, suitable for vegetarians, on food labels and menus. [188055]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock) on 15 September 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1643–44W.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he intends to take to prevent the inclusion in foods labelled as vegetarian of processing agents derived from animals. [188056]

Miss Melanie Johnson: On 24 September, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) plans to hold a stakeholder meeting to discuss the labelling of vegetarian products. The meeting will consider whether establishment of FSA advice for industry and enforcement authorities on use of the terms 'vegetarian' and 'vegan' would be helpful.

The Food Safety Act 1990 and the Trade Descriptions Act 1968 already contain provisions outlawing false or misleading labelling. The FSA considers that the presence of processing agents derived from animals in a food labelled as 'suitable for vegetarians' would contravene this legislation, which is enforced by local authorities.

Forum Support Organisations

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to continue support for individual health forums currently provided by forum support organisations. [188395]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We will shortly be consulting with patients' forums about the nature of the support provided to them in the future. The details of the future arrangements will be developed after this consultation has taken place.

General Practitioners

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time general practitioners were working for the NHS in each primary care trust in the Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 1997. [188176]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of full-time general practitioners working for the national health service in each primary care trust in the Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority in each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

General medical practitioners (excluding registrars, retainers and locums)[1] who work full-time for Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority by primary care trust

Number (headcount)

		1997		*1998*		*1999*	
		General medical practitioners (excluding registrars, retainers and locums)[1]	*Of which: full-time*	*General medical practitioners (excluding registrars, retainers and locums)[1]*	*Of which: full-time*	*General medical practitioners (excluding registrars, retainers and locums)[1]*	*Of which: full-time*
Surrey and Sussex SHA		1,412	1,200	1,432	1,190	1,431	1,180
Of which:							
Adur, Arun and Worthing PCT	5L8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bexhill and Rother PCT	5FH	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Brighton and Hove City PCT	5LQ	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Crawley PCT	5MA	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey PCT	5KP	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
East Surrey PCT	5KQ	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Eastbourne Downs PCT	5LR	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Guildford and Waverley PCT	5L5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hastings and St Leonards PCT	5FJ	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Horsham and Chanctonbury PCT	5MC	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mid-Sussex PCT	5FK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
North Surrey PCT	5L6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sussex Downs and Weald PCT	5LT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Western Sussex PCT	5L9	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Woking PCT	5L7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

		2000 General medical practitioners (excluding registrars, retainers and locums)[1]	Of which: full-time	2001 General medical practitioners (excluding registrars, retainers and locums)[1]	Of which: full-time	2002 General medical practitioners (excluding registrars, retainers and locums)[1]	Of which: full-time
Surrey and Sussex SHA		1,442	1,176	1,455	1,163	1,483	1,140
Of which:							
Adur, Arun and Worthing PCT	5L8	n/a	n/a	123	103	126	104
Bexhill and Rother PCT	5FH	n/a	n/a	47	41	46	42
Brighton and Hove City PCT	5LQ	n/a	n/a	155	117	154	114
Crawley PCT	5MA	n/a	n/a	59	53	61	52
East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey PCT	5KP	n/a	n/a	152	110	153	112
East Surrey PCT	5KQ	n/a	n/a	80	63	83	65
Eastbourne Downs PCT	5LR	n/a	n/a	93	80	93	77
Guildford and Waverley PCT	5L5	n/a	n/a	143	102	151	97
Hastings and St. Leonards PCT	5FJ	n/a	n/a	48	44	51	43
Horsham and Chanctonbury PCT	5MC	n/a	n/a	53	40	54	36
Mid-Sussex PCT	5FK	n/a	n/a	75	64	79	61
North Surrey PCT	5L6	n/a	n/a	113	90	115	89
Sussex Downs and Weald PCT	5LT	n/a	n/a	82	67	84	67
Western Sussex PCT	5L9	n/a	n/a	123	100	126	93
Woking PCT	5L7	n/a	n/a	109	89	107	88

		2003 General medical practitioners (excluding registrars, retainers and locums)[1]	Of which: full-time
Surrey and Sussex SHA		1,514	1,125
Of which:			
Adur, Arun and Worthing PCT	5L8	125	100
Bexhill and Rother PCT	5FH	45	39
Brighton and Hove City PCT	5LQ	153	110
Crawley PCT	5MA	66	50
East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey PCT	5KP	161	110
East Surrey PCT	5KQ	88	66
Eastbourne Downs PCT	5LR	95	78
Guildford and Waverley PCT	5L5	153	99
Hastings and St. Leonards PCT	5FJ	50	41
Horsham and Chanctonbury PCT	5MC	55	39
Mid-Sussex PCT	5FK	82	63
North Surrey PCT	5L6	115	86
Sussex Downs and Weald PCT	5LT	84	66
Western Sussex PCT	5L9	135	90
Woking PCT	5L7	107	88

n/a = Not available.

[1] All practitioners (excluding retainers, registrars and locums) include GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, salaried doctors, (Para 52 SFA), PMS other and flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

Note:

Data as at 1 October 1997–99 and 30 September 2000–03.

Source:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners have *(a)* been recruited into and *(b)* retired from working for the NHS in each primary care trust in the Surrey and Sussex strategic health authority in the last five years. [188177]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners *(a)* will reach retirement age and *(b)* are expected to retire from working for the NHS in each primary care trust in the Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority over the next five years. [188178]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of general practitioners, broken down by age, for each of the Primary Care Trusts in the Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority area is shown in the table.

General Medical Practitioners within Surrey and Sussex SHA by age band, as at 31 March 2004

Number (headcount)

		All General Medical Practitioners[1]	Under 30	30–34	35–39	40–44	45–49	50–54	55–59	60–64	65–69	70 and over
Surrey and Sussex SHA		1,842	72	242	333	371	328	246	159	71	18	2
5L8	Adur, Arun and Worthing PCT	155	6	23	27	37	29	20	12	1	—	—

General Medical Practitioners within Surrey and Sussex SHA by age band, as at 31 March 2004

Number (headcount)

		All General Medical Practitioners[1]	*Under 30*	*30–34*	*35–39*	*40–44*	*45–49*	*50–54*	*55–59*	*60–64*	*65–69*	*70 and over*
5FH	Bexhill and Rother PCT	55	1	4	6	14	12	7	6	4	1	—
5LQ	Brighton and Hove City PCT	172	2	19	38	38	23	20	18	11	3	—
5MA	Crawley PCT	77	4	7	12	20	11	12	6	3	2	—
5KP	East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey PCT	195	8	23	45	34	33	28	11	10	2	1
5KQ	East Surrey PCT	122	7	22	22	19	22	18	7	3	1	1
5LR	Eastbourne Downs PCT	106	5	9	14	29	16	16	11	6	—	—
5L5	Guildford and Waverley PCT	203	6	32	37	42	35	32	15	2	2	—
5FJ	Hastings and St. Leonards PCT	53	1	5	5	5	11	14	3	6	3	—
5MC	Horsham and Chanctonbury PCT	61	3	5	12	11	14	8	6	2	—	—
5FK	Mid Sussex PCT	104	3	15	24	25	22	7	8	—	—	—
5L6	North Surrey PCT	126	4	16	22	23	23	17	17	3	1	—
5LT	Sussex Downs and Weald PCT	110	7	13	19	23	17	17	8	4	2	—
5L9	Western Sussex PCT	165	8	30	28	25	29	19	15	11	—	—
5L7	Woking PCT	138	7	19	22	26	31	11	16	5	1	—

[1] All practitioners include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS Other, GP Retainers, and Flexible Career Scheme GPs.

Source:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.

Health Forums

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to reform the procedures for the selection and appointment of members to health forums. [188390]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We intend that responsibility for making appointments to patients' forums will be transferred to the NHS Appointments Commission (NHS AC). We will be working with the NHS AC, patients' forums, the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health and other interested parties to consider the detail of future selection and appointment procedures.

Health Services (Teesside)

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the University hospital of Hartlepool is compliant with the European Working Time Directive; and what steps are being taken to ensure it is compliant. [188815]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* The Working Time Directive (WTD) is a legal requirement on which implementation is being taken forward locally.

Validated information relating to individual trusts is not collected centrally. The WTD is a legal requirement and strategic health authorities are working with their trusts to support delivery.

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether he has *(a)* received and *(b)* reconsidered the draft consultation document on the future of North Tees and Hartlepool Hospital Services produced by the Tees Services Review; [188816]

(2) whether the University Hospital of Hartlepool at Holdforth Road will continue to provide *(a)* in-patient paediatrics, *(b)* consultant-led obstetric deliveries, *(c)* emergency surgery and *(d)* accident and emergency services for trauma and major injuries after the implementation of the Tees Services Review; [188817]

(3) what terms of reference he has issued to Professor Dargi regarding the planned review of hospital services by the Tees Health Services Review. [188818]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* I am aware of the thinking emerging from the Tees Services Review. The Department has asked Professor Ara Darzi to carry out a further review, working with the County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority. Professor Darzi's terms of reference are:

> To consider how the fullest possible range of services can be maintained at Hartlepool Hospital, taking into account work already undertaken in the course of the Tees Services Review and the wider context of proposed provision of primary and secondary care services, both north and south of the Tees; to report by the end of October 2004.

Proposals for the future of health services in the Tees Valley will be developed further in the light of Professor Darzi's work. This will include detailed proposals for services to be provided at Hartlepool Hospital. Consultation of the public and patients will then follow.

As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has already confirmed—8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 132—Hartlepool will still have a full and proper hospital service after the review has taken place.

Health Services (Torbay)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients were registered with GPs in the Torbay Primary Care Trust area in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [188135]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of national health service patients registered with general practitioners in the Torbay Primary Care Trust area for the last five years is shown in the table.

Patients of Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs)[1] *for Torbay Primary Care Trust Group*

Number

	Torbay PCT 5CW	*Torbay PCG* 4FC69
1999	n/a	137,830
2000	n/a	137,613
2001	140,471	n/a
2002	140,790	n/a
2003	142,209	n/a

n/a = not available.

[1] UPEs include general medical service unrestricted principals, personal medical service (PMS) contracted GPs and PMS salaried GPs.

Notes:

Data as at 1 October 1999 and 30 September 2000–03.

2003 patient data has been revised from previously published figures.

Source:

Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

Healthy Living Centres

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much Exchequer funding has been received by healthy living centres since 1999, broken down by region; and if he will make a statement. [188744]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Healthy living centres (HLCs) are funded by the Big Lottery Fund programme and do not receive funding from the Department. Many HLC plans included funds from statutory bodies, including the national health service and local authorities. The amounts actually provided and the regional distribution are not held centrally.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many healthy living centres have *(a)* opened, *(b)* closed and *(c)* have discussed the possibility of closure with his Department since 1999; and if he will make a statement. [188745]

Miss Melanie Johnson: 257 Big Lottery Fund healthy living centres have opened in England. One has closed and two have discussed the possibility of closure with their regional director of public health.

Hospices

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much financial support *(a)* adult and *(b)* children's hospices have received in the past three financial years from social services departments. [188572]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not centrally collate information on about how much financial support hospices received from social services departments.

The latest estimate we have available (from 2000) is that, on average, the national health service funds 28 per cent. of adult and 5 per cent. of children's hospice costs. However, this predates the allocation of an additional £50 million per annum for adult palliative care, which began in 2003–04, representing an increase of about 40 per cent. Funding the services provided by hospices is a matter for negotiation between the hospice concerned and the NHS primary care trusts to which the hospice provides a service. There are no limits to the amount of funding which may be provided; this is for local decision.

Knowledge Management System

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to maintain the knowledge management system when the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health is wound up. [188389]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are working with the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) to identify ways of utilising the knowledge management system once the CPPIH has been abolished.

Lymphoedema Clinics

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what access there is to lymphoedema clinics in each primary care trust in the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire strategic health authority area. [188393]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

It is the responsibility of primary care trusts to commission services to meet the health needs of their local communities.

Military Low Flying

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effects of military low flying on *(a)* hearing and *(b)* other long-term health issues. [188582]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not funded any research or assessment of the effects of military low flying on hearing and other long-term health issues.

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Caton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans his Department has to increase the numbers of consultants and doctors qualified to diagnose myasthenia gravis; [188630]

(2) what plans his Department has to increase the number of nurses qualified to care for patients diagnosed with myasthenia gravis. [188631]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of consultants, doctors and nurses specifically qualified to diagnose and treat myasthenia gravis is not collected centrally.

As at March 2004, there were 427 consultants in neurology. Since September 1997, numbers have increased by 149, or 54 per cent., and we are working towards increasing their numbers further.

We are encouraging more doctors to practise neurology by expanding the number of specialist registrar (SpR) opportunities in the specialty.

In 2003–04, central funding was distributed to support the implementation of 10 additional SpR posts in neurology. All the posts have now been implemented. Trusts also have the opportunity to create up to 20 locally funded SpR training opportunities. Trusts were surveyed in February 2004, when six locally funded opportunities had been implemented, with the remaining 14 planned to have been implemented by August 2004.

In 2004–05, neurology has been allocated a further two centrally funded posts and strategic health authorities have been given freedom to agree as many

additional SpR training opportunities as are necessary to achieve Working Time Directive compliance, subject to obtaining educational approval.

The number of nurses overall employed in the national health service has increased by 77,500 since 1997 and we are increasing the number of training places for nurses and midwives. Between 1996–97 and 2003–04, the number of students entering training to become a nurse or midwife has increased by 9,300, or 62 per cent.

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what long-term plans he has for the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency. [187118]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Proposals for the reconfiguration of the National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA) are outlined in a report, "Reconfiguring the Department of Health's Arm's Length Bodies", published on 22 July 2004. It is proposed that NHS PASA will be reshaped as part of a major programme to support the NHS in handling purchasing and supply more effectively. The Department's commercial directorate has developed plans to streamline the supply chain in the NHS. As these plans are implemented, a transformed NHS PASA will play a crucial role in applying procurement best practice to maximise savings. NHS PASA should be able to take on procurement and contracting functions from other arm's length bodies (ALBs), helping to reduce the cost of the ALB sector.

Osteoporosis

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the national screening committee plans to review its advice on osteoporosis screening; [188182]

(2) what plans he has to introduce screening for osteoporosis by means of DEXA scan for those who have specified risk factors for osteoporosis; and if he will make a statement. [188183]

Dr. Ladyman: The United Kingdom national screening committee (NSC) advises Ministers about all aspects of screening policy. The NSC assesses proposed new population screening programmes against a set of internationally recognised criteria covering the condition, the test, the treatment options and effectiveness and the acceptability of the screening programme.

The current NSC policy is that there is insufficient evidence to offer population screening for osteoporosis. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has however commissioned a clinical guideline on the prevention, treatment and assessment of osteoporosis for those who have risk factors. The NSC will review its policy on population screening when NICE has published its clinical guideline.

Parliamentary Questions

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will answer questions *(a)* 187359, *(b)* 187360 and *(c)* 187361 tabled by the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme on 22 July for answer on 7 September. [189269]

Mr. Hutton: I replied to my hon. Friend on Tuesday 14 September 2004.

Personal Social Services

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average standard spending assessment/formula spending share funding per head has been for personal social services in *(a)* England and *(b)* North Somerset in each year since 1997. [188661]

Dr. Ladyman: The personal social services average standard spending assessment/formula spending share (SSA/FSS) allocation per head of total population is shown in the table.

£

	England	*North Somerset*
1997–98	152	127
1998–99	160	135
1999–2000	169	139
2000–01	177	146
2001–02	181	150
2002–03	186	155
2003–04	224	187
2004–05	246	208

Note:
The figures are based on the latest available national and sub-national population estimates, which are derived from the 2001 census.

The comparison shows that North Somerset's funding is always less than the England average. Each authority's SSA/FSS allocation depends on a number of factors including whether it has a large or small population, and whether it suffers from relatively high levels of need and deprivation. As a result an authority with a large population and much deprivation receives a far higher funding share than a smaller authority that has relatively low levels of need and deprivation.

Private Sector Treatment

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there are medical conditions which the national health service will not treat if the patient has previously paid for the same treatment in the private sector. [188932]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service would generally pay for any treatment that a patient had previously received as a private patient, so long as it is a treatment normally provided by the NHS and there is appropriate clinical approval.

Specialist Drug Support

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are to be introduced to allow general practitioners easier access to specialist drug support for their patients. [182292]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Treatment Agency (NTA) for substance misuse has introduced a number of measures to allow general practitioners easier access to specialist drug support for their patients.

The NTA issued guidance to local drug treatment commissioners to ensure that enough drug treatment places are commissioned in line with the NTA guidance "Models of Care" and that each local area has identified referral criteria and routes between primary care and drug treatment specialist services.

Since the introduction of the new general practitioners' contractual arrangements in April 2004, the NTA regional teams have worked hard to ensure that most drug action teams have in place a range of contractual arrangements which specify partnership and support arrangements between primary care and specialist drug treatment services. These include nationally enhanced service contracts and local enhanced service contracts.

The Royal College of General Practitioners also has a range of training courses funded by the Department to train GPs to properly identify, refer and provide treatment for drug misusers.

Temporary Clerical and Administration Staff

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 1 September 2004 to question reference 185185, on temporary clerical and administration staff, if he will list the benefits to hospital and primary care trusts of using the national framework agreement when hiring temporary clerical and administration staff. [188005]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* The use of national framework agreements (NFAs) brings a number of benefits to the national health service, for example:

Competitive commission rates.

Ensuring competitive pay rates for all temporary workers.

The individual trusts no longer have to go through their own tender exercise.

It ensures vetted and verified quality procedures for all agencies.

It provides pre-written specifications and terms and conditions.

The NFA continues to allow trusts the flexibility to form local service level agreements to ensure local variations are accounted for.

The availability of individual trust management information, enabling identification and management of expenditure.

The independent monitoring and review of the NFA and agencies by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency.

A choice of nine quality providers offering a comprehensive service and assistance with contract administration.

The assurance that all European Union procurement legislation has been complied with.

DEFENCE

C17

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many hours the lease contract provided for the Royal Air Force to operate fleet of C17s in each year; and how many flying hours the fleet flew in each six monthly period since it entered service with the Royal Air Force. [188462]

Mr. Ingram: The lease contract for the RAF's four C-17 aircraft does not restrict the number of flying hours. However, the support arrangements were initially based on an assumed annual fleet usage rate of 3,000 hours; this has been increased to 5,800 hours per annum in response to operational demands.

The C-17 fleet entered Royal Air Force service in September 2001. Since that time, the fleet has flown in excess of 17,000 hours, broken down as follows:

	Flying hours
September 2001 to February 2002	2,159
March 2002 to August 2002	3,089
September 2002 to February 2003	2,374
March 2003 to August 2003	3,986
September 2003 to February 2004	2,788
March 2004 to August 2004	3,071

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total cost, including the lease, support, manpower and fuel, of operating the fleet of leased C17s was for each six monthly period since it entered service with the Royal Air Force; and what the budgeted cost of each six monthly period was when the lease contract was agreed. [188466]

Mr. Ingram: The following information on the lease and support costs is taken from the Major Project Report (MPR). Information about the lease contract is not recorded historically on a six monthly basis:

	£ million
2001–02	88
2002–03	104
2003–04	102

Over the same period, the total manpower and fuel costs to operate and support the fleet are 21 million and 31 million respectively, broken down as follows:

£ million

	Manpower	*Fuel*
September 2001 to February 2002	3.4	3.5
March 2002 to August 2002	3.5	5.2
September 2002 to February 2003	3.5	4.2
March 2003 to August 2003	3.6	7
September 2003 to February 2004	3.9	5.2
March 2004 to August 2004	3.9	6.6

I am withholding details of the lease costs and underlying aircraft price in accordance with Exemption 13 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information as they are commercially sensitive.

Coastal Protection (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the costs were of coastal protection vessels in Northern Ireland waters in each year since 1997. [187418]

Mr. Ingram: The Northern Ireland patrol ships do not have distinct, identifiable budgets and the figures could only be collated at a disproportionate cost.

Defence Aviation Repair Agency

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he plans to announce the final decision on the end-to-end review as it relates to the Defence Aviation Repair Agency. [189318]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement I made earlier today to the House, on the outcome of the Air Depth Support Investment Appraisal work.

European Defence Policy

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on how much *(a)* manpower and *(b)* finance of the UK's national defence will be tied into the European defence policy. [188795]

Mr. Hoon: Under the Helsinki Headline Goal, the United Kingdom has offered up to 12,500 troops, 18 warships and 72 combat aircraft to EU operations. However, these national forces are made available to EU operations on a voluntary, case-by-case basis, as for NATO or UN operations. UK contributions to such operations are provided from within existing forces.

European Rapid Defence Force

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what forward level of *(a)* manpower and *(b)* financial commitment has been assigned to the European Rapid Defence Force. [188792]

Mr. Ingram: There is no European Rapid Defence Force. National forces declared under the Helsinki Headline Goal are made available to EU operations on a voluntary, case-by-case basis, as for NATO or UN operations. UK contributions to such operations are provided from within existing forces.

Fishery Protection Vessels

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will propose a plan of renewal for Royal Navy fishery protection vessels. [188800]

Mr. Ingram: At present, I have no plans for such a proposal.

Future Aircraft Carrier

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his written statement of 19 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1WS, on the Future Aircraft Carrier, what role his Department will play in the proposed alliance on the CVF Programme; and what proportion of the risk he estimates his Department will assume. [186642]

Mr. Hoon: Discussions continue with a view to agreeing the roles and responsibilities of Alliance participants, including the risk and reward share arrangements. These are progressing well, the outcome will be announced in due course.

It is planned that an Alliance Management Board (AMB) comprising the leaders of each participant organisation, will lead and collectively manage the project. As in commercial alliancing, the AMB will be led by the MOD as the client.

Iran

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what action his Department is taking to ensure the return of the Royal Naval marine equipment and weapons held by the Iranian authorities. [188352]

Mr. Ingram: Ministry of Defence Ministers, FCO Ministers and officials continue to press the Iranian authorities to return the boats and equipment, which they hold. Any significant developments will be announced in the House in the usual way.

Iraq

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department is taking to ensure the safety of United Kingdom personnel in Iraq following the transfer of sovereignty. [188318]

Mr. Ingram: United Kingdom military personnel are thoroughly trained before deployment to Iraq and appropriately equipped to allow them to perform the tasks expected of them in theatre.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the required numbers of Iraqi *(a)* armed forces, *(b)* police, *(c)* civil defence corps and *(d)* border police. [188353]

Mr. Ingram: We are working with the Multinational Security Transition Command (MNSTC) and the Iraqi authorities to review the required future manning levels for the Iraqi security forces. The MNSTC currently assesses that the future strength of the Iraqi armed forces will be approximately 100,000; of the police, 135,000; of the Iraqi national guard, 62,000; and of the Department for Border Security, 32,000. These figures remain under regular review.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to increase assistance by his Department to the Government of Iraq in its efforts to improve security. [188357]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently no plans to increase the substantial support that the Department is providing to the Iraqi Interim Government in its efforts to improve security, although we keep the situation under constant review.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether at any stage during June, July or August he imposed a ban on press access to or news coverage of British forces serving in the Iraq theatre of operations. [188594]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: The Ministry of Defence has not banned access to, or news coverage of, British forces in Iraq. Sponsored media representatives accompanying British forces in Iraq have, on occasion, had temporary restrictions placed upon their movement, either for their own safety and that of the forces protecting them, or because their reporting could put our personnel at risk.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Iraqi detainees are held by British troops. [189325]

Mr. Ingram: As at 14 September 2004, there were no detainees, although 26 internees were being held by British troops in Iraq.

Mess Services

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to introduce mess services common to all ranks; and if he will make a statement. [188570]

Mr. Ingram: Although there are initiatives exploring the possibilities of combining the catering support facilities on bases, there are no plans to introduce messes common to all ranks. The separate messes for officers, senior non-commissioned officers and junior ranks allow individuals to relax and interact within their respective peer groups, and they remain an integral feature of Service life.

Scottish Regiments

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* establishment, *(b)* funded liability and *(c)* actual strength is of (i) the Highlanders, (ii) the Black Watch, (iii) the Royal Scots, (iv) the Royal Highland Fusiliers, (v) the King's Own Scottish Borders, (vi) the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, (vii) the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and (viii) the Scots Guards. [183824]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 13 July 2004]:* Funded liabilities are not broken down below Intermediate Management Group (IMG). The establishment and actual strength of each of the Scottish Regiments, are as follows:

2004	*Establishment*	*Trained strength*
Highlanders[1]	625	525
Black Watch[2]	675	635
Royal Scots	630	555
Royal Highland Fusiliers	630	580
Kings Own Scottish Borderers	670	585
Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders	615	570
Royal Scots Dragoon Guards[3]	500	490
Scots Guards	625	600
F Coy Scots Guards	110	110

[1] Strength totals for 2004 exclude Gurkhas attached to the regiment. There were two in January 2004.

[2] Black Watch totals exclude BW LAD REME.

[3] RSDG totals exclude RSDG LAD REME.

Notes:

1. The figures are at 1 January 2004.
2. All figures have been rounded to the nearest five.
3. Totals are for Regular Army officers and soldiers.
4. FTRS have been excluded.
5. Totals include members of other cap badges, including those of arms/services attached to the unit, but exclude the two REME LADs attached to BW and SDG.
6. Establishment and strength figures refer to the respective units* and do not include cap badge strength permanently employed elsewhere within the Army.

* That is 1st Battalion The Highlanders, 1st Battalion The Black Watch, 1st Battalion The Royal Scots, 1st Battalion The Royal Highland Fusiliers, 1st Battalion The Kings Own Scottish Borderers, 1st Battalion The Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, 1st Battalion the Scots Guards and F Company Scots Guards.

Service Deployment

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of *(a)* Royal Navy and Royal Marines, *(b)* Army and *(c)* Royal Air Force trained strength was deployed on operations and other militar tasks for (i) the final quarter of financial year 2003–04 an (ii) the first two quarters of financial year 2004–05. [1884

Mr. Ingram: Information on trained strengt deployed on Operations and other Military Tasks produced quarterly, in arrears, as part of the Ministry o Defence's assessment of performance against Spendin Review 2002 Public Service Agreement targets. It published on the MOD website (www.mod.uk following review by the Defence Management Board and on the Treasury Public Service Performanc Reporting website (http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk performance/MOD.cfm). Quarter 4 data for 2003–0 (January to March 2004) is given in the table (and available on the MOD and HMT websites):

Percentage of trained strength deployed on operations and other military tasks

	2003–0
	Q
Navy/Marines	17.
Army	22.
RAF	12.

Note:

Percentages exclude those either preparing for, or recoverin from, deployments and are quarterly averages. A list of Militar Tasks can be found on the Department's website (http: www.mod.uk).

Quarter 1 data for 2004–05 (April to June 2004) i currently being collected, and will be published at th end of September. We expect to publish Quarter 2 data for 2004–05 (July to September 2004) at the end o November.

Territorial Army Personnel

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what pension provision is made for Territorial Army personnel who are away from their civilian work for periods of six months or longer. [188801]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has arrangements in place to ensure that reservists who are called-out for active service with the armed forces, including those called out for periods of six months or longer, are not disadvantaged in pension terms. Individuals may have a number of pension options dependent on their personal circumstances:

those individuals who wish to remain in their civilian pension scheme during their period of called-out service can do so and the MOD will meet the cost of the employer contribution to that scheme; or

individuals may opt to have their period of called-out service covered by MOD's Full Time Reserve Service pension arrangements; or

they can opt to be contracted-in to the state pension arrangements (State Second Pension).

Those individuals who have previous service that gave them pension rights from the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) may alternatively opt for an enhancement to their AFPS pension rights.

Trooper David Clarke

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress he has made in the investigation of the

death of Trooper David Clarke; what communications he has had with the family of Trooper David Clarke about the progress of the investigation; and if he will make the results of the investigation public. [188585]

Mr. Caplin: The Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch (SIB) have completed an investigation into the incident in which Trooper (Tpr) Clarke and his colleague Corporal Allbutt died. An Army Board of Inquiry (BOI) is ongoing.

It is not departmental policy to release publicly copies of either SIB or BOI reports. However, regular contact is being maintained with Tpr Clarke's family, who are informed of all significant developments on the various processes under way. The family will receive a copy of the final BOI report when this becomes available.

Vaccination

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research his Department *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the simultaneous administration of anthrax and pertussis vaccine following the letter from Dr. Metters of 21 December 1990; and if he will make a statement. [174196]

Mr. Caplin: Research into the simultaneous administration of anthrax and pertussis vaccines is being addressed as part of the Ministry of Defence's Vaccines Interactions Research Programme, which is overseen by an independent research panel. The Programme includes a study by the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) which has specifically attempted to address and extend tests that NIBSC carried out using anthrax and pertussis vaccines in 1990, and which led to the communication from Dr. Metters.

The preliminary results from the NIBSC study have been published and are available on our website at http://www.mod.uk/issues/gulfwar/research/interact.htm. The final results are being submitted for publication in peer reviewed scientific literature.

PRIME MINISTER

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister whether he authorised British military personnel to commence meetings with US personnel to plan an invasion of Iraq in mid 2002. [188706]

The Prime Minister: As set out in the Butler Report, the UK and US Governments had frequent discussions about Iraq.

However, the decision to resort to military action to ensure that Iraq fulfilled its obligations imposed by successive UN Security Council Resolutions was taken only after other routes to disarm Iraq had failed. I decided to commit UK forces after securing the approval of the House in the vote on 18 March 2003.

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister (1) pursuant to paragraph 404 of the Butler Report, on what *(a)* operational, *(b)* security and *(c)* other basis the Government decided against favouring sources regarded as reliable by the intelligence services that tended to present a less worrying view of Iraqi chemical and biological weapons capability; [188622]

(2) at what point he was informed that two thirds of the total amount of intelligence about Iraqi deception and concealment activities came from a single source; [188623]

(3) at what point he was informed that over four fifths of the intelligence about Iraqi deception and concealment activities came from two sources; [188624]

(4) at what point he was informed that human intelligence sources regarding the evidence of Saddam Hussein on weapons of mass destruction were not extensive; [188625]

(5) whether he had been informed prior to September 2002 of the reliability of the sub-sources who provided the information that Iraq could use chemical and biological weapons of some sort within 45 minutes; [188635]

(6) on which parts of the Joint Intelligence Committee assessments from or prior to March 2002 his statement on 3 March 2002 that Iraq was trying to accumulate weapons of mass destruction was based; [188636]

(7) on which parts of the Joint Intelligence Committee assessments from or prior to March 2002 his statement on 11 March 2002 that there was a threat from Saddam Hussein was based; [188637]

(8) on which parts of the Joint Intelligence Committee assessments from or prior to March 2002 his statement on 11 March 2002 that there was no doubt at all that Saddam Hussein had acquired weapons of mass destruction was based; [188638]

(9) on which parts of the Joint Intelligence Committee assessments from or prior to April 2002 his statement on 3 April 2002 that Iraq had stockpiles of major amounts of chemical and biological weapons was based; [188639]

(10) whether Joint Intelligence Committee assessments from March and April 2002 made definitive claims on the *(a)* existence of stockpiles of weapons and *(b)* development of weapons with regard to Iraq; [188640]

(11) what assessments were provided to him before or during March 2003 from UNMOVIC which suggested that Iraq had far-reaching plans to weaponise VX after 1991; [188846]

(12) what intelligence assessment was available to him on *(a)* 30 May 2003 and *(b)* 2 June 2003 which indicated that trailers found in Iraq were used for the production of biological weapons; [188847]

(13) when he was informed of the content of the overall summary provided by the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC to the Security Council on 7 March 2003 regarding the extent of Iraq's co-operation with the UN inspectors; [188848]

(14) when he was informed that UNMOVIC had been able to obtain information on Iraq's past mycotoxin programme; [188858]

(15) whether the UNMOVIC Clusters document of March 2003 suggested that Iraq had far-reaching plans to weaponise VX in any period after 1991; [188859]

(16) what assessment was made of the possibility that stocks of growth media which UNSCOM had reported as still unaccounted for in its final substantive report of January 1999 still existed; [188867]

(17) at what point he became aware *(a)* that the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC had told the Security Council that Iraqi scientists had agreed to be interviewed in private and *(b)* that the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency had been successful in conducting interviews with Iraqi scientists in private; [188868]

(18) when he became aware of the contents of the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC's briefing to the Security Council of 14 February 2003 which stated that the Government of Iraq had encouraged interviewees not to request the presence of Iraqi officials nor to require interviews to be taped; [188869]

(19) when he became aware that UN weapons inspectors had confirmed that evidence had been provided for the prior destruction of chemical and biological warfare agents in *(a)* November 2002, *(b)* December 2002 and *(c)* February 2003; [188870]

(20) which parts of the Joint Intelligence Committee intelligence assessments led him to state on 10 April 2002, *Official Report*, column 11, that Iraq posed a threat to the wider world; [188871]

(21) when British intelligence experts investigated the two trailers found in Iraq; [188873]

(22) when intelligence findings were circulated regarding the two trailers found in Iraq; [188874]

(23) when weapons inspectors found live anthrax in Iraq as referred to in his article in the Independent on Sunday of 2 March 2003; and what evidence he had to confirm that discovery; [188875]

(24) when he was informed that the factory at which anthrax had been produced before 1991 to which he refers in his article in the Independent on Sunday of 2 March 2003 had been under UN monitoring since October 1991; [188876]

(25) whether, prior to the war, Iraq's intention to use nuclear, biological and chemical weapons outside its borders, either by the Iraqi armed forces or through the supply of such weapons to non-state actors, prior to any military attack, had been investigated by the British intelligence service; [188902]

(26) what assessment he made of whether to inform Parliament prior to March 2003 of Hans Blix's report to the Security Council of 14 February 2003, on access to Iraqi sites; [188938]

(27) when he became aware of Hans Blix's report to the UN Security Council on 14 February 2003 on access to Iraqi sites; [188939]

(28) pursuant to paragraph 405 of the Butler Report, when he became aware that in July 2003 the Special Intelligence Service had withdrawn two reports from a new source on trial because the source had by then been discredited; [188940]

(29) when he became aware of UNMOVIC's conclusions on *(a)* the fate of the castor oil extraction plant at Fallujah III in 1998 and *(b)* the extent of production of castor oil in July 2001; [188965]

(30) when he became aware of UNMOVIC's conclusions on the operability of the chlorine plant at Fallujah II, following visits between 9 December 2002 and 2 March 2003; [188989]

(31) when he became aware of the extent to which UNMOVIC has visited the Fallujah II plant between 9 December 2002 and 2 March 2003; [188990]

(32) what intelligence material was available to him to cast doubt upon Dr. Blix's statement on the usefulness of the Iraqi declaration of 8 December 2002; [188998]

(33) how many days it took the Defence Intelligence Staff to complete their initial assessment of the 12,000 page Iraqi declaration of 8 December 2002; [188999]

(34) whether he was aware that drafted statements which conveyed that Iraq would only be likely to use chemical and biological weapons during an invasion were removed from the September 2002 dossier; [189001]

(35) on what evidence he based his claims in the September dossier that the production of nitric acid in the al-Sharqat complex was being used for the purification of uranium; [189004]

(36) what assessment he made of the report by the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the Security Council on 7 March 2003 on whether there was an indication of resumed nuclear activity in Iraq; [189005]

(37) when he became aware of the views of the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency on the level of nuclear activity in any of the sites inspected as passed to the Security Council on 7 March 2003; [189006]

(38) when he was made aware that the statements in the September dossier on Iraq about mobile biological laboratories were based upon evidence from one defector; [189007]

(39) when he became aware of the results of the findings by UNMOVIC following examination of the sites named in the September dossier, with regard to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programmes; [189008]

(40) pursuant to paragraph 403 of the Butler Report, when he became aware that the Secret Intelligence Service had raised serious doubts about the reliability of reporting of the sub-source who provided information about Iraqi chemical and biological programmes and intentions; [189009]

(41) on what evidence he based his statement on 2 June 2003 that he stood by the evidence presented to the public on Iraq's weapons programme; [189010]

(42) on what grounds he based his statement to the Liaison Committee on 8 July 2003 that he stood by the evidence put forward in the September dossier; [189011]

(43) on what evidence he based his views, expressed to journalists in his monthly press conference on 30 July 2003, that he believed the intelligence he had received prior to the war regarding Iraq was correct; [189012]

(44) whether he was aware on 25 January that MI6 had withdrawn key reports on Iraq's weapons; [189013]

(45) on what evidence he based his statement in an interview with *The Observer* on 25 January that he believed that the intelligence regarding Iraq was correct; [189014]

(46) when he became aware that Hussein Kamel had claimed in 1995 that there were no remaining stockpiles of agents in Iraq; [189015]

(47) at what point he became aware that the interim report of the Iraqi Survey Group published on 2 October 2003 had not come to a conclusion regarding the purpose of the clandestine laboratories and safe houses within the Iraqi Intelligence Service; [189016]

(48) when he became aware that an e-mail had been sent from the then chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee to the head of the Iraq Survey Group (ISG), with suggestions for the ISG report; [189017]

(49) pursuant to Joint Intelligence Committee assessments, when he became aware that British Intelligence assessments prior to March 2003 stated that a collapse of the Iraqi regime would increase the risk of chemical and biological warfare technology or agents finding their way into the hands of terrorists; [189018]

(50) whether there was an assessment of the validity of the material in the dossier of September 2002 between November 2002 and March 2003; [189019]

(51) pursuant to the inter-departmental advice available to Ministers in early March 2002, what intelligence assessments were available to him in *(a)* April 2002 and *(b)* September 2002 that showed that Iraq posed a threat not just to its neighbours but to the wider world; [189020]

(52) whether intelligence assessments relating to Iraq in 2002 and 2003 made reference to an intention by Iraq to use nuclear, biological and chemical weapons outside its borders *(a)* by the Iraqi armed forces and *(b)* through the supply of such weapons to non-state actors even if Iraq itself was not attacked; [189021]

(53) whether, prior to the war on Iraq, intelligence assessments confirming Iraq's intention to use nuclear, biological and chemical weapons existed that did not relate to Iraq's likely response if it were invaded; [189022]

(54) whether any Joint Intelligence Committee assessments prior to March 2003 asserted that Iraq had the intention to use nuclear, biological and chemical weapons outside its borders, with the exception of the circumstance of a US-led attack; [189023]

(55) prior to March 2003 and pursuant to the Joint Intelligence Committee assessment of 9 September 2002, what assessment the British intelligence service made of the possibility of Iraq threatening to use weapons of mass destruction against other states other than in the context of a US-led invasion; [189024]

(56) what assessments were made by the British intelligence services of whether Iraq sought nuclear, biological and chemical weapons for the purpose of external aggression; [189025]

(57) pursuant to his statement at the TUC conference on 10 September 2002, whether assessments had been made of the possibility that stocks of growth media that UNSCOM had reported as still unaccounted for in its final substantive report of January 1999 no longer existed in usable form; [189026]

(58) pursuant to his speech at the Azores summit on 16 March 2003, when he was informed that UN weapons inspectors had confirmed that evidence had been provided for the prior destruction of chemical and biological warfare agents in *(a)* November 2002, *(b)* December 2002, *(c)* February 2003 and *(d)* March 2003; [189027]

(59) when he was informed that assessments were available before March 2003 which demonstrated that there was a distinction between the materials that UNMOVIC found to be unaccounted for and what was known to exist in Iraq; [189028]

(60) what part of the Joint Intelligence Committee intelligence assessments led him to state on 3 September 2002 that Iraq posed a threat to the security of the world; [189029]

(61) on what evidence it was stated in the September dossier that Iraq was conducting an illicit chemical weapons programme at the Fallujah II plant; [189030]

(62) pursuant to his statement of 18 March 2003, *Official Report*, columns 760–74, on Iraq, with particular reference to the Iraqi declaration of 8 December 2002, whether he made an assessment of the merits of requesting that Defence Intelligence staff make a full assessment on the Iraqi declaration before making further comment upon it; [189041]

(63) whether the new sub-source referred to in paragraph 403 of the Butler Report was the source for the claim made in the September 2002 dossier that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction could be deployed in 45 minutes. [189296]

The Prime Minister: These matters have been examined during the course of the Butler Review and other inquiries, and covered during debates and statements on Iraq and in briefings by my Official Spokesman. All relevant information has been placed in the public domain insofar as that could be done without prejudicing national security.

Written Answers to Questions

The following answers were received between Friday 17 September and Thursday 30 September 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CDC/Actis Capital

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether external consultants have advised CDC/Actis Capital on the Higaturu Oil Palms investment since 1999; and whether the deal team identified specific areas of concern regarding impact on *(a)* the environment, *(b)* indigenous cultures and *(c)* employed smallholders. [188968]

Hilary Benn: Several external consultants have advised CDC on Higaturu Oil Palms since 1999. All have made recommendations for further improvement of Higaturu's environmental management, which have been incorporated into Higaturu's environmental management plan. None of them identified areas of concern that had not already been recognised or were not part of ongoing management.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list CDC/Actis Capital's expenditure on *(a)* corporate executive and *(b)* department staff development and team building exercises in each year since 2002. [189059]

Hilary Benn: CDC's expenditure on *(a)* Corporate Executive and *(b)* department staff development and team building exercises from 2002 until the end of June was as follows:

£ million

	Corporate executive	*Staff development and team building*
2002	0.2	0.2
2003	0.2	0.1
2004 (end June)	0.1	0.1

These figures do not include expenditure incurred by Actis since its demerger from CDC earlier this year. As Actis is an independently managed business, in which HMG is only a minority shareholder, it is inappropriate for me to comment on the internal affairs of the business.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list CDC/Actis Capital public relations consultant expenditure since 1997, broken down by project. [189066]

Hilary Benn: CDC retained a UK public relations agency in 1997 and 1998, but stopped its services in mid 1999. Fees paid were minimal.

Another UK public relations agency was employed in late 2002 and its services were used until April 2004. The costs of the services of this agency were £30,667 in 2002 and £113,512 in 2003. A breakdown by project is not possible as neither agency was retained on a project-specific basis. CDC has not retained any PR consultants since then.

These figures do not include any expenditure incurred by Actis on public relations since its demerger from CDC earlier this year. As Actis is an independently managed business, in which HMG is only a minority shareholder, it is inappropriate for me to comment on the internal affairs of the business.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what representations he has received on the conditions of smallholders employed by Pacific Rim Palm Oil; [188853]

(2) what representations he has received regarding the Higaturu Oil Palms plantation's effect on *(a)* public health, *(b)* water quality, *(c)* indigenous sacred sites, *(d)* tribal property rights, *(e)* labour rights, *(f)* rainforest sustainability and deforestation and *(g)* species habitat; and if he will make a statement. [188852]

Hilary Benn: I received a letter from Friends of the Earth in June 2004, which enclosed letters from organisations in Papua New Guinea. In my reply to Friends of the Earth, I assured them that DFID takes these matters very seriously but that they should be taken up in the first instance with the company concerned. I understand that Actis, which manages the CDC investment in Pacific Rim Palm Oil Pte Ltd., the owners of Higaturu Oil Palms, held a meeting in late June 2004 with Friends of the Earth about these issues and has also replied to them by letter. In that reply, they invited Friends of the Earth to visit the plantation.

Correspondence

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Richmond Park of 30 April regarding the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. [189141]

Hilary Benn: I wrote to the hon. Member about this subject on 23 September. Unfortunately, DFID has no record of receiving her original letter.

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting; [188209]

(2) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting. [188208]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1451W.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the cost of fraud to his Department in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* UK locations and *(b)* overseas offices. [188329]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The estimated cost of fraud to DFID each year since 1997, including the number of cases, is illustrated in the following table. While many of the cases are relatively small in financial terms (the total loss due to fraud in recent years is 0.006 percent of DFID's total spending) the Department remain committed to minimising such losses. This year DFID has reviewed and updated its policy and response to fraud, with advice from anti-fraud specialists.

	UK (£)	*Number of cases*	*Overseas*	*Number of cases*	*Total (£)*
1996–1997	1,986	1	6,287	2	8,273
1997–1998	2,732	2	45,633	2	48,365
1998–1999	nil	—	96,925	9	96,925
1999–2000	79,833	5	11,220	4	91,053
2000–2001	9,489	6	8,750	5	18,239
2001–2002	1,378	3	82,187	9	83,565
2002–2003	8,385	5	94,599	12	102,984
2003–2004	30,000	1	[1]202,917	16	232,917

[1] This is the current estimate since investigations are ongoing for some cases in 2003–2004.

Departmental Projects

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list water services *(a)* delivery and *(b)* consultancy projects his Department has supported in each of the last five financial years; what levels of financial support were given in respect of each project; and which UK based companies were recipients of funding. [189348]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The information requested is not readily available without extensive research being carried out for which the time and expenditure would incur a disproportionate cost.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what *(a)* overspend and *(b)* underspend has been identified for (i) programmes, (ii) initiatives, (iii) overseas projects and (iv) Department-wide projects funded by his Department in the last financial year. [189190]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's resource budget covers all DFID expenditure on development assistance. The outturn against the operating budget in 2003–04 is set out in the following table. This includes spending on programmes, projects and other initiatives. Separate figures are given for the Africa and Global Conflict pools:

2003–04

£ million

	Net Resource Provision (voted)	*Net Resource Outturn*	*Under (-) /Over (+) spend*
RfR1: Eliminating Poverty in Poorer Countries	3,015	2,914	-101
RfR1: Other Adjustment	—	-85	-85
RfR2: Conflict Pools	49	45	-4
Total	3,064	2,959	-190

DFID also provided development assistance through our contribution to the EC. This totalled £865 million in 2003–04. The official outturn will not be available until 2006.

The following table shows resource outturn by Departmental Objective. This compares gross resource outturn against programme budgets. It excludes administration costs and other costs (for example, Capital Charges).

2003–04

£ million

	Net Resource Programme Budget	*Net Resource Programme Outturn*	*Under (-)/Over (+) spend*
Reducing Poverty in sub- Saharan Africa	680	639	-41
Reducing Poverty in Asia	514	592	+78
Reducing Poverty in the Rest of the World	425	429	+4
Improve Efficiency of Multilateral Aid	780	676	-104
Developing Innovative Approaches to Development	229	225	-4
Programmes Contributing to Multiple Objectives	73	89	+16
Others	2	-21	-23
Total	2,704	2,630	-74

Conflict Pools 2003–04

	Resource Budget	*Resource Outturn*	*£ million Under (-) /Over (+) spend*
Africa	22	19	-3
Global	27	26	-1
Total	49	45	-4

DFID also invests in capital projects for its own administration, for example, on accommodation and Information Technology projects. Spend against the Administration Capital budget in 2003–04 was as follows:

2003–04

	Admin Capital Budget	*Admin Capital Outturn*	*£ million Under (-) /Over (+) spend*
Central Departments	32	30	-2

Departmental Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if he will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188701]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In the UK, in the last 12 months, the Department for International Development has recycled at least 90 per cent. of our redundant documentation, waste paper and card, and has now implemented an Environment Management System to monitor all our environmental impacts including waste streams. DFID also has a clear policy to reduce our production of waste by actively encouraging re-use, recycling and composting of paper and card and recycling of other materials such as glass, metal and wood. DFID also use refurbished and recycled products and materials wherever possible, and all our copying paper is 100 per cent. recycled with at least 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Disaster-prone Regions

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 383–84W, on disaster-prone regions, if he will set a date for the implementation of a disaster reduction strategy.[189111]

Hilary Benn: The scoping study designed to inform DFID's proposed strategy for Disaster Reduction is due to be completed within the next few weeks. DFID will then start to draw up a strategy and a plan for its implementation, but we also wish to take account of the outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction to be held in Japan in January 2005 before finalising it. Therefore I envisage that DFID's strategy will be finalised by the end of March 2005. It will include information on an implementation.

Hurricane Ivan

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department plans *(a)* to provide to and *(b)* to request from the European Union for (i) the Cayman Islands, (ii) Jamaica, (iii) Grenada and (iv) other affected parts of the Caribbean following the passage of Hurricane Ivan. [189791]

Hilary Benn: Details of the UK's immediate humanitarian response to affected parts of the Caribbean, following the impact of Hurricane Ivan, were included in the oral statement I made in the House on 14 September and the written statement provided on 16 September.

Since then DFID has announced a further contribution of £368,000 to the International Federation of the Red Cross towards their regional appeal, bringing our overall support to the Red Cross to £0.5 million. DFID has continued to deliver priority relief supplies, including plastic sheeting, potable water and hygiene materials to the Cayman Islands following an urgent request from the Government. Following the completion of field assessments, we are also considering support to the relief efforts of non-governmental organisations working in Grenada and Jamaica.

The European Community has announced it is mobilising £3.65 million in emergency relief and post emergency rehabilitation to help Grenada cope in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan. This includes the earlier commitment of £1.01 million from the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office towards the country's emergency needs and to assist St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The UK share of this European Community humanitarian assistance is about £710,000. The European Union is also planning to mobilise £2.64 million from the allocation to Grenada under the European Development Fund, originally set aside for unforeseen circumstances. This allocation will go towards post emergency reconstruction focusing on the rehabilitation of schools that were severely damaged.

The European Union will also be exploring, with the Government, ways to adapt already committed but as yet un-disbursed funds available to Grenada. In addition, discussions will also be held with the Government concerning a previously earmarked £3.51 million for the development of the water sector in Grenada as to the possibility of using these funds to help with the rehabilitation of the water system that has been severely disrupted.

The full extent of the recovery needs of Grenada and other affected islands will take a little time to be assessed but the extent of destruction and damage indicates significant loss. The World Bank sent a team last week to Grenada. The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States and Caribbean Development Bank will be starting their assessment this week. The Government of Jamaica plan to announce their initial findings later this week.

I will be making a further written statement to the House following the recess. In the meantime, the DFID website www.dfid.gov.uk contains regularly updated information.

Natural Disasters

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much overseas aid the UK has provided to assist relief efforts following natural disasters in each of the last five years. [189487]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not keep statistics distinguishing between humanitarian aid provided for natural disasters and humanitarian aid in other contexts centrally; this information could not be obtained without incurring a disproportionate cost. DFID's total humanitarian assistance in the last five years was as follows:

Humanitarian assistance

	Total (£ million)
1999–2000	314
2000–01	297
2001–02	288
2002–03	374
2003–04[1]	381

[1] Provisional.

These figures include UK contributions to European Community Humanitarian programmes and UK contributions to UN humanitarian agencies.

Pakistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking *(a)* to encourage democratic reform and *(b)* to assist in institution-building in Pakistan. [188365]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is working to support improvements to the democratic process in Pakistan, including through initiatives to improve grassroots democracy, the embedding of the recently introduced devolution reforms and extensive capacity-building support for the strengthening of key representative bodies. As part of this, DFID is supporting federal and provincial level programmes of Civil Service Reform and Public Sector Development, as well as targeted support for the Ministries of Finance, Education, and Health and Welfare, the Ministry of Women's Development, Social Welfare and Special Education, Comptroller General of Accounts, National Accountability Bureau, Election Commission of Pakistan and others. DFID is also supporting the Faisalabad District Government to evolve and strengthen district governance systems. DFID is also considering some capacity-building support through civil society to small political parties across the political spectrum.

Efforts are also being made through civil society to secure greater representation and accountability of the state to its citizens by enhanced awareness of their entitlements and the participation, particularly of women, in decision-making at all levels of devolved government. In the 2001–02 Local government elections, for example, 32,222 women were elected into union councils and 3,827 women to tehsil/town and district councils. In addition, through contesting open elections, 16 women were elected as union council, tehsil or district nazims (mayors).

Sudan

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the level of funding the Government will commit to the reconstruction of southern Sudan during the six-year interim period; and if he will make a statement. [189547]

Hilary Benn: I have allocated £150 million over the next three years for relief and development in Sudan, after a comprehensive peace agreement. DFID expects funding to continue at this level at least for the rest of the interim period and remains fully committed to helping the people of Sudan reach a sustainable peace and eliminate poverty. DFID looks forward to the peace talks reconvening soon.

Tristan da Cunha

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact on the islanders of Tristan da Cunha of the changes in sailing schedules of the Royal Mail Ship St Helena; and if he will make a statement. [189541]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In January this year, the St. Helena Government (SHG) decided to end the annual call by the RMS St. Helena at Tristan da Cunha. In reaching its decision, SHG considered the alternative access arrangements available to Tristan da Cunha and the take-up of passenger and freight traffic on the ship during recent voyages. Taking account of alternative shipping links with Tristan, which can offer more competitively priced freight and passenger capacity, the conclusion reached was that the annual call had become of limited economic or practical value.

Essential physical access arrangements for Tristan will be maintained by other vessels that call there on other business. These include two South African fishing vessels and a South African research ship which, between them, are expected to make 14 visits to Tristan this year.

The new arrangements for the XRMS St. Helena' will remain under review and further adjustments will be considered in the light of experience. SHG has not ruled out the possibility in future of occasional voyages to Tristan (or the UK) if there were sufficient demand for them.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) if he will provide a Written Ministerial Statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188218]

(2) if he will provide a Written Ministerial Statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states

that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188219]

Mr. Leslie: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to her on 13 September by the Foreign Secretary.

Fathers 4 Justice

Keith Vaz: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to meet representatives of the Fathers 4 Justice campaign. [189213]

Mr. Leslie: None. We recently published a consultation paper "Parental Separation: Children's Needs and Parents' Responsibilities", setting out proposals to improve the outcomes for children where parents separate, and also improve the experiences of their parents through provision of better, more focussed services. We are consulting on these proposals until 1 November 2004. Fathers 4 Justice has been invited to submit a response to this.

Freedom of Information

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the preparedness of Government Departments to fulfil the demands made on them for access to information after the Freedom of Information legislation comes fully into effect in respect of *(a)* speed and *(b)* comprehensiveness of reply. [189985]

Mr. Leslie: In accordance with Section 85(5)*(a)* of the Freedom of Information Act, the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs is required annually to lay before Parliament a report on his proposals for bringing fully into force those provisions of the Act which are not yet fully in force.

The fourth Annual Report on proposals for bringing fully into force those provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which are not yet fully in force will be laid before both Houses before 30 November 2004. Government Departments' progress on implementation and preparedness for full implementation of the Freedom of Information Act is surveyed annually for inclusion in this Report.

Additionally, my Department is liaising closely with other Government Departments in preparation for full implementation for the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Judicial Appointments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what judicial appointments the Lord Chancellor made during the summer adjournment of both Houses of Parliament. [189214]

Mr. Leslie: The Lord Chancellor made, or recommended to Her Majesty, 322 judicial appointments during the summer adjournment of both Houses of Parliament. I will forward a table detailing the names of those appointed, and the posts they were appointed to the hon. Member, and I will place a copy in the House of Commons Library.

Statute of Limitations

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will seek to alter the statute of limitations so that where a convicted criminal serving a prison sentence comes into money through whatever lawful means after the limitation period has expired, victims or their relatives may take legal action for recompense irrespective of the length of time that has elapsed since the offence took place. [189219]

Mr. Leslie: The government recognises there are concerns about compensation to crime victims or their relatives in these circumstances. We are currently considering a number of options to improve the compensation regime for victims. The civil law on limitation is one of several areas to be considered in this context.

UN Convention

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs, when Jersey and Guernsey will apply the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; what consultations he has had with the island authorities; what undertakings he has been given on the formulation and enactment of legislation; and whether he has power to extend the convention to the islands in the way they were extended to the Isle of Man. [189721]

Mr. Leslie: These conventions both cover areas where the Governments of the Crown Dependencies have domestic competence. I understand that the Insular Authorities in Jersey and Guernsey have both made a commitment to have the necessary legislation in place when it is practicable to do so.

Once that legislation is in place and the Insular Authorities request the extension of the conventions, that may be done by declaration, in the same way as they were extended to the Isle of Man.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

David Taylor: To ask the Solicitor-General what plans there are to review the status of witnesses in the Crown Prosecution Service's decisions on prosecuting cases. [187386]

The Solicitor-General: Crown Prosecutors apply the principles set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors ("the Code") when they make prosecution decisions.

Paragraph 6.7 of the Code sets out, "The Crown Prosecution Service prosecutes cases on behalf of the public at large and not just in the interests of any particular individual. However, when considering the public interest test Crown Prosecutors should always take into account the consequences for the victim of the decision whether or not to prosecute, and any views expressed by the victim or victim's family". While this paragraph applies to victims, similar considerations apply to witnesses.

The Code is currently subject of a review. The review has involved consultation with, among others, victim and witness interest groups.

The Bar Written Standards for the Conduct of Professional Work prohibits prosecution counsel in trials from interviewing a witness about that or any other witness's evidence. Crown Prosecutors follow this practice in all cases.

In 2002, the Attorney General asked the Director of Public Prosecutions to consider whether the time had come for prosecutors to interview key witnesses before trial in order to establish the reliability of their evidence. The Crown Prosecution Service conducted a public consultation in 2003. The Attorney General is in the process of considering the responses to that consultation before reaching a final conclusion as to the appropriate way forward.

The Direct Communications with Victims initiative was successfully rolled out nationally in 2002. Under the scheme, where a charge is discontinued or substantially altered the prosecutors will write to the victim to explain the reasons for the decision. Additionally, a meeting will be offered to explain the decision in cases where a death has occurred, cases of child abuse, sexual offences, racially and religiously aggravated offences and offences with a homophobic or transphobic element.

The No Witness No Justice project is currently being rolled out nationally in CPS Areas. Under the project police officers will consider the specific needs of witnesses. This information will be passed to a prosecutor and to witness care units operated by police and CPS staff. The witness care units will take such action as is necessary to address the needs of the witness.

Significant steps have also been made to ensure that vulnerable and intimidated witnesses can give their best evidence when attending court as a witness through the ongoing implementation of special measures.

TREASURY

Hospital Acquired Infection

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people who died in the last 12 months had hospital acquired infection attributed as the cause of death on their death certificates. [189440]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Tim Loughton, dated 27 September 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many people who died in the last 12 months had hospital acquired infection attributed as the cause of death on their death certificates. (189440).

It is not possible to give reliable figures on the number of deaths involving hospital-acquired infections from routinely collected mortality data, as information on where the infection was acquired may not be available to the doctor certifying the death.

Immigration

Chris Grayling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many immigrants he estimates have entered the United Kingdom from the new EU countries since May. [189534]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Chris Grayling, dated 23 September 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding estimates for the number of people migrating to the UK from the new EU countries since May 2004. (189534)

The information requested is not available.

Estimates of total international migration produced by the Office for National Statistics are compiled from a range of survey and administrative sources on an annual basis. Estimates of people migrating from the EU to the UK are primarily produced from the International Passenger Survey. This survey has a small sample size for the EU accession countries, which results in any estimates being subject to a high degree of error. Consequently, it is our present judgement that we will be unable to release reliable estimates for a single year for the accession countries when the 2004 data are published.

Lisbon Agenda

Mr. Brady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his assessment is of whether the EU has made progress towards achieving the Lisbon Agenda aim of making the EU the world's most competitive economy by 2010 in the last two years. [189518]

Mr. Timms: The Treasury published an assessment of the EU's progress towards the Lisbon goals in February 2004, "Advancing Long-term Prosperity: Economic Reform in an Enlarged Europe". That report noted that the EU and the member states had implemented a number of important reforms, but that further action was needed in order to achieve the Lisbon goals by 2010. In September 2004, the Government also published their submission to the High-Level Group headed by Wim Kok and tasked with conducting a mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy. That report described a range of priority areas for reform to deliver a more flexible and outward-looking Europe.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Statement of 13 September, *Official Report*, column 1101, on the Lisbon Agenda, if he will list the 102 benchmarks. [189563]

Mr. Timms: A full list of the 102 structural indicator benchmarks against which Member States' economic performance can be assessed is available on the Eurostat website (http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/), alongside the most recent available data.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the annual Lisbon Agenda score cards will be introduced. [189572]

Mr. Timms: In its September 2004 report, "Mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy: UK submission to the high-level group", the Government proposed that an annual Lisbon Scorecard, ranking national performance against a core set of headline economic reform indicators should be prepared each year for the

spring European Council. At present, the European Commission compares national economic performance against a range of indicators in its annual report to the spring European Council, highlighting the best and worst three performing member states against individual indicators.

Census Results (Manchester)

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many 18-year-olds were resident in the City of Manchester at the last census; [189459]

(2) how many 18-year-olds were resident in the Manchester, Withington constituency at the last census. [189460]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Keith Bradley, dated 21 September 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions asking how many 18 year olds were resident in the City of Manchester and the Manchester Withington Constituency at the last Census. (189459 & 189460)

Figures from 'Census 2001—Census Area Statistics for Output Areas, Wards and higher administrative geographies in England and Wales' indicate that on Census day (29 April 2001) there were 6,008 18 year olds resident in Manchester Local Authority District, and 915 18 year olds resident in the Manchester, Withington Constituency.

The 'Census 2001—Census Area Statistics for Output Areas, Wards and higher administrative geographies in England and Wales' DVD is available in the House of Commons Library.

The 'Census 2001—Census Area Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies in England and Wales' CD was released on the 16th of September 2004 and is now available in the House of Commons Library.

Civil Service Redundancies

Mr. Best: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in which *(a)* departments and *(b)* agencies civil service job losses will be made. [189135]

Mr. Boateng: There will be an overall gross reduction in posts in UK departments of 84,150 by 2008 and departments are pursuing these reductions in line with business need. All relevant departmental reductions were published in the 2004 Spending Review White Paper, which can be accessed via www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Mr. Best: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the number of Civil Service jobs that will be lost in *(a)* Yorkshire, *(b)* Leeds and *(c)* Leeds North West following the Spending Review announcement. [189144]

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) which *(a)* departments, *(b)* agencies and *(c)* public bodies will be affected by job losses resulting from his recent announcement in the 2004 Spending Review; [189351]

(2) how many Civil Service jobs will be lost in Castle Point as a result of the recently announced cuts in Civil Service jobs. [189352]

Mr. Boateng: There will be an overall gross reduction in posts in UK departments of 84,150 by 2008 and departments are pursuing these reductions in line with business need, consulting all stakeholders including union and staff. Departments will come forward in due course with details of workforce changes once plans are finalised.

Crown Estate's Communication Department

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the staffing costs for the Crown Estate's Communication Department were in each year since 1997. [188445]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* The information is as follows:

	£
1996–97	42,000
1997–98	75,000
1998–99	88,000
1999–2000	109,000
2000–01	110,000
2001–02	128,000
2002–03	133,000
2003–04	138,000

Economic Growth

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* British and *(b)* European strategy is for combining economic growth while retaining the priority on social inclusion. [189562]

Mr. Timms: The Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report provides an overview of the Government's policies to promote economic growth and social inclusion.

The Government's approach combines flexibility and fairness, recognising that promoting employment opportunities is central to both economic growth and social inclusion. At the European level, the Lisbon Strategy sets ambitious targets for achieving both economic growth and social inclusion, focussing particularly on employment. The European employment guidelines establish three overarching objectives for Member State action to promote full employment, improve quality and productivity at work, and strengthen social cohesion and inclusion.

Employment and Productivity

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures the Government are taking to ensure increased employment and productivity in the UK. [189564]

Mr. Timms: The Government is committed to raising the rate of UK productivity growth. The Government's approach is set out in "Productivity in the UK: The Evidence and the Government's Approach" (published alongside the 2000 Pre-Budget Report).

The Government's strategy for ensuring employment opportunity for all has been set out in successive Budget and Pre-Budget reports.

...e Government reports on steps to increase productivity and employment in every Budget and Pre-Budget Report.

Fair Trade Products

Mr. Wood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what incentives the Treasury offers to British businesses which *(a)* sell, *(b)* stock and *(c)* use fair trade products. [189496]

John Healey: The Government are committed to supporting ethical trading wherever possible and through the Department for International Development it provides significant support to the Fairtrade Foundation's efforts in promoting the supply and marketing of Fairtrade products.

Since 1997 the Government have also introduced a range of tax incentives to benefit business, including cuts in the rates of corporation tax, measures to simplify the administrative burden of VAT and permanent enhanced first year capital allowances for small and medium-sized enterprises.

HM Revenue and Customs Department

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his Answer of 7 September, ref. 187239, what responsibility *(a)* the Paymaster General and *(b)* the Economic Secretary will have with regard to the proposed HM Revenue and Customs Department. [188465]

Mr. Gordon Brown: An updated list of Ministerial Responsibilities has been published on the HM Treasury website. This establishes the Paymaster General as Departmental Minister for HM Revenue and Customs.

Information and Communication Specialists

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many information and communication technology specialists are in full-time employment in the Department. [189597]

Mr. Timms: HM Treasury's HR system shows 14 IT specialists are employed in the Department, working in areas such as the central IT helpdesk, the Information Services team, and the HR Information Systems team.

Job Creation (Mitcham and Morden)

Siobhain McDonagh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many jobs have been created in Mitcham and Morden since 1997. [189338]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Siobhain McDonagh, dated 21 September 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about jobs created in Mitcham and Morden. (189338)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to jobs in Mitchem and Morden, for 1997 and the latest year available, 2002.

Number of employees[1] with workplace in Mitchem and Morden parliamentary constituency: 1997 and 2002

	Number
1997	18,100
2002	22,800
Change from 1997 to 2002[2]	4,700

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.

[2] The 1997 to 2002 change has been rounded to the nearest hundred separately from rounded levels for 1997 and 2002.

Source:

1997: Annual Employment Survey, rescaled. 2002: Annual Business Inquiry.

Tax Credits

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many appeals against rulings on tax credits have been lodged in the last 12 months. [189431]

Dawn Primarolo: In the twelve months to the end of August 2004, Inland Revenue submitted to the Appeals Service about 1,800 written appeals against tax credit decisions.

I understand from the Appeals Service that, of these appeals, about 1,500 were heard by a tribunal by the end of August 2004. Others appeals were settled without a tribunal hearing, were withdrawn, struck out, not accepted as duly made or were outstanding.

Taxation of Pensioners

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of total income tax in the last year for which figures are available was derived from pensioners; and if he will make a statement on the taxation of pensioners. [189542]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to table 3.12 'Income and tax for the elderly, by region and country' and 2.4 'Shares of total income tax liability' on the Inland Revenue website http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/table-312-2001-02.xls and http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_tax/table2-4.xls. From 2004-05, as a result of measures introduced since 1997, including the Pension Credit, the government will be spending around £10 billion more in real terms on pensioners. Around 65 per cent. of pensioners now pay no tax at all or tax at 10 per cent.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring forward proposals to reduce the burden of taxation on pensioners' incomes. [189543]

Mr. Timms: Around 65 per cent. of all pensioners pay no tax or tax at 10 per cent. Age-related personal allowances increased from April 2004 in line with earnings from £6,610 to £6,830 for those between 65 and

74, from £6,720 to £6,950 for those over 75. Since April 2004 no pensioner aged 65 or over will pay tax on income of less than £131 a week. Age-related personal allowances rise in line with the rise in average earnings for the remainder of this Parliament.

Personal tax and benefit changes mean that the average pensioner household is 26 per week better off in 2004–05 than would have been the case under the 1997 system. The poorest third of pensioners are now £33 per week better off.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the cost to the Exchequer of exempting the state retirement pension from income tax; and if he will exempt the state retirement pension from income tax. [189544]

Dawn Primarolo: It would cost around £4 billion to exempt state retirement pension from income tax. These estimates are based upon the 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes and are consistent with the Budget 2004 forecasts.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the cost to the Exchequer of making the first £10,000 of occupational pensions income subject to a taxation rate of 10 per cent.; and if he will make the first £10,000 of occupational income subject to a taxation rate of 10 per cent. [189545]

Dawn Primarolo: It would cost around £2 billion to extend the starting rate of income tax to £10,000 for all non-state pensions. It would cost around £19 billion to extend the starting rate of tax to £10,000 for all earned income.

These estimates are based upon the 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes and are consistent with the Budget 2004 forecasts.

US/UK Trade Links

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures the Government is taking to deepen its cooperation with the US on trade and investment. [189573]

Mr. Timms: The US is our biggest single export market. UK trade with the US is worth around £50 billion (taking exports of goods and services together). In 2003–04 the US was by far the largest investing country in the UK with 314 projects creating 10,668 jobs. The Government in the form of UK Trade and Investment in London and the US, and funding for Regional Development Agencies, is committed to maintaining the UK as the primary destination for US inward investment in Europe.

The Government is also actively engaged with the Commission, other Member States and stakeholders such as the Transatlantic Business Dialogue to encourage increased economic cooperation between the ED and the US. The Government welcomes the call at the June 2004 EU-US Summit for stakeholder consultation leading to a new forward-looking strategy to break down remaining barriers to closer cooperation and will participate fully in this process.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Civil Service (Job Losses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House which services within his Office will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review. [189645]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 16 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1659W.

Information and Communication Specialists

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Leader of the House how many information and communication technology specialists are in full-time employment in his office. [189592]

Mr. Woolas: None. The Privy Council Office provides administrative support to the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons. There are currently no full-time or part-time information and communication specialists employed by the Privy Council Office (PCO). ICT services are provided to PCO by the Cabinet Office, under a Service Level Agreement.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Civil Service (Job Losses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which services within her Department will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review. [189643]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 16 September 2004, *Official Report* column 1659W.

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) if she will provide a Written Ministerial Statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which her Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188206]

(2) if she will provide a Written Ministerial Statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which her Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188207]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1451W.

Digital Television

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department

has allocated to digital television switchover *(a)* in the financial year and *(b)* for each of the next three financial years. [189210]

Estelle Morris *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* The Department has to date allocated approximately £380,000 (excluding staff and administrative costs) to digital switchover in the current financial year.

Decisions have yet to be made on allocations for future years.

English Heritage

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many official meetings she has had with English Heritage in the last 12 months. [189201]

Mr. Caborn: In the last 12 months my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has had three formal meetings with the Chairman and Chief Executive of English Heritage. The Minister for Heritage has meetings with them on a regular basis, both formally and informally.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many English Heritage sites she has visited in the last 12 months. [189202]

Mr. Caborn: The Secretary of State has not had an opportunity to visit any English Heritage sites in the last 12 months, but the Minister for Heritage has visited a number of English Heritage managed sites and visited their East of England regional office.

Freeview Service

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of the population are able to access Freeview; and what steps she is taking to speed up the availability of Freeview. [189442]

Estelle Morris: At present around 73 per cent. of UK households can access Digital Terrestrial Television services. This figure cannot be increased before Switchover.

The Government are committed to ensuring that at Digital Switchover everyone who can currently get the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form (BBC1 and 2, ITV, Channel 4/S4C and Five) can receive them on digital systems.

Much progress has been made in the discussions between the Government, Ofcom and the Public Service Broadcasters and while the broadcasters have not reached a full consensus on the optimum timetable, some—including the BBC—have suggested that 2012 may be the most appropriate date for the completion of Switchover. This has been reflected in the draft Digital Replacement Licences, which Ofcom have issued for Channels 3, 5 and Teletext.

Grade II Listed Buildings

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was given in grants to Grade II listed buildings in the last financial year. [189199]

Mr. Caborn: During 2003–04 English Heritage offered £300,000 in grants to Grade II listed buildings.

English Heritage also offered a further £9.8 million in grants through their Heritage Economic Regeneration schemes, which principally target Grade II and unlisted buildings in conservation areas.

Heritage Economic Regeneration

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on heritage economic regeneration schemes. [189226]

Mr. Caborn: English Heritage launched its Heritage Economic Regeneration scheme in 1999. Since then some £50 million has been invested in the regeneration of run down and deprived conservation areas. English Heritage has recently reviewed the scheme and it has been renamed Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas. New applications will now be considered against regional priorities.

Mobile Libraries

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to increase the use of mobile libraries. [189206]

Estelle Morris: Mobile libraries are becoming increasingly sophisticated in the services that they can offer, and can be particularly useful in providing access to library services for those in outlying communities, or as an outreach tool to the socially excluded by visiting housing estates, but it is for local authorities responsible for library provision to decide how to allocate funding. We are encouraging authorities to understand better and meet the needs of their local communities.

Princess Diana Memorial Fountain

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether compensation has been paid to those injured at the Princess Diana Memorial Fountain. [189198]

Mr. Caborn: Compensation has not been paid.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much public money has been spent on the Princess Diana Memorial Fountain since its opening; and what the projected maintenance costs are for the next 10 years, in real terms. [189205]

Mr. Caborn: £83,000 has been spent on the fountain since it opened.

Maintenance costs are expected to be £140,000 in the first year and £118,000 per annum in subsequent years.

Royal Parks

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on security measures in place in the Royal Parks. [189203]

Mr. Caborn: From 1 April 2004, policing the Royal Parks passed to the Metropolitan police, working

alongside the Royal Parks police in the Royal Parks Operational Command Unit (RPOCU). It would be inappropriate to go into detail about their security measures but these are commensurate with the perceived level of threat at any given time.

The new policing arrangements involve the deployment of Community Support Officers in addition to the police officers and this has made it possible to provide higher visibility policing in the Royal Parks.

Switchco

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress has been made towards the establishment of Switchco. [189211]

Estelle Morris *[holding answer 16 September 2004]*: Discussions are taking place between the Government, broadcasters, and other stakeholders under the Digital Action Plan, on the role and structure of the organisation that will be responsible for co-ordinating Digital Switchover. An announcement will be made on the outcome of these discussions in due course.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Back-To-Work Bonus

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the back to work bonus of £1,000 is payable to unemployed people starting up their own business. [188323]

Maria Eagle: The Back to Work Bonus is payable to all customers aged under 60 in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support and in part time work. This includes people who are moving off benefit in order to start their own business.

To be eligible to apply for a Back to Work Bonus when moving into work that takes them off benefit, a person must have met the qualifying conditions and have been working part time and declaring their earnings. Half of the declared earnings after the appropriate disregard has been applied are accrued. The minimum that can be paid is £5 and the maximum £1,000. The amount the customer receives is dependant on the amount of earnings that has accrued from their part time work.

Jobcentre Plus

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what changes in the number of civil service jobs have arisen from the introduction of Jobcentre Plus offices; and how many jobs have been contracted out to independent service providers; [189414]

(2) what the refurbishment budget for Jobcentre Plus offices is. [189416]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Tim Loughton, dated 29 September 2004:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply direct to your questions about the changes to the number of Civil Service jobs arising from the introduction of Jobcentre Plus offices, contracting out of jobs, and the costs of the refurbishment programme. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

In our customer-facing offices the number of Civil Service staff has increased as a result of the introduction of the Jobcentre Plus service. This is largely due to the increased advisory activity aimed at helping more customers return to work. For 2003/04 the increase to the headcount was estimated at 4,350, and for 2004/05 a further 1,200. These increases in staff numbers have not resulted in posts being contracted out to independent service providers.

The budget for the estates refurbishment programme is £550m.

As you may be aware, on the 16th September 2004, the Secretary of State made a written statement about the impact of the Department for Work and Pensions Efficiency Programme on meeting the government's efficiency challenge. This includes our plans to centralise benefit processing and contact centres.

I hope this is helpful.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he proposes to update assessed average rental values used in the calculation of entitlement to housing benefit. [188682]

Mr. Pond: Claims received from those in the private rented sector will generally be referred to the local Rent Officer for a rental valuation to determine the housing benefit claim. The market evidence that is used to compare properties for the purpose of making these valuations is updated on an ongoing basis by the Rent Service.

In nine pathfinder areas, we are testing a reform of housing benefit for tenants in the private rented sector, called the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). This is a flat-rate allowance based on broadly average market rents in the area for each size of property, and the rates are set by the Rent Officer. Once an LHA rate has been calculated, it will apply to all properties within that particular area and so will not have to be calculated separately for each property. LHA rates are updated monthly in line with any changes to market rents in the area, and are supplied to the relevant local authority. The local authority is then required to publish these figures.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants there are in each *(a)* county, *(b)* metropolitan authority, *(c)* London Borough and *(d)* unitary authority in England. [188987]

Maria Eagle: The information has been placed in the Library.

New Deal (Mitcham and Morden)

Siobhain McDonagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* people, *(b)* lone parents and *(c)* people with disabilities in Mitcham and Morden have gained work through the new deal. [189358]

Jane Kennedy: The available information is in the table.

New deal in Mitcham and Morden

	People into work though new deal
Total	2,000
New deal for young people	850
New deal 25-plus	580
New deal for lone parents	460
New deal 50-plus	110

Notes:
1. Information is not available at constituency level for new deal for disabled people and new deal for partners.
2. All data is to the end of June 2004 apart from new deal 50-plus which is to the end of March 2003 and is the number of new deal 50-plus employment credit starts.
3. In April 2003, the new deal 50-plus employment credit was replaced by the by the 50 plus element of the working tax credit.
4. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
DWP Information and Analysis Directorate.

Pensioners (Mitcham and Morden)

Siobhain McDonagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average change in income for pensioners in Mitcham and Morden has been from pension credit; and what the total sum paid to pensioners in the constituency in pension credit has been to date. [189336]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is not available.

In August 2003 there were 2,500 pensioner households in Mitcham and Morden receiving an average amount of £62.25 a week in Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG).

This is not directly comparable with an average amount for pension credit since there are differences between pension credit and MIG that are attributable to a variety of factors. Following the introduction of pension credit in October 2003, some elements of the support previously provided through MIG are now provide through local authority funding for people in care homes, and through tax credits for children. In addition, average pension credit awards are expected to be lower than MIG because a savings credit of up to £15.51 (single) or £20.22 (couples) is available for people with modest incomes above the guarantee level who previously received nothing from MIG.

In August 2004 there were 3,365 pension credit claimants in Mitcham and Morden receiving an average amount of £51.86.

The total sum of pension credit paid to pensioners in Mitcham and Morden between 6 October 2003 and 31 August 2004 is £7.1 million.

Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if he will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188695]

Mr. Pond: The latest figures for waste are for 2003–04. The following figures show the total amount of waste generated from DWP offices (where data is available) and the amount of that waste that is recycled. All our recycled waste shown in this table is paper or cardboard, although other currently unmeasured recycling takes place on furniture and fluorescent tubes.

	Tonnes
Total Waste Arisings	25,834
Total Paper/Card Recycled	13,015

The Department is working to reduce the total amount of waste that it produces, by developing Waste Minimisation plans within each area of the business. At the same time, In accordance with its Sustainable Development Policy Statement, the Department is working with our Estates Partner (Land Securities Trillium) to extend existing recycling facilities for paper products, increase recycling of estate based waste, and consider the potential for recycling other waste streams such as plastics and aluminium cans.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Child Care

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate the Government have made of the percentage of GDP the UK has spent on child care provision in each year since 1997. [186826]

Margaret Hodge: The latest available data on child care expenditure, reported in the 2004 DfES Department Report and by Sure Start, show that child care expenditure has risen from 0.001 per cent. of GDP in England in 1997–98 to 0.02 per cent. in 2002–03. Expenditure on Early Years services has risen from 0.2 per cent. of GDP in England in 1997–98 to 0.251 per cent. of GDP in 2002–03.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate the Government have made of the number of privately run nurseries in each year since 1997 *(a)* broken down by region and *(b)* in St. Helens. [187363]

Margaret Hodge: The Department does not collect this information on a regular basis. According to the Childcare and Early Years Workforce Survey for 2003–04 there were 7,700 privately—owned full day care providers in England in 2003 but these are not broken down by region or local authority district.

Of the 1216 neighbourhood nurseries that are now open, 498 are operated by the private sector—over 40 per cent. The regional breakdown is set out in the table.

Region	Number of private neighbourhood nurseries
East of England	18
East Midlands	42
London	61
North East	67
North West	113
South East	27
South West	32
West Midlands	62
Yorkshire and the Number	76

Nine neighbourhood nurseries have been developed in St. Helens. Of these six are privately-run.

Adult Education (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in (i) Greater London and (ii) each London borough in each year since 1997. [189474]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the London Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas is set out in the table:

£000

	April 2001 to July 2001[1]		August 2001 to July 2002		August 2002 to July 2003	
Learning and Skills Council Area	Basic skills	Key skills	Basic skills	Key skills	Basic skills	Key skills
London North	8,753	985	14,099	1,395	18,829	1,921
London West	13,671	858	24,013	1,629	29,303	1,652
London Central	18,207	1,119	38,694	1,733	38,130	1,204
London East	14,746	1,476	31,412	2,114	39,783	2,367
London South	5,758	998	13,241	1,488	15,398	1,728
Total	61,135	5,436	121,459	8,359	141,443	8,872

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at borough level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Bullying

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the Department's guidance to schools on its anti-bullying strategy addresses identifying the individual needs of children who are being bullied. [188122]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We take all bullying seriously and attach great importance to tackling it. All secondary and middle schools have received a copy of our "Don't Suffer in Silence" guidance and it is available free on request to all others. It sets out a range of strategies for supporting children who are being bullied and recognises that different situations require different responses, in order to meet different needs. The guidance emphasises the importance of tackling all sorts of bullying, including bullying because of race, gender, sexual orientation or disability and highlights the rise in bullying via new technology such as mobile phones.

The Anti-Bullying Charter for Action not only reinforces existing guidance but also offers suggestions for dealing with bullying via the use of school councils and peer support and by regularly canvassing children's opinion on the nature and extent of bullying. The Anti-Bullying Alliance has been formed, which will give schools support in implementing the charter.

CAFCASS

Mrs. May: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the backlog of Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service reports is; and how many children are involved in those cases. [186991]

Margaret Hodge: At 31 July 2004 there were 469 unallocated cases requiring private law reports, representing 5.4 per cent. of the CAFCASS caseload. There has been a dip in performance over the summer, but the overall trend has shown improvement. In March 2004 CAFCASS had 272 unallocated cases, representing 3.2 per cent. of the caseload, compared with 365 unallocated cases in March 2003, representing 4.5 per cent. of the caseload.

At 31 July 2004, there were 287 unallocated public law cases, representing 2.4 per cent. of the caseload. CAFCASS has reduced the backlog considerably; at 31 March 2003 there were 639 unallocated cases, representing 5.1 per cent. of the caseload.

CAFCASS has two measurements for allocating public law cases:

Section 31 cases (care and supervision proceedings) should be allocated within two days from receipt of the request. The current target for CAFCASS is to achieve 70 per cent. of allocations within 2 days by March 2005. CFACASS began collecting information on this basis in November 2003, with the introduction of the "Protocol for Judicial Case Management in Public Law Children Act Cases". In November 2003 CAFCASS was allocating 37.3 per cent. of cases within two days. By July 2004, the proportion had risen to 54.4 per cent.

CAFCASS also has a target to allocate 98 per cent. of all case types within 28 days from receipt of the request. At the end of July 2004, CAFCASS was allocating 93.8 per cent. of cases within 28 days, compared with 79.9 per cent. of cases at the end of April 2003.

CAFCASS does not keep central statistics about how many children are involved in each case.

Cambodia (Adoption)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the suspension of adoption arrangements with Cambodia. [188387]

Margaret Hodge: I made a statement to the House on 22 June 2004 announcing my decision to temporarily suspend the adoption of Cambodian children by UK residents. A copy of my statement has been placed in the House of Commons Library for information.

The temporary suspension was introduced in response to concerns raised by and investigated by officials from the Department for Education and Skills who visited Cambodia, by the British Embassy in Cambodia and, separately, by other relevant stakeholders about the intercountry adoption process in Cambodia.

As explained in my statement, I believe that the safeguards in the Cambodian adoption system are insufficient to prevent children being adopted without proper consents being given by their birth parents and improper financial gain being made by individuals involved in the adoption process.

As stated, I intend to review the temporary suspension when the Cambodian Government passes new adoption legislation or if there is another development I consider to be significant, for example if Cambodia were to implement the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Intercountry Adoption.

Only in exceptional circumstances will I consider that the temporary suspension should not apply in a particular case. Any decision relating to a particular case will of course take account of what is in the best interests of the child and all the facts of the particular case.

Children's Homes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children are accommodated in *(a)* public children's homes, *(b)* private children's homes and *(c)* voluntary organisation children's homes. [189451]

Margaret Hodge: Data are not collected on the number of children accommodated in children's homes by the individual categories requested. However, the total number of children placed in children's homes at 31 March 2003 was 6,600.

The term 'children's homes' is defined here as including homes and hostels, secure units, and residential schools that are dual registered as children's homes.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average cost of placement of a 15-year-old in *(a)* private children's homes and *(b)* local authority run children's homes was in the last year for which figures are available. [189463]

Margaret Hodge: Figures on the average cost of placement of a 15-year-old are not held centrally. The only figures we have available relate to the average cost for all children in children's homes in 2002–03. The average weekly cost of a placement in a private children's home was £1,846 and in a local authority run children's home the average weekly cost was £1,812.

Civil Service (Job Losses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which services within his Department will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review. [189644]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer the hon. Member to the answer he received from my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 16 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1658W.

Class Sizes

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans the Government has to set lower statutory number limits for *(a)* infant, *(b)* junior and *(c)* nursery classes. [189276]

Mr. Miliband: We have no plans to introduce statutory class size limits for nursery or junior classes, nor do we plan to change the current statutory limit of 30 for infant classes. We introduced the infant class limit because research indicates that restricting infant class sizes to 30 allows teachers to spend more time with individual pupils, and may benefit them in those early years of school when they need to acquire basic skills.

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining the key points on the agenda for each of the Council of Ministers' meetings at which his Department is represented in advance of each meeting; [188214]

(2) if he will provide a written ministerial statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by hon. Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188215]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1451.

Departmental Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if he will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188698]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Of the total waste generated by my Department during 2003–04 17.7 per cent. of clean paper and cardboard is recycled.

My Department already has in place a "green housekeeping policy statement". The Waste Management Strategy is being developed in accordance with the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government estate.

Early-years Teacher Training

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Government's policy is on the training of early years teachers; and if he will make a statement. [187367]

Margaret Hodge: It is a regulatory requirement that a qualified teacher must be involved in early years' education in each maintained setting. It is also set out in Sure Start Unit guidance to local authorities that they should work towards and beyond having one qualified teacher to every ten non-maintained settings. The Sure Start Unit is, therefore, providing the Teacher Training Agency with additional funding to expand the number of primary training places with an early years' specialism. We are also funding local authorities to ensure that all Foundation Stage practitioners, including early years' teachers, receive an average of four days training and development a year.

Education (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many free books have been provided for pre-school children in York. [188945]

Margaret Hodge: We do not hold details on the number of free books made available in York. The Sure Start Unit are funding the Bookstart scheme for the year 2004–05 to deliver a bag with two baby books to every six to nine month old baby in England. The pack also includes a booklet explaining how and why it is important to share books with young children, a booklist and an invitation to join the library. On 12 July the Chancellor announced an extension to this scheme to give packs to children at 18 months and three years old. This is in addition to children's access to books through local libraries.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will propose changes to the education maintenance allowance regulations to allow pupils who by the time they are 15 years old have successfully completed their GCSEs to qualify for education maintenance allowances while continuing their A level education. [188322]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have received a number of representations on this subject. Allowing younger students who have completed their GCSEs to receive EMA is an option we are looking at for future years. In my view there are arguments both for and against such an extension, and I will want to take views from stakeholders in coming to a decision.

Educational Courses

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to increase the opportunities for older people to take educational courses which do not lead to a qualification. [188548]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Our plans were set out in the White Paper "21st Century Skills; Realising Our Potential" published in July 2003. We are committed to safeguarding a wide range of opportunities for which do not lead to a qualification, including for older people. This is why we have agreed a budget with the Learning and Skills Council of £207.4 million in 2004–05 for adult and community learning secured through local education authorities, compared with £206 million in 2003–04. Over half (51 per cent.) of learners on these courses are aged 55 or over.

English Domiciled Students

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of English domiciled students in secondary education aged 18 years from each local education authority were accepted through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service to full-time undergraduate courses in each year since 1994–95 for *(a)* each local education authority and *(b)* each region. [189478]

Dr. Howells: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and covers 18 year old applicants accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HMD courses.

The participation rates calculated are based upon all 18 year olds, not just those who have been in secondary education. The population numbers are estimates and can be volatile from year to year, hence participation rates should be used only as a guide to the long term trend in participation in a particular area.

Tables containing the figures have been placed in the House Libraries.

Higher Education (Manchester)

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students whose home address is in the City of Manchester went into higher education in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2004–05. [189458]

Dr. Howells: The available information from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) covers applicants accepted to full-time undergraduate courses at UK institutions. The latest figures are for entry in 2003.

Applicants domiciled in Manchester LEA, accepted through UCAS to full-time undergraduate courses at UK institutions

Year of entry	*Accepted applicants*
2001	2,074
2002	2,214
2003	2,414

Source:
UCAS

Mathematics

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what content has been removed from the course of study required for mathematics at *(a)* GCSE level and *(b)* A level under each examination board since 2001. [189355]

Mr. Charles Clarke: No content has been removed from the programme of study for maths at GCSE. Following a consultation with maths subject associations and schools, in autumn 2002, there was

some alteration to the GCE criteria for the AS Level. Some of the larger topics were moved to A2 (the second year of study for A level) because the consultation revealed that the AS Level was overloaded with content. Maths at AS Level and at A Level remains a rigorous and challenging subject. The changes have been widely welcomed by the maths community.

Minimum Funding Guarantee

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether it is his policy that a minimum funding guarantee overrides existing fair funding formulae, and if he will make a statement on the Audit Commission's observation to that effect on page 11 of its publication Education Funding; [189270]

(2) what representations the Department has received from *(a)* local education authorities and *(b)* their representative bodies concerning the effect of the minimum funding guarantee on agreed local authority formulae for distributing funds to schools; [189277]

(3) if he will make a statement on the finding of the Audit Commission study that showed that councils have suspended changes to their formula because they are unclear about the Government's intentions with regard to the minimum funding guarantee. [189314]

Mr. Miliband: The minimum funding guarantee that was introduced in 2004–05 has brought stability and certainty to schools budgets. It was considered appropriate to put in place such stability given the funding difficulties experienced by some schools in 2003–04. As a result of the introduction of the minimum funding guarantee two thirds of schools nationally received an increase above the level of the minimum guarantee while the remaining third of schools received a per pupil increase in funding in line with the guarantee.

The proposals for the minimum funding guarantee (including specifically provisions for exclusions, special cases and small schools) were developed in close consultation with our national partners, including representatives of local authorities and Chief Education Officers. Provision was made in the regulations to enable local education authorities to apply to the Secretary of State to amend the operation of the minimum funding guarantee where there was a clear anomaly in the outcome for individual schools or groups of schools.

Changes to a local education authority's funding formulae are matters for local discretion provided that they operate within the framework of the regulations. While the Audit Commission reports that some councils have suspended proposed changes to their funding formula, the survey was based on a sample of LEAs and was carried out before the start of the financial year 2004–05. Evidence from other authorities shows that there is no inherent need to suspend changes to formulae as a result of the minimum funding guarantee. Some authorities, in fact, have used the guarantee to provide transitional protection to ensure that such changes are phased in appropriately to ensure stability in school budgets.

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what approaches have been made by Sefton local education authority to his Department seeking to amend Sefton's formula for the distribution of school funding in the last three years; [189313]

(2) whether he has objected to proposals from Sefton local education authority to change their formula for the distribution of funds to schools in the last four years; and if he will make a statement. [189271]

Mr. Miliband: Under regulation 28 of the Financing of Maintained Schools Regulations, the Secretary of State has power to approve 'additional arrangements' whereby the normal national rules for school funding formulae are set aside in favour of a purpose-built local solution, in circumstances where significantly anomalous results would result from the application of the national rules.

During the period in question, Sefton local education authority made one application to the Secretary of State for an additional arrangement under regulation 28, in relation to the application of the minimum funding guarantee during the 2004–05 financial year. This application was turned down because it paid insufficient regard to the impact of the minimum funding guarantee on individual schools. The authority was invited to put forward an amended application, but did not do so.

Nurseries

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* announced and *(b)* unannounced inspections of nurseries took place in each of the last five years; [189405]

(2) how many nurseries were de-registered by Ofsted in each of the last five years; [189406]

(3) how many complaints about child care providers Ofsted has received in each of the last five years. [189465]

Margaret Hodge: These are matters for the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) and I have asked HM Chief Inspector for Schools, David Bell, to write to the hon. Gentleman and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* nurseries and *(b)* nursery places have been closed in each of the last five years; [189407]

(2) how many registered nurseries there were in each of the last five years, broken down by those *(a)* publicly provided, *(b)* privately provided and *(c)* provided by the voluntary sector. [189404]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested. The available information on the numbers of day nurseries (or full day care providers) and the number of available nursery places in England is shown in the tables.

With the introduction of the National Day Care Standards and the transfer of responsibilities for registration and inspection to Ofsted, childcare providers are now classified according to whether they are full day care, sessional day care, childminder, out of school day care or creche day care places. Previously, childcare providers were classified according to whether

they were day nurseries, playgroups and pre-schools, childminders, out of school clubs or holiday schemes. Therefore, figures for 2003 and 2004 are not directly comparable with figures for earlier years because they are collected on a different basis.

The latest statistics on the number of full day care providers registered in England were published on 22 July 2004 in a report by Ofsted "Registered Childcare Providers and Places in England, 30 June 2004". The report is available on the Ofsted web-site, www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications.

Number of day nurseries and places[1] in England 1999 to 2001

Position as at March 31	*Number of day nurseries[2]*	*Number of places in day nurseries[2]*
2002	[3]	[3]
2001	7,800	285,100
2000	7,500	264,200
1999	7,000	247,700

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.

[2] Figures derived from local authority estimates reported on the Day Care Facilities Survey.

[3] Information not available.

Number of registered full day care providers and places[1] in England 2003–04

Position as at March 31	*Number of registered full day care providers[2]*	*Number of places in registered full day care providers[2]*
2004	11,000	456,300
2003	9,600	381,600

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.

[2] Data supplied by Ofsted.

The Department does not collect information on the ownership and management of full day care providers on a regular basis. However, according to the Childcare and Early Years Workforce Survey for 2002–03 there were around three quarters of full day care providers who were privately-owned and one in ten who were being run by a voluntary, church or community group in England in 2003. The remainder were run by either the local authority, school/college or by some other form of provider. The figures from this Survey were published in a report by Sure Start in May 2004 "2002–03 Childcare and Early Years Workforce Survey: Day Nurseries and other Full-day Care provision". The report is available on the Sure Start web-site, www.surestart/ensurequality/research/earlyyears/workforce/.

Pre-school Education

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Government's policy is on implementing the recommendations of the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education project; and if he will make a statement. [187366]

Margaret Hodge: The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) project was commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills in 1997 to provide evidence on which the Government could base their development of good quality early years services. The project has already produced a number of significant findings which have informed or supported policy. These include:

- early education produces better effects in small bursts over a long period. This confirms the benefits of our offer of a free part-time early education place for all three and four-year-olds;
- the effects of early years provision are greatest and most sustained for disadvantaged children, hence our focus on targeted improvement of services through Sure Start Local Programmes, Children's Centres and other initiatives. Children's Centres will cover all the 20 per cent. most deprived wards by 2008;
- an early start at pre-school (under three years) was linked with better intellectual attainment and children having better relationships with other children (peer sociability) at age three years. We have also recently announced that we will pilot early education for 12,000 disadvantaged two-year-olds;
- integrated services produce better cognitive outcomes for children, and we are now building on the lessons of Early Excellence Centres and Sure Start Local Programmes, in our multi agency Children's Centres, and in extended schools;
- qualified teacher involvement is important to improved outcomes, and we now require teacher input as part of the Children's Centre core offer, and
- the home environment and parents have a major impact on children's development, and early years services are more effective when working closely with parents. There is a strong emphasis on parental involvement in Sure Start programmes.

Protection of Children Act

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many names are on the Protection of Children Act list; and how many names have been added in each month since its inception. [187110]

Margaret Hodge: As of 22 September 2004, there are a total of 1,072 individuals confirmed on the Protection of Children Act List. Under the Protection of Children Act 1999 an individual can be provisionally included on the list until sufficient information has been gathered which enables a final decision. A breakdown of the number of individuals added to the List, following their period of provisional inclusion, in each of the last 12 months is shown in the following table. This information was not routinely collected before July 2003.

Month	*Number of cases*
July 2003	8
August 2003	5
September 2003	0
October 2003	0
November 2003	5
December 2003	4
January 2004	5
February 2004	24
March 2004	9
April 2004	0

Month	Number of cases
May 2004	8
June 2004	15
July 2004	17
Aug 2004	6
Sept 2004	2

Pupil Exclusions

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary pupils on average were (i) permanently excluded from school and (ii) unable to access a place in school in each of the last five years in (A) Greater London, (B) each London local education authority and (C) England. [189476]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Requested information on the number and percentage of excluded pupils is given in the tables.

We do not hold information centrally on the numbers of excluded pupils unable to access a place in school. However, from September 2002 all local education authorities (LEAs) have been committed to providing suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixteenth day of their exclusion. Since then all but a handful of LEAs have met this commitment. Currently only two LEAs are not meeting it and the Department is working with them to help them achieve it.

Maintained primary schools[1]: Number and percentage of permanently excluded pupils by Local Education Authority area 1998/99 to 2002/03 (provisional)[2]

		1998/99		1999/2000		2000/01		2001/02		2002/03[p]	
		Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]
	England	1,370	0.03	1,230	0.03	1,440	0.03	1,450	0.03	1,300	0.03
	London	250	0.04	170	0.03	200	0.03	210	0.03	180	0.03
	Inner London	110	0.05	80	0.03	80	0.04	80	0.03	60	0.03
202	Camden	*	0.03	*	0.02	10	0.09	*	0.02	10	0.07
201	City of London	0	0.00	*	0.45	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
204	Hackney	10	0.07	10	0.03	10	0.05	10	0.05	10	0.03
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	*	0.04	*	0.04	10	0.07	*	0.02	0	0.00
309	Haringey	10	0.05	10	0.03	*	0.01	10	0.02	*	0.01
206	Islington	10	0.05	*	0.01	0	0.00	0	0.00	*	0.01
207	Kensington and Chelsea	10	0.10	10	0.07	*	0.04	*	0.04	0	0.00
208	Lambeth	10	0.05	10	0.06	10	0.05	10	0.05	10	0.05
209	Lewisham	10	0.06	20	0.07	10	0.05	10	0.06	10	0.04
316	Newham	10	0.05	10	0.03	10	0.03	10	0.04	10	0.02
210	Southwark	10	0.05	10	0.03	20	0.06	10	0.06	10	0.05
211	Tower Hamlets	*	0.00	*	0.00	*	0.00	*	0.00	*	0.00
212	Wandsworth	10	0.06	10	0.03	*	0.02	10	0.05	*	0.01
213	Westminster	*	0.02	*	0.02	*	0.02	*	0.01	10	0.05
	Outer London	140	0.03	90	0.02	120	0.03	130	0.03	120	0.03
301	Barking and Dagenham	10	0.07	10	0.04	10	0.05	10	0.05	*	0.02
302	Barnet	10	0.02	10	0.02	*	0.02	*	0.01	10	0.02
303	Bexley	20	0.08	10	0.02	20	0.07	10	0.05	10	0.06
304	Brent	10	0.03	10	0.04	10	0.02	*	0.01	*	0.02
305	Bromley	10	0.02	*	0.01	10	0.03	10	0.02	10	0.04
306	Croydon	20	0.05	10	0.02	20	0.05	30	0.08	20	0.07
307	Ealing	10	0.02	*	0.01	*	0.01	*	0.01	10	0.02
308	Enfield	10	0.02	*	0.01	10	0.02	10	0.02	10	0.02
203	Greenwich	20	0.08	10	0.03	10	0.05	20	0.09	10	0.03
310	Harrow	10	0.04	10	0.02	10	0.05	10	0.03	10	0.06
311	Havering	*	0.01	n	0.00	*	0.01	*	0.01	*	0.01
312	Hillingdon	*	0.02	*	0.02	20	0.06	10	0.03	10	0.03
313	Hounslow	*	0.02	10	0.04	*	0.02	10	0.04	*	0.02
314	Kingston upon Thames	*	0.01	*	0.01	*	0.01	*	0.01	*	0.01
315	Merton	10	0.03	10	0.04	*	0.03	*	0.02	0	0.00
317	Redbridge	10	0.03	*	0.02	*	0.01	*	0.01	10	0.03
318	Richmond upon Thames	*	0.01	*	0.01	*	0.01	*	0.02	*	0.02
319	Sutton	10	0.05	0	0.00	*	0.01	*	0.01	0	0.00
320	Waltham Forest	10	0.04	10	0.05	0	0.00	10	0.03	*	0.02

Maintained primary schools[1]: Number and percentage of permanently excluded pupils by Local Education Authority area 1998/99 to 2002/03 (provisional)[2]

		1998/99		1999/2000		2000/01		2001/02		2002/03[p]	
		Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]
	England	8,640	0.28	6,710	0.21	7,310	0.23	7,[illegible]	[illegible]4	7,690	0.23
	London	1,470	0.38	1,070	0.27	1,200	0.29	1,20[illegible]	0.29	1,260	0.30
	Inner London	500	0.41	410	0.33	430	0.34	390	0.30	390	0.30
202	Camden	20	0.22	20	0.15	20	0.20	20	0.22	20	0.23
201	City of London	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
204	Hackney	20	0.24	20	0.28	20	0.27	20	0.26	20	0.25

Maintained primary schools[1]: Number and percentage of permanently excluded pupils by Local Education Authority area 1998/99 to 2002/03 (provisional)[2]

		1998/99		1999/2000		2000/01		2001/02		2002/03(p)	
		Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]	Number	%[3]
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	40	0.68	20	0.25	30	0.46	30	0.47	30	0.44
309	Haringey	30	0.28	20	0.16	30	0.25	30	0.24	30	0.27
206	Islington	30	0.37	20	0.24	20	0.25	10	0.16	20	0.22
207	Kensington and Chelsea	20	0.57	20	0.53	10	0.35	10	0.25	20	0.42
208	Lambeth	30	0.39	20	0.22	20	0.33	30	0.40	20	0.30
209	Lewisham	50	0.43	50	0.45	70	0.60	50	0.44	30	0.29
316	Newham	40	0.24	30	0.15	30	0.16	40	0.21	60	0.31
210	Southwark	90	0.98	60	0.59	50	0.44	30	0.29	30	0.30
211	Tower Hamlets	30	0.20	30	0.22	40	0.31	40	0.26	40	0.29
212	Wandsworth	60	0.63	80	0.84	60	0.58	50	0.49	40	0.36
213	Westminster	40	0.49	40	0.46	30	0.34	30	0.32	30	0.36
	Outer London	970	0.37	660	0.24	770	0.27	810	0.29	870	0.30
301	Barking and Dagenham	30	0.24	20	0.22	10	0.09	10	0.12	30	0.22
302	Barnet	40	0.18	50	0.24	50	0.24	50	0.24	40	0.20
303	Bexley	40	0.26	20	0.13	60	0.33	50	0.25	60	0.32
304	Brent	70	0.49	50	0.33	40	0.28	30	0.23	50	0.31
305	Bromley	80	0.39	20	0.12	50	0.25	80	0.37	70	0.30
306	Croydon	110	0.67	80	0.45	100	0.58	110	0.62	100	0.54
307	Ealing	70	0.47	20	0.16	30	0.19	60	0.38	50	0.33
308	Enfield	70	0.36	70	0.34	70	0.32	60	0.31	50	0.22
203	Greenwich	60	0.44	40	0.26	30	0.20	30	0.22	40	0.29
310	Harrow	30	0.40	30	0.39	60	0.65	60	0.70	60	0.62
311	Havering	40	0.26	30	0.21	30	0.19	40	0.26	30	0.20
312	Hillingdon	60	0.39	40	0.24	50	0.28	40	0.21	40	0.24
313	Hounslow	60	0.39	40	0.27	40	0.25	50	0.31	70	0.43
314	Kingston upon Thames	20	0.29	20	0.18	10	0.08	*	0.02	*	0.04
315	Merton	20	0.25	20	0.21	30	0.35	20	0.24	40	0.41
317	Redbridge	30	0.19	20	0.12	20	0.12	30	0.16	60	0.30
318	Richmond upon Thames	40	0.57	20	0.32	30	0.40	30	0.34	50	0.64
319	Sutton	30	0.22	20	0.14	20	0.16	30	0.23	10	0.09
320	Waltham Forest	70	0.60	40	0.30	50	0.36	20	0.18	30	0.23

(p) = provisional.
n/a = Not applicable.
* = less than 5.

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. There may be discrepancies between the sum of constituent items and the totals as shown.
[3] The number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the number (headcount) of pupils, excluding dually registered pupils.
[4] Before local government reorganisation.
[5] After local government reorganisation.

Source:
Annual Schools Census.

School Furniture

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received in favour of commissioning research into the possible relationship between back pain and school furniture as the part of its plan to refurbish every secondary school in the next 15 years; and what plans he has to commission such research. [188669]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: There has been no formal representation made to the Department since the announcement of the Building Schools for the Future programme regarding a possible relationship between back pain and school furniture. However, informal discussions have been held with the National Back Pain Association in the recent past and we are aware of that organisation's concerns in this regard. The Department has no plans to commission research on this issue but is developing an ergonomic website which will allow teachers and building professionals to determine the correct size of furniture for a particular pupil, supported by child size data gathered recently by a survey jointly funded by the Department.

Special Schools

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will issue guidance that pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties should not be sent to moderate learning difficulties special schools. [189049]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice gives guidance to local education authorities on carrying out their statutory duties for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with special educational needs, including those who have behaviour, social and emotional needs. The Code of Practice makes clear that local education authorities must make decisions about the placement of children with statements of SEN on an individual basis, taking account of parental preference.

Stable Families

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to promote stable families. [186975]

Margaret Hodge: We believe that all children deserve the chance to grow up in a stable loving family, and we

are increasing the support available to families who want it. We know that poverty places great stress on families and can be a major contributing factor to family breakdown. There are around 500,000 fewer children living in relative poverty than there were in 1997, and there have been significant increases in child benefit, and more generous support through new tax credits. We have also introduced the biggest ever package of legal changes to help working parents balance work and family, including the right to request flexible working—for fathers, as well as mothers and over one million people are now taking this up.

The Every Child Matters Green Paper put supporting parents and carers at the heart of our approach to ensure that every child reaches their full potential in life. Through the development of Sure Start, Children's Centres and Extended Schools we are now bringing together support for all children and families in a more integrated way. We are expanding the Children's Centre programme to create 2500 centres by 2008.

Every Child Matters also highlighted the role of relationship counselling and family mediation services. Current arrangements are being amalgamated to form a new Strengthening Families Grant programme to fund voluntary and community sector organisations providing relationship support. A family focused, single grant programme will help to promote stable families. However, the Government recognises that some relationships will inevitably break down and the recently published Parental Separation: "Children's Needs and Parents' Responsibilities" Green Paper details a range of measures to provide more effective support to families in relation to contact and residence after divorce and separation.

Although Governments cannot create stable families, we believe that these—and other—measures are playing a valuable role in supporting families.

Sure Start (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been allocated to the Tamworth constituency under the Sure Start scheme since its inception. [188113]

Margaret Hodge: Sure Start Tamworth is a round four Sure Start programme. It has an indicative capital allocation of £1,000,000. Its revenue allocation is £599,000 for 2003–04 and £613,975 for 2004–05.

Under the neighbourhood nurseries scheme, the Manna House Neighbourhood Nursery in Tamworth received £151,200 revenue grant and £58,780 NOF funding for capital.

Teacher Recruitment

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new teachers were recruited in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2003. [189522]

Mr. Miliband: The number of new recruits to initial teacher training in England in those years was as follows:

Academic year	*Recruits*[1]
1997/98	27,810
2000/01	29,510
2003/04	41,090

[1] Includes conventional (PGCE/BEd) and employment-based training routes.
Source:
Teacher Training Agency

The numbers of teachers taking up posts for the first time in maintained schools in England in the 1997–98 and 2000–01 financial years were as follows. Data for 2003–04 are not yet available:

Financial Year	*New entrants to teaching*[1]
1997/98	27,420
2000/01	28,150

[1] 10–20 per cent. of part-time teachers may not be included in the data.
Source:
Database of Teacher Records.

Teacher Salaries

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average total salary was in each year since 1997 of *(a)* a primary school teacher and *(b)* a secondary school teacher in (i) Greater London, (ii) each London local education authority and (iii) England. [189477]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the average total salary for full-time regular qualified teachers in the maintained nursery and primary and secondary sectors in each London local education authority, Greater London and England in each year from 1997. 2002 is the most recent information available. The figures include all allowances and cover all grades.

Nursery and Primary Schools

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
City of London	24,960	24,290	25,950	25,900	27,780	29,540
Camden	24,640	25,590	26,810	27,820	29,760	31,920
Greenwich	24,510	25,110	26,200	27,250	28,550	31,190
Hackney	23,950	26,310	26,580	27,580	26,990	30,910
Hammersmith	23,620	24,170	25,060	26,440	28,190	30,220
Islington	24,400	24,770	25,860	26,970	28,710	30,360
Kensington and Chelsea	25,850	27,400	29,620	30,840	33,440	n/a
Lambeth	24,400	24,010	26,560	27,210	27,610	29,770
Lewisham	24,610	25,380	26,580	27,440	29,360	31,780
Southwark	24,340	24,850	25,860	27,230	29,050	31,330
Tower Hamlets	25,870	25,560	26,440	27,590	29,200	31,850

Nursery and Primary Schools

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Wandsworth	24,190	24,840	25,650	26,540	28,270	30,280
Westminster	24,230	24,960	25,490	26,680	28,100	30,370
Barking	23,370	24,150	25,240	26,010	28,100	30,820
Barnet	22,930	23,680	24,610	25,640	27,460	29,140
Bexley	22,600	23,430	24,270	25,000	26,520	28,400
Brent	25,070	25,360	26,300	27,410	29,480	31,970
Bromley	23,470	24,130	25,090	26,080	27,710	29,520
Croydon	22,830	23,570	24,440	25,520	28,330	30,400
Ealing	23,530	24,260	25,300	26,110	27,880	30,140
Enfield	23,250	23,870	24,820	25,710	27,280	29,680
Haringey	24,330	24,880	25,820	26,720	28,550	30,780
Harrow	23,650	24,090	25,060	25,960	27,750	29,600
Havering	22,740	23,590	24,610	25,810	27,500	29,410
Hillingdon	22,400	23,050	24,110	24,800	26,410	28,740
Hounslow	22,790	23,570	24,690	25,620	27,230	29,090
Kingston upon Thames	23,020	23,590	24,540	25,420	26,480	29,920
Merton	24,140	24,670	25,640	26,640	28,100	30,000
Newham	23,430	24,280	25,080	26,120	27,700	30,390
Redbridge	22,820	23,480	24,220	25,210	27,270	29,030
Richmond upon Thames	22,870	23,710	24,740	25,450	26,950	28,730
Sutton	22,740	23,270	24,370	25,360	27,060	29,430
Waltham Forest	23,300	23,970	24,920	26,030	28,090	30,370
Greater London	23,670	24,310	25,320	26,280	27,950	30,170
England	22,090	22,700	23,580	24,550	26,190	27,580

Secondary schools

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
City of London	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Camden	26,210	27,260	28,530	29,690	31,750	34,260
Greenwich	25,780	26,410	27,180	28,200	29,600	32,580
Hackney	25,310	28,100	28,320	29,370	29,040	32,350
Hammersmith	26,610	27,540	28,690	29,900	32,570	35,170
Islington	25,320	26,220	27,800	28,780	30,490	32,730
Kensington and Chelsea	27,590	28,750	29,880	30,810	33,580	33,600
Lambeth	25,920	26,040	28,350	29,210	30,160	33,470
Lewisham	26,800	27,070	28,400	29,380	31,390	34,010
Southwark	26,300	27,010	27,860	29,580	31,820	34,920
Tower Hamlets	26,980	26,970	28,000	29,090	30,820	34,430
Wandsworth	25,880	26,540	27,370	28,200	30,590	32,950
Westminster	25,550	26,060	27,000	28,210	29,370	32,600
Barking	24,820	25,560	26,740	27,750	30,390	32,820
Barnet	24,300	25,060	26,060	27,090	29,240	31,090
Bexley	24,500	25,100	25,890	26,740	28,610	30,580
Brent	26,300	26,980	27,860	28,920	n/a	n/a
Bromley	24,480	25,190	26,100	27,160	29,100	31,160
Croydon	24,700	25,160	26,260	27,500	28,860	32,410
Ealing	24,840	25,580	26,480	27,670	29,820	32,390
Enfield	24,700	25,230	26,290	27,430	29,470	n/a
Haringey	25,500	26,280	27,190	28,490	31,010	33,170
Harrow	24,980	25,600	26,550	27,640	29,890	32,460
Havering	24,890	25,600	26,610	27,730	30,190	32,590
Hillingdon	24,650	25,310	26,450	27,330	29,460	31,750
Hounslow	23,960	24,840	25,870	27,100	28,880	31,110
Kingston upon Thames	24,800	25,310	26,350	27,300	n/a	31,380
Merton	25,690	26,190	27,070	28,140	30,730	33,050
Newham	25,000	25,660	26,800	28,020	30,280	32,990
Redbridge	24,650	25,410	26,350	27,380	29,880	31,820
Richmond upon Thames	24,220	24,940	25,990	27,310	29,580	31,230
Sutton	24,450	25,200	26,210	27,040	28,550	31,130
Waltham Forest	24,630	25,280	26,460	27,560	29,790	32,090
Greater London	25,150	25,840	26,870	27,950	29,930	32,430
England	23,510	24,170	25,080	26,010	28,000	29,530

n/a = Not available.

Source:

Database of Teachers' Records (DTR).

University Bursaries

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support from university bursary schemes has been proposed for students from families with joint incomes above *(a)* £22,500 and *(b)* £33,533; which universities offer such support; and if he will estimate (i) the number of students likely to be helped and (ii) the total value of such help in the next three years. [189078]

Dr. Howells: The level of bursary and other financial support and the criteria for eligibility, will be a matter for the universities themselves to decide how to implement and operate, subject to approval by the Director of Fair Access to Higher Education. We expect institutions that wish to charge higher fees from 2006 to draw up their access plans, including details of bursary and other financial support, this autumn.

I have also commissioned Sir Alan Langlands to oversee a report on how the public sector and the professions can sustain and improve recruitment opportunities for graduates, especially those who do not qualify for the full £3,000 support.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

High Hedges

Mr. Wood: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will issue guidance to local authorities in respect of provisions to address problems with high hedges contained in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. [189504]

Phil Hope: Draft guidance to local authorities on dealing with complaints about high hedges under the provisions in Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 was issued for public consultation on 29 March. The consultation closed on 30 June and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is now finalising the guidance and other operational details before bringing this Part of the Act into effect. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects this will be towards the end of 2004.

Town Centre Regeneration

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how much has been given in grants to redevelop town centres in the last 12 months; [189227]

(2) if he will make a statement on funding for regeneration of town centres. [189235]

Keith Hill: This Government are fully committed to ensuring the regeneration of our town and city centres. It is a vital element in meeting a wide range of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's objectives, including the development of sustainable communities.

There are no statistics held centrally as to how much has been given in grants to redevelop town centres. This could be provided only at disproportionate cost. While it is not clear as to the exact proportion that is spent on town centres specifically, in the current financial year (2004–05) nearly £3.27 billion of Government funding has been allocated to regeneration programmes of all kinds. This is due to increase to £3.55 billion in 2005–06.

Funding for town and city centre regeneration can be secured from a wide range of different sources, and is being carried out through partnership working across central and local government, regeneration agencies and local stakeholders. The nature of local economic growth and the development of town and city centres requires local authorities to determine local policies which meet the specific needs of their area. To do so they need to develop their own strategies and prioritise resources, which will vary in each case.

Funding for the regeneration of town and city centres can be secured from sources including the Single Regeneration Budget, European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund, the lottery, New Deal for Communities, Regional Development Agencies, English Partnerships, Urban Regeneration Companies, local government, Business Improvement Districts, section 106 agreements, and private sector funding.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on future plans for the regeneration of *(a)* the London borough of Havering and *(b)* Romford town centre. [189228]

Phil Hope: Government plans for Havering include an investment of £6 million to improve the public transport interchange at Rainham station through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Thames Gateway Programme. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is also supporting the opening up of Rainham Marshes, providing £2 million to enable the public to have improved access to the Marshes.

Future plans include proposals for Havering Riverside, which is identified as a major location for growth in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's "Creating Sustainable Communities" (published July 2003) and is an Opportunity Area in the London Plan. The regeneration strategy will be taken forward by the Mayor, the London Borough of Havering and the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation through the East London sub-regional development framework.

The London Plan sets the framework for the scale of growth of Romford within London and the east London sub-region. The Mayor of London's sub regional development framework, currently in preparation, will also address the issue of regeneration in Romford. However, the main vehicle for bringing forward detailed proposals is the review of the Unitary Development Plan.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the implications for revitalising town and city centres of the Government's plans to build more new and affordable homes. [189229]

Keith Hill: No specific assessment has been made of the implications for revitalising town and city centres of the Government's plans to build more new and affordable homes.

However, there is considerable evidence of urban renaissance in towns and cities across the country, and much of this recent investment has included residential development.

Major mixed use developments like the new Bull Ring in Birmingham, and investment in new or improved civic squares, high quality architecture like the Lowry Centre in Salford, the Urbis Building in Manchester, the Winter Gardens in Sheffield and the Newcastle-Gateshead Millennium Bridge, have played a key role in encouraging population growth in town and city centres.

For example, Manchester's city centre population rose from under 1,000 in 1991 to over 15,000 today. Liverpool's has increased from 2,300 to more than 9,000 over the same period. Birmingham, Leeds and Bristol have experienced similar growth.

In short, revitalising town and city centres is a vital element in delivering the government's housing plans.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan on town centres which are not included in the Plan, with particular reference to Romford. [189231]

Phil Hope: "Sustainable Communities: building for the future" is a policy document, which identifies growth areas, including Thames Gateway, but also refers to growth across London. Proposals in "Sustainable Communities" have to be tested through the normal regional and local plan making process, and any specific proposals for development would be the subject of planning applications. The impact of the proposals, including any impact on nearby town centres, would be considered through these processes.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on regeneration of town centres in London. [189232]

Keith Hill: Government policy, set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 (Town Centres and Retail Development) seeks to encourage regeneration of town centres.

Within London, policy on the regeneration of town centres is principally a matter for the Mayor of London and the London boroughs. The London Plan sets out the general policy of promoting the strategic importance of London's town centres in accommodating economic growth, meeting the needs of Londoners and improving the sustainability of London's development. It also seeks to ensure that there is a robust strategy for each town centre taking account of the relationship with nearby centres. The local development frameworks to be prepared by the London boroughs will ensure that there is full community involvement in the development of regeneration proposals and are intended to promote a positive approach to managing development.

Brownfield/Greenfield Land

Llew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his estimate is of the area of *(a)* brownfield land and *(b)* greenfield land that will be used to deliver his Department's household projections in England by 2021 published on 8 September. [189340]

Keith Hill: The Government do not make estimates of land required to deliver household projections as it is the responsibility of Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities to consider the amount of land needed for housing. However, the Government are committed to maximising the re-use of brownfield land. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister set a target that by 2008, 60 per cent. of additional housing should be provided on previously-developed land and through conversions of existing buildings. In 2002 the actual proportion was 66 per cent.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Regional Planning Bodies to prepare statutory Regional Spatial Strategies, replacing existing Regional Planning Guidance. These strategies will be required to identify the amount and distribution of housing in each region having regard to the Government's latest published household projections and national planning policy for housing as set out in PPG3. They will also need to consider other factors including the needs of the regional economy, environmental implications and the capacity of urban areas and existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate new housing.

Where the amount and location of previously-developed land varies across regions, Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities are expected to work together to focus new housing in areas where previously-developed land is available in preference to developing greenfield sites. They should set out in their Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks targets for land recycling which contribute to the national target.

Castle Point Borough Council

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the objectives are of the head official from his Department who has been placed with Castle Point borough council. [189467]

Mr. Raynsford: The objectives of the lead official who has been appointed to Castle Point borough council are to advise Ministers on the capability and capacity of the council to achieve sustained recovery following their assessment as 'poor' under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and to monitor the implementation of the authority's recovery plan.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many hours per week will be spent in Castle Point borough council by the head official from his Department *(a)* within the council and *(b)* on the council's business. [189468]

Mr. Raynsford: The lead official has no fixed number of hours per week to work with Castle Point borough council, but will spend such time as is necessary to form a view on the council's prospects for recovery and to monitor its rate of progress. This will include time spent at the council's offices in discussion with members and officers.

Civil Service (Job Losses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which services within his Office will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the Civil Service announced in the Spending Review. [189631]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Member for Brent, South (Paul Boateng) on 16 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1659W.

Compulsory Purchase Orders

Mr. Wood: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many compulsory purchase orders have been *(a)* initiated, *(b)* successfully completed and *(c)* completed at the initial price in the last two years; and what the most common obstacles for completion of such orders are. [189494]

Keith Hill: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Failing Councils

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria he considers in deciding whether to place a district or borough council which is judged as failing under administrative control; and if he will list the councils where this *(a)* has taken place and *(b)* is under consideration. [189353]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government's powers to intervene in the manner in which a local authority exercises its functions are set out in section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999 and may be used where the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is satisfied that the authority in question is failing to meet its statutory duty to achieve best value, as set out at section 3 of the same Act.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has so far used these powers on two occasions; in respect of the London Borough of Hackney, in 2001; and in respect of Kingston-upon-Hull council, in 2003.

Market Towns

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many visits he has made to market towns over the past 12 months. [189234]

Phil Hope: In the last twelve months my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has visited a number of market towns on departmental business including market Warsop, Bingley, Kendal and Harrogate.

Millennium Dome

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people are employed on the Millennium Dome project; and what the total wage bill is for this financial year. [189312]

Keith Hill: English Partnerships (EP) currently employs seven members of staff at the Millennium Dome, at an annual salary cost of £225,756. This does not include those other EP corporate staff who may spend part of their time dealing with Dome-related matters as part of normal business, but who are not employed exclusively in relation to the Dome or the Greenwich Peninsula.

Parish Boundaries

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to ensure that *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* parish councils are obliged to inform landowners of proposed changes to parish boundaries which might affect the prospect of housing development on their land. [189530]

Mr. Raynsford: Procedures to be followed by local authorities when consulting on reviews of parish arrangements in their area including any proposed changes to parish boundaries are contained in the Local Government and Rating Act 1997.

Local authorities are under statutory obligation to secure that persons who may be interested in proposals to change parish boundaries are informed of reviews and recommendations. This may include advertising in the local press, notices in local libraries and, particularly in smaller areas, an individual notification to affected households. In areas that are already parished it may be appropriate to call a parish meeting to consider proposals to change parish boundaries.

Planning Guidance (Rural Areas)

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effects of planning guidance on *(a)* B1 and *(b)* B8 categories in rural areas; and what plans he has to issue further guidance on these categories. [189379]

Keith Hill: No specific assessment of this kind has been made. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister commissioned a wider study into planning for economic development. The report of this study, which we published in May 2004, will help inform the review of national planning policy guidance, including Planning Policy Guidance note 4, "Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms".

In August 2004 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7), "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas". PPS7 makes clear that local planning authorities should plan for and support a range of economic activity in rural areas, subject to sustainability considerations and with most new development being focused on existing towns and villages.

Copies of PPS7 and the research report, "Planning for Economic Development" are available in the Library of the House.

Rossendale Council (Asset Sales)

Janet Anderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department has had discussions with Rossendale borough council about the possible sale of the site of the former civic hall in Whitworth. [188492]

Phil Hope: Within the context of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's monitoring the council's overall performance, the topic of asset management is periodically discussed with the council. However decisions concerning asset sales are taken solely by the council.

Janet Anderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list requirements made by his Department of Rossendale borough council in respect of asset sales. [188493]

Phil Hope: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has no requirements of Rossendale borough council (RBC) in relation to asset sales other than those generally required by law. Like all local authorities, RBC is expected to submit its asset management plan to its regional Government office for assessment, with the aim of reaching a "Good" standard. As a council categorised as poor under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment regime, RBC is also required to agree an Improvement Plan with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, against which its performance is regularly monitored.

Smoke Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his policy is on encouraging further take-up of smoke alarms in domestic properties; and if he will make a statement. [189309]

Mr. Raynsford: Most fire and rescue services already undertake work to encourage and publicise fire prevention, including installing smoke alarms for vulnerable households. Smoke alarm ownership in the home has increased from nine per cent. in 1987 to the current level of 80 per cent.

The National Fire and Rescue Framework sets out the Government's objectives to increase smoke alarm ownership. Fire and rescue services are encouraged to implement smoke alarm installation programmes, targeting those at most risk by offering fire safety advice to householders and supplying and fitting smoke alarms free of charge where a dwelling has none. To underpin this work, a key feature of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, is the new duty on all fire and rescue services to promote fire safety in their area.

The Government will continue to promote smoke alarm ownership through a series of national community fire safety campaigns.

Supporting People Programme

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 7 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1172W, on the Supporting People programme, what *(a)* monitoring and *(b)* research he has conducted on the operation of the Supporting People programme in the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [189118]

Keith Hill: The Supporting People programme has been in operation since 1 April 2003. Since this time, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has undertaken—and continues to undertake—comprehensive monitoring and research of its operation to enable the Government to better understand the programme and to ensure that it is meeting the housing related support needs of vulnerable people. This includes:

(a) continuing and regular monitoring of the effectiveness of the Supporting People programme on a variety of information including progress with reviews, contracting and the operation of the Commissioning Body. Data are collected from Administering Authorities on a quarterly basis and analysed, this helps us to ascertain if any authorities are struggling and what support they might need. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is also now collecting and analysing data on a quarterly basis from Administering Authorities in relation to Supporting People key performance indicators.

(b) Undertaking research into the Supporting People programme. Research that has been published, or is due for publication includes:

Value for Money analysis, Starfish. Published April 2003.

Developing an Allocation Formula, Matrix MHA. Published April 2003

Support Needs of Homeless Households, Research and Information Services. Published December 2003

Review of the Supporting People Programme: Independent Report, RSM Robson Rhodes. Published February 2004

Review of development of policy and costs of housing related support, Matrix. Published March 2004

Analysis of local Supporting People shadow strategies, Leeds Metropolitan University. Published June 2004

Developing a Distribution Formula, Matrix MHA. Underway, due to complete October 2004.

SP Benefits Realisation, Matrix. Due to be published Autumn 2004.

Baseline User Survey, BMRB Social Research. Due for publication Autumn 2004.

Service Packages Project, Matrix. Due to be published Autumn 2004.

Safer Communities Supported Housing Fund Evaluation including Teenage Parent ADP evaluation, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol. Underway, due to complete 2006.

Health pilots, University of Bristol. Underway, due to complete 2006.

Sustainable Communities Plan

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress with the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan. [189233]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is making excellent progress with the Sustainable Communities Plan. Following the 2004 Spending Review, we will spend £38 billion on creating sustainable communities over five years to March 2008. Since 2002, this money has already helped to increase housebuilding by 10 per cent., delivered 34,553 affordable homes for rent and assisted over 10,000 key workers into home ownership. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has cut rough sleeping by over 70 per cent. since 1998 and we are exceeding our target to build 60 per cent. of new homes on brownfield land. Since 1997, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made around £1 million social homes decent and increased grant to local authorities by 30 per cent. in real terms. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will celebrate this success with the international Sustainable Communities Summit, in Manchester, in January 2005.

Telecommunications Masts

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many occasions in each of the last five years a local planning authority has paid costs to the communications industry as a result of losing an appeal following refusal of permission for new or additional antennae. [189558]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The Planning Inspectorate maintains an annual statistics report, but these figures cannot be obtained from that report. This question could not be answered without specific research.

Unauthorised Roadside Sales

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice he has given to local authorities on dealing with unauthorised sales carried out on roadside sites; and if he will make a statement. [187984]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Defra is currently consulting through it's 'Clean Neighbourhoods' document on a raft of measures that will improve the suite of powers available to local authorities in the management of our local environment. These would be taken forward once a suitable legislative opportunity arises. The document includes proposed measures on nuisance vehicles.

The proposal is to create a definition of 'nuisance' vehicle that would include vehicles that were detrimental the amenity of an area or causing a nuisance. Local authorities would have the power to remove these vehicles immediately and recover the costs of doing so. It would become a prosecutable offence for being responsible for such a vehicle.

What constitutes a nuisance or detrimental to the amenity of an area would be clarified in regulations and will be subject to the results of the consultation. Vehicles which are placed on the highway for sale is being considered as part of this process.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of the human rights of women and children jailed in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime for misdemeanours who remain in prison. [189501]

Mr. Rammell: Life has improved in Afghanistan for all, including women and children, since the fall of the Taliban. Prison conditions have also improved, although there is still a lot to do, and the UK remains concerned about some of the reported conditions in prisons across Afghanistan. We are aware that there are still cases where women remain in prison who have been jailed for committing 'crimes' such as being raped or being abandoned by their husbands. We are pushing the Afghan Government to implement fully international human rights standards, including the humane treatment of prisoners. We welcomed President Karzai's decree on prisoner release last month and are pressing for this to be enforced. In practical terms, the UK has given £1 million to support the work of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), which has a particular focus on the rights of women and children. The UK has also supported the NGO Womankind, whose projects included working with inmates at a women's prison in Kabul.

Bangladesh

Mr. Soley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political situation in Bangladesh; and if the UK will assist in dealing with attacks on political activists. [189298]

Mr. Alexander: We are concerned about the current political situation in Bangladesh and the poor relationship between the two main political parties. This continues to detract from the proper functioning of the country's democratic institutions. We regularly urge the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition to take a constructive and co-operative approach to tackle the key challenges that Bangladesh faces.

We have been shocked by recent violence in Bangladesh, especially the attack on an opposition rally in Dhaka on 21 August. In a public statement on 22 August, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary condemned this attack and called on all concerned to refrain from further violence and to exercise restraint. A copy of this statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/news/press-releases. He also called on the Bangladeshi authorities to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice. On 26 August EU Heads of Mission, including the British High Commissioner, called on the Bangladeshi Foreign Minister to deliver an EU declaration condemning the attack, and affirming the importance of adequate protection to all political groups. We continue to emphasise these messages through our High Commission, and remain ready to assist the Bangladeshi authorities where we can.

Colombia

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on UK relations with Colombia. [188583]

Mr. Rammell: The UK has good relations with Colombia. We support the efforts that President Uribe is making to bring peace and security to his country in the face of the huge problems that Colombia faces. The armed conflict, fuelled by the illegal drugs trade, causes great suffering to the Colombian people. Cocaine from Colombia also causes great harm in the UK. Human rights form a central component of our policy on Colombia. We consistently urge the Colombian Government to take stronger action to improve the human rights situation in the country, and in particular to ensure that UN recommendations regarding human rights are implemented. To achieve this goal, we are working closely with the Colombian Government and other partners, including the UN, EU, NGOs and the trades unions.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on *(a)* the killing of the trade unionists Leonel Goyeneche, Hector Alirio Martinez and Jorge Prieto Chamucero in Arauca, Colombia this year and *(b)* the implications for human rights in that country. [188584]

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of

Colombia on the murder on 5 August of trade unionists Jorge Chamucero, Hector Martinez and Leonel Goyeneche; and if he will make a statement. [189382]

Mr. Rammell: I have expressed our concerns about the deaths in Arauca personally with President Uribe of Colombia when we met at the Panamanian presidential inauguration on 1 September. I raised them again with the Colombian Foreign Minister when we met in London on 8 September 2004. Our Embassy in Bogota has also raised the case at the highest level. We made it clear at the outset that in our view, given the circumstances, a civil investigation, rather than a military one, should be undertaken into these deaths. As I told President Uribe, we were therefore pleased that the Colombian Government did decide to pursue this course of action, and that NGOs and trades unionists locally were kept informed of the process. The Colombian Government made it clear that if a human rights abuse had been committed, they too would find it unacceptable and would take strong measures against the perpetrators. We note that, following the investigation, the Prosecutor General has ordered the arrest of the military personnel involved in the deaths.

We continue to urge the Colombian Government to implement all outstanding UN human rights recommendations. We have made it plain that we are very willing to assist in this process, and with other partners are in close touch with the Colombian Government, the UNHCHR Representative, NGOs and trades unions to help carry matters forward.

Correspondence

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to reply to a letter from the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull, North forwarded to the Foreign Office by the Prime Minister's Communications Unit on 18 August. [189327]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 16 September 2004]*: My noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean replied to my hon. Friend on 17 September 2007.

Cuba

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations the UK has made to the *(a)* US Administration and *(b)* United Nations on lifting the US trade embargo against Cuba. [189495]

Mr. Rammell: The UK's policy on Cuba, and its position on the embargo, is well understood by the US Administration. We—and our EU partners—believe in constructive engagement and dialogue with the Cuban authorities, and we make our objections against the US embargo known every year at the United Nations General Assembly. On 4 November 2003, we again voted to adopt the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the USA against Cuba.

Departmental Services

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which services within his Department will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review. [189633]

Mr. Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the reply my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Boateng) gave him on 16 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1659W.

EU Constitution

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost was of printing the Government's recent White Paper on the EU Constitution; whether this document will be posted with the proposed Constitution to every household in the UK; and what estimate he has made of the cost of printing 30 million copies of the White Paper. [189346]

Mr. Straw: The cost of printing 1,500 copies of the Government's White Paper on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe was £2,385. There are no plans currently to send the White Paper to every household in the UK. As no tendering process has yet been entered into for this work a cost estimate is not available at this time. A copy of the White Paper is available online at www.europe.gov.uk.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate his Department has made of the cost of posting a copy of the proposed EU Constitution to every household in the UK; whether other Government literature will be enclosed; and when he expects this mass-mailing to take place. [189347]

Mr. Straw: No decisions have yet been made on the distribution of the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty. As no tendering process has yet been entered into for sending a copy to every household a cost estimate is not available at this time. A copy of the Provisional Treaty text is available online at www.europe.gov.uk.

EU Directives

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the EU directives outstanding without implementation *(a)* over two years, *(b)* over three years, *(c)* over four years and *(d)* over five years for each member state. [189520]

Mr. MacShane: The European Commission is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the implementation of Directives in EU member states. The best available data on member states progress in implementing Directives is therefore available on the Commission's own website at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgb/droit_com/pdf/mne_country_20040831_en.pdf).

The European Commission's Single Market Scoreboard also records implementation relating to the Internal Market. The full text of the latest Internal Market Scoreboard is at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/score/index_en.htm.

Explosion (Yanggang Province)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on reports of a large explosion in Yanggang Province in North Korea on North Korea's National Day this year. [189345]

Mr. Straw: I refer the right hon. and learned Gentleman to the written statement made by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Bill Rammell) on 16 September 2004, *Official Report*, columns 186–88WS, concerning his visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

General Affairs and External Relations Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the outcome was of the General Affairs and External Relations Council held on 13 September; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [189216]

Mr. MacShane: The answer is as follows:

Outcome of the 13 September 2004 General Affairs and External Relations Council

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, John Grant (UK's Permanent Representative to the EU) and I represented the UK at the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in Brussels on 13 September.

Conclusions were agreed on Sudan/Darfur, Great Lakes Region, ASEM, Iraq and Belarus.

General Affairs Session

EU Financial Framework For 2007–2013

The Council held a policy debate on the proposed EU financial framework for the 2007–13 period, endorsing the methodology proposed by the Presidency for work on the dossier until the end of the year with the aim of enabling agreement to be reached during 2005.

The Council also took a number of decisions without debate, such as the conclusions on progress in planning operation ALTHEA in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and a list of the 24 persons it intends to appoint as Members of the Commission for the 2009 period.

External Relations Session

Sudan/Darfur

The Council remained concerned about the situation in Darfur. It expressed readiness to support the African Union (AU) mission in the region and to contribute to an expanded mission. It also agreed that the EU will take appropriate measures, including sanctions, against the Government of Sudan and all other parties if no tangible progress is achieved in meeting the Council's and the UN Security Council's demands. Conclusions were agreed.

Great Lakes Region

The Council expressed concern over the recent increase in tension in the region and urged the leaders of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi as well as neighbouring countries, in particular Rwanda and Uganda, to continue implementation of their respective peace accords. The Council reaffirmed its conviction that the resolution of conflicts in the Great Lakes Region requires a regional approach. The Council also supported a more focused and robust mandate of MONUC (United Nations Mission in the DRC). Conclusions were agreed.

ASEM

The Council reviewed the issue of ASEM (Asia-Europe meeting) enlargement from the perspective of the upcoming ASEM Summit in Hanoi (8 October) and underlined the importance it attached to EU-Asia relations. It decided that, in the absence of progress in Burma by the time of the Summit, it would tighten restrictive measures against the regime and increase support to the Burmese people. Conclusions were agreed.

Iran

Ministers discussed the Iranian nuclear issue over lunch. They confirmed their full support for the efforts undertaken by France, Germany and the UK and reiterated their request to Iran to comply with suspension commitments. Ministers also discussed human rights in Iran.

Iraq

The Council expressed its strong condemnation of the continued kidnappings and acts of terrorism in Iraq and called for all hostages to be immediately released unharmed. Endorsing the preliminary findings of an EU exploratory mission in Iraq concerning possible EU activities in the field of civilian crisis management, it asked for these findings to be further examined and elaborated with a view to assistance proposals being prepared in good time for the 5 November European Council. Conclusions were agreed.

Belarus

The Council discussed its concerns over the proposed presidential referendum, which is to be held in parallel with the parliamentary elections on 17 October 2004. This change to the constitution will allow the president to run without limitation in future presidential elections. The Council stressed the need to hold such a referendum in accordance with OSCE and Council of Europe standards and norms. It underlined the need for a fair and constructive dialogue with the opposition before any referendum on changing the constitution could be conducted. Furthermore, there should be an improvement in the freedom of access to the media for all political groupings.

The Council once again reiterated its hope that Belarus will take its rightful place among European democratic countries. Conclusions were agreed.

AOB—Western Balkans

The Hungarian delegation raised the question of violent incidents in Vojvodina (Serbia). The Presidency asked EU Heads of Mission and the EU Monitoring Mission to report on these developments.

AOB—Libya

The Italian delegation asked for a possible derogation to the arms embargo against Libya to allow for co-operation in the field of illegal immigration to be taken up in the Council bodies.

Gibraltar

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with Spanish counterparts concerning the re-opening of discussions on sovereignty-sharing over Gibraltar; when these discussions took place; and which country initiated the talks. [188484]

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on diplomatic discussions between his Department and the Spanish Government over joint sovereignty of Gibraltar. [189196]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* Members of my Department have regular discussions with their Spanish counterparts on a wide range of issues, as do I and my ministerial colleagues. It is natural that these should include Gibraltar. Since the election of the PSOE government, the Spanish side has several times expressed a wish to re-open discussions on a number of issues concerning Gibraltar, including sovereignty. As we have consistently made clear, there will be no change to Gibraltar's sovereignty without the consent of the people of Gibraltar.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many hostile actions have been taken against Gibraltar by Spain in each of the last three years. [189194]

Mr. MacShane: The daily lives of Gibraltarians in a number of areas have faced difficulties in recent years. Examples include delays in crossing the border, disruption to cruise ship movements, a limit on the provision of telephone connections to Gibraltar and restrictions on the use of airspace and diversion of incoming flights.

My ministerial colleagues and I raise these issues when we meet our Spanish counterparts, and press them to rethink their approach. I have made clear in public in Spain and in Spanish when necessary that such actions are neither justified, nor helpful, nor acceptable.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the celebrations to mark the 300 years of British rule over Gibraltar. [189195]

Mr. MacShane: We are playing a full part in celebrating the warm relationship that we have enjoyed with the people of Gibraltar for the past 300 years. The Government are participating in an extensive programme of commemorative events taking place in both Gibraltar and the UK. The Royal Gibraltar Regiment and military units from the United Kingdom, including the Royal Marines, the Royal Engineers, the Royal Air Force, Royal Navy ships and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary are taking part in a total of more than 20 events throughout the year. My right hon. Friend the Defence Secretary visited Gibraltar on 4 August to be present at events celebrating the Tercentenary and the granting of the Freedom of the City to the Royal Navy. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary hopes to attend an event in the UK to commemorate the Gibraltar Tercentenary later this year.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what impact the change of government in Spain has had on discussions on Gibraltar. [189244]

Mr. MacShane: Following the change of government in Madrid, Ministers and officials have continued to have regular discussions with their Spanish counterparts on a wide range of issues. It is natural that these should include Gibraltar.

There are signs that the Spanish Government is prepared to consider greater co-operation with Gibraltar, including between local authorities in the Campo region. I welcome this, and encourage such contacts. But, as I have made clear to my Spanish counterpart, there will be no change in Gibraltar's sovereignty without the consent of the people of Gibraltar.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what ministerial visits to Gibraltar are planned over the next 12 months. [189245]

Mr. MacShane: Foreign engagements for my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and other Ministers are kept under constant review. It is not our practice to announce such visits until they are firm. Because of the unpredictable nature of world events, final decisions on overseas visits are often not possible until very shortly before the day of travel and occasionally not until they are underway.

Heads of Government (British Citizenship)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether *(a)* United Kingdom passport holders and *(b)* individuals granted British citizenship are permitted to retain this status if they become head of government of a foreign state. [189103]

Mr. Mullin: A person holding British citizenship may continue to retain this status upon becoming the head of government of a foreign state, whether or not they hold a UK passport.

Iceland

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on Iceland joining the European Union. [189240]

Mr. MacShane: As I discovered for myself when I visited Iceland on 21–22 July, there is currently an informed debate in Iceland about the pros and cons of European Union membership. Iceland is already a member of the European Economic Area and the Schengen free movement zone. It is for the Icelandic people themselves to decide whether to join and of course the United Kingdom would welcome Iceland as a partner in the EU.

Information and Communication Technology

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many information and communication technology specialists are in full-time employment in the Department. [189585]

Mr. Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office employs 354 full-time Information and Communication specialists.

Intelligence Sharing

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the extent to which British intelligence on relevant security issues and global terrorism is shared with the Russian authorities. [189291]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* The British and Russian security and intelligence services continue to cooperate in the campaign against global terrorism. We value such cooperation with the Russians as with other countries. The details of intelligence exchanges are confidential. I am withholding further details under exemptions 1*(a)* and 1*(c)* of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

International Atomic Energy Agency

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals the United Kingdom plans to put to the conference on the global threat reduction initiative at the International Atomic Energy Agency meeting in Vienna on 18 and 19 September; and whether non-governmental organisations will be given *(a)* access and *(b)* accreditation to the conference. [189110]

Mr. MacShane: The UK did not put new proposals to the Conference on the Global Threat Reduction Initiative in Vienna on 18 and 19 September. We are already carrying out work in this area through the Global Partnership, and will listen with interest and respond to any proposals made by other countries. The meeting will be open for NGOs to register and attend.

Iran

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations concerning Iran's nuclear programme the Government will make to the International Atomic Energy Agency in its September meetings; and if he will make a statement. [189092]

Mr. Straw: Together with the Governments of France and Germany the UK has drafted a resolution on Iran for discussion at the current meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

As has been recent practice, UK statements on Iran at the Board of Governors' meeting and to the IAEA General Conference will be published once they have been delivered.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government has received since February from human rights organisations operating in Iran; and if he will list the human rights violations those organisations reported. [189093]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office maintains close contacts with the semi-official Islamic Human Rights Commission in Tehran, other individuals and organisations in Iran with an interest in human rights issues, and international human rights organisations which follow events in Iran. These individuals and organisations continue to report a wide range of human rights violations in Iran. Because human rights violation is so widespread in Iran, and because many of the representations we receive are confidential in nature, we cannot list here all the individual violations reported to us.

We continue to make our views on human rights clear to the Iranian authorities bilaterally, through the European Union and through action at the United Nations, and to press them to bring their practices into line with international law and standards.

Iraq

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 3 August 2004, *Official Report*, column 683W, on Iraq, whether hon. Members other than Ministers had an input into the preparation of the September 2002 Dossier, Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction. [188758]

Mr. MacShane: As I made clear in my answer on 3 August (published on 1 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 683W), the Joint Intelligence Committee was responsible for producing the dossier. The final draft was made available for information to members of the Intelligence and Security Committee.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he was informed that post-war validation had raised serious doubts about the reliability of reporting from the sub-source referred to in paragraph 403 of the Butler Report. [189278]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* These matters have been examined exhaustively in the course of the Butler review and other inquiries. All relevant information has been placed in the public domain insofar as that could be done without prejudicing national security.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 1 September 2004, *Official Report*, columns 683–4W, on Iraq, when the translation of Iraq's declaration of the status of its programmes of weapons of mass destruction was completed; and if he will place a copy of the translation in the Library. [189288]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* Translation of the text of the declaration, of which 648 pages were in Arabic, was completed on 20 December 2002.

The supporting documentation (much of which consisted of purchase orders and invoices) were reviewed, summarised and assessed over the ensuing weeks, and this work had been completed by 19 March 2003.

The declaration remains a confidential document of the United Nations, and I cannot, therefore, place a copy in the Library of the House.

Islamic Organisations

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with prominent Islamic organisations in the UK. [189136]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and FCO Ministers regularly meet a wide range of Muslim organisations, both nationally and locally, as Ministers travel to the regions regularly to meet grassroots organisations. Some of the national organisations include the Muslim Council of Britain, Islamic Society of Britain, Islamic Forum Europe and Union of Muslim Students, among others.

The topics of discussion include a wide range of foreign policy issues of interest to the Muslim community.

Israel

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence he has reviewed on the *(a)* development and *(b)* use of (i) biological and (ii) chemical weapons and agents by Israel. [189295]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* We are aware of no credible evidence of development or use of chemical or biological weapons or agents by the State of Israel. Israel has signed, but not ratified, the Chemical Weapons Convention and has neither signed nor ratified the Biological and toxin Weapons Convention. It therefore has no legal obligation not to develop these weapons, and nor is it subject to any international monitoring.

Krishna Maharaj

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information has been made available to the Consular Service, in relation to Krishna Maharaj, on the failures to investigate Adam Hosein and Jamie Majais for possible involvement in the murders of Duane and Derrick Moo Young. [189137]

Mr. Mullin: These are a matter for Mr. Maharaj's legal team. The Government remain in close contact with Mr. Maharaj's lawyers who update us on developments in the case and on various avenues they are pursuing.

Maldives

Mr. Soley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the *(a)* political situation in the Maldives and *(b)* arrest of Members of Parliament. [189299]

Mr. Alexander: We have welcomed recent moves towards further democratic reform in the Maldives, in particular the proposals in President Gayoom's speech of 9 June. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary wrote to the President in July to express our support for many of his proposals and to encourage him to ensure that a free and open debate on reform in the Maldives is allowed. We are concerned at the continuing detention of many of those arrested following the pro-reform demonstrations on 12 and 13 August, including members of the Special Majlis, and have urged the Government to repeal the state of emergency, restore all fundamental rights to the detainees, and reconvene the Special Majlis.

Middle East

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of Syrian policy towards terrorism in the Middle East; and what representations he has made to the Syrian Government about the presence of Hamas in Syria. [188813]

Mr. MacShane: We have continuing concerns about Syrian support for Palestinian terrorist organisations and judge that Syria can do more to constrain their activities. While office closures are welcome, Syria should more tightly control the activities, including the travel and contacts with the Occupied Territories, of known Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other leaders. We have repeatedly made our views known to the Syrian authorities.

Muslims (Human Rights Abuses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made regarding abuses of human rights against Muslims who choose to convert to another faith; and if he will make a statement. [189301]

Mr. Rammell: The Government condemn instances where individuals are persecuted because of their faith or belief, wherever these happen and whatever the religion of the individual or group concerned. We are concerned about the plight of apostates throughout the world including those Muslims who are punished for choosing to convert to another faith. Both bilaterally and with our EU partners we regularly raise specific cases of religious persecution with the Governments concerned. Over the past year we have formally raised the treatment of religious minorities with both the Pakistani and Bangladesh Governments. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Panel on Religious Freedom, which brings together representatives from all of the faith communities in the UK, has also discussed the issue of apostasy.

Non-EU Countries (Governmental Visits)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from which non-EU countries' governments inward visits to the UK are planned in the next three months. [189305]

Mr. Rammell: The President of Korea Mr. Roh Moo-hyun accompanied by Mrs. Roh Moo-hyun will pay a State Visit to the United Kingdom in December.

Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Republic of India arrived in the United Kingdom on 15 September for a two-day visit as a Guest of Her Majesty's Government. No other non-EU Guest of Government visits are planned within the next three months.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office also sponsors visits which enable influential individuals, e.g. Parliamentarians, and public servants to carry out a

working programme in their area of expertise. The full programme of visits for the next three months is not yet fixed but is expected to include visitors from China, Nigeria, Taiwan, Argentina, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Gambia, Afghanistan, Egypt, Bahrain, Syria and other Middle Eastern countries, South Africa, Sudan, Japan, India, Zambia, Russia, Pakistan, Bolivia, Uruguay, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Mauritius, Ghana, Tanzania, USA, Peru and Philippines.

Nordic Countries

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what bilateral meetings are planned between the UK and the Nordic countries. [189241]

Mr. MacShane: Frequent bilateral meetings of Ministers, officials and parliamentarians take place between the United Kingdom and the Nordic countries on an ongoing basis. There is also frequent contact in the context of EU, NATO, UN and other multilateral meetings.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on bilateral relations with *(a)* Iceland, *(b)* Denmark, *(c)* Norway, *(d)* Sweden, *(e)* Finland and *(f)* the Faroe Islands. [189242]

Mr. MacShane: Bilateral relations between the United Kingdom and the Nordic countries are excellent. Strong working relationships exist variously in the EU, NATO, UN and a wide range of international organisations. We co-operate closely on issues such as the environment, international development, human rights and peacekeeping. The UK has a healthy trading relationship with these countries. There are regular official and ministerial contacts and all party parliamentary groups have well-established links with the respective Parliaments. Further information about the relationship with individual Nordic countries can be found in the country profiles section of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk and web pages of each of our embassies.

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received in respect of compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty by *(a)* Iran, *(b)* North Korea, *(c)* South Korea and *(d)* the United Kingdom, with particular reference to provisions under articles one and six of the treaty. [189104]

Mr. MacShane: Issues of compliance with the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) form an integral part of our dialogue with a number of Governments and other bodies. These include meetings of the review process of the NPT, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the G8 non-proliferation meetings. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary is confident that the United Kingdom continues to fulfil all of its obligations under Articles I and VI of the Treaty.

South Africa

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* UK investors in the South African mining industry and *(b)* the South African Government on the implications of the South African Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act 2002 on the 1994 agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the Promotion and Protection of Investments, which came into force in 1994; when these discussions took place; and what mechanisms exist for settlement of claims UK investors may have against the South African Government resulting from the expropriation of privately-owned common law mineral rights under the 2002 Act.[189091]

Mr. Straw: Foreign and Commonwealth Office and UK Trade and Investment officials have regular discussions with UK companies investing in South Africa. In June 2002, I took the opportunity of a meeting with the South African Foreign Minister to underline the importance we attached to the South African Government consulting industry on the details of the draft Mining Bill.

Remedies exist for UK companies in dispute with the South African Government under South African law. In addition, under the provisions of the UK/South Africa Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement any dispute between a UK investor and the South African Government may be submitted to international arbitration.

Terrorism

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which ethnic groups have been responsible for each of the 20 largest terrorist attacks, in terms of loss of life, across the world in the last four years; and if he will make a statement. [189311]

Mr. MacShane: The Government regard all acts of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomever they are committed. Terrorism threatens democracy, and aims to destabilise legitimately constituted governments and undermine tolerance and the rule of law. The Government do not seek to assign responsibility specifically on the basis of ethnicity.

UN International Day of Peace

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to encourage observance of the International Day of Peace declared by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 36/67 of 30 November 1981, with particular reference to observance in the UK. [189143]

Mr. Rammell: The UK supports the initiative for an International Day of Peace, which aims to promote a global ceasefire and non-violence, including by encouraging rebel groups involved in conflict to agree to a cessation of hostilities to allow aid agencies to obtain access to civilians. General Assembly Resolution 36/67 first established an International Day of Peace, and the UK was a co-sponsor of General Assembly Resolution 55/282 of September 2001, which determined that this day would be observed on 21 September. The Foreign

and Commonwealth Office has provided support to the British NGO, 'Peace One Day', which campaigns to promote observance of this day both in the UK and worldwide.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government have taken to protect current and former British passport holders in Zimbabwe. [189344]

Mr. Straw: We provide the same level of consular protection to British passport holders in Zimbabwe as to those in any other country. However, we are unable to provide consular protection to former British passport holders who have renounced their British citizenship to become single Zimbabwean nationals. Former British passport holders can apply to the Home Office, through the British Embassy in Harare, to have their citizenship re-instated, provided they meet the necessary criteria.

TRANSPORT

Roads (Luneside, East)

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of vehicular access to Luneside East, Lancaster; and what estimate he has made of the change in traffic consequent on the Luneside East Development. [189548]

Mr. Jamieson: A traffic impact assessment was prepared for the Luneside East scheme and both Lancaster city council, as Planning Authority, and Lancashire county council, as Highway Authority, considered its traffic impacts. Both authorities concluded that traffic generated by the scheme could be accommodated by the existing road network and the city council, therefore, granted outline planning permission in December 2002.

Civil Service (Job Losses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which services within his Department will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review. [189636]

Charlotte Atkins: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend, Chief Secretary of the Treasury of 16 September *Official Report*, column 1659W.

Departmental Expenditure

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has spent on *(a)* mobile phones, *(b)* hospitality and *(c)* taxi costs in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [185245]

Charlotte Atkins *[holding answer 21 July 2004]:* The central part of the Department for Transport spent £15,000 on hospitality/entertainment in respect of all members of the Department in 2003–04. All expenditure on official entertainment and hospitality is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in "Government Accounting". The giving and receiving of hospitality is conducted fully in accordance with the guidance set out in the "Ministerial Code, and Guidance on Contacts with Outside Interest Groups including Lobbyists".

Costs in relation to mobile phones and taxi costs are not readily available and would be so only at disproportionate cost.

The Department for Transport was established in 2002 and therefore figures are not available prior to this date.

Departmental Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the latest available 12-month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if he will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188690]

Charlotte Atkins: The waste handling contract for the Department's London headquarters building enables us to recycle all documentation, paper and card. Our policy aim is to recycle 100 per cent. of paper and card and we provide separate bins for such material and encourage staff to use them. In 2003–04, this resulted in the Department recycling 53 tonnes of paper, which represented 44 per cent. of total waste recycled. As we only record figures for the amount of documentation, waste paper and card that is actually recycled, we are unable to say what proportion this represents of total disposal of all such materials.

To further encourage paper recycling the Department:

(a) only uses uncoated paper containing 100 per cent. post-consumer waste, and coated paper containing a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste;

(b) undertakes an annual review of its stocks of printed materials and organised the pulping of any deemed to be redundant, for recycling; and

(c) instituted a 'print-on-demand' facility, so that no more copies of printed materials need be produced than are forecast to be used.

The Department also manages an award-winning framework contract to procure recycled printing papers for all its printing needs. The contract let in partnership with Defra and DTI is currently used in total by 18 Departments, agencies and NDPBs, and the number is growing. The management and use of this contract by public bodies has so far:

(a) diverted over 22,000 tonnes of potential landfill back into use; *(b)* led paper mills to develop new recycled products; and

(c) contributed to improving the quality of those already on the market.

The Department in consultation with its agencies is considering how it will develop a corporate departmental sustainable waste management strategy as required under the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. However, our already existing policy remains that as many waste streams as possible should be recycled where appropriate and possible.

Humberside Safety Camera Partnership

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been raised in gross by the Humberside Safety Camera Partnership in each year since its inception. [188573]

Mr. Jamieson: The Humberside Safety Camera Partnership joined the National Safety Camera Programme in April 2003. Partnership accounts are audited by an auditor appointed by the Audit Commission. The audited 2003–04 accounts for Humberside are not yet available.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many persons were employed by the Humberside Safety Camera Partnership at its inception. [188740]

Mr. Jamieson: The Humberside Safety Camera Partnership, made up of the police, magistrates courts and local authorities, joined the cost recovery programme in April 2003. It employed a complement of 48.6 full-time equivalent posts. This means that some staff spend part of their time with the partnership and the rest with their parent authorities.

London, Tilbury and Southend Line

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on overcrowding on the London, Tilbury and Southend rail line. [189365]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the written reply given to him on 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1382W.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the safety consequences of passengers standing on the London, Tilbury and Southend rail line; and if he will make a statement. [189366]

Mr. McNulty: None. Trains are designed to accommodate standing passengers and to operate safely when fully loaded.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact on overcrowding on the London, Tilbury and Southend line of the removal of four four-coach Class 357 trains from that line. [189515]

Mr. McNulty: None. The redeployment of rolling stock was agreed by the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) to cover a potential shortfall in rolling stock elsewhere on the network. The rolling stock formations now in use on the c2c route are expected to accommodate demand. The SRA and c2c continue to monitor the impact of the changes on crowding levels on the route.

Manchester Airport

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of projected passenger numbers at Manchester airport in his deliberations on the proposed phase three Metrolink extension; [188015]

(2) what representations he has had from Manchester airport following his decision regarding phase three of the Manchester Metrolink extension; [188016]

(3) what assessment he has made of the alternative available public transport links to Manchester airport in the absence of the Metrolink extension; [188017]

(4) what assessment he has made of the impact of the Metrolink phase three extension on future journey times between Manchester airport and the city centre; [188018]

(5) what assessment he has made of the economic benefits to Manchester airport of the Metrolink phase three extension; [188019]

(6) what assessment he has made of the contribution of an extension of the Metrolink to Manchester airport to an integrated transport strategy for South Manchester. [188020]

Manchester Public Transport

Mr. McNulty: It is for Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE) as promoters of Metrolink to undertake any consultation and assessment. The Manchester Airport Line formed part of the original three line package of Metrolink extensions. However, following increased costs, the GMPTE submitted an alternative package replacing the airport line with a spur to East Didsbury.

It was for GMPTE to undertake the assessment of alternatives. GMPTE's assessment of the original package took account of: future journey times between the airport and the city centre; projected passenger numbers; economic benefits to the airport; alternative public transport links if Metrolink Phase III was not approved; and the contribution to an integrated transport strategy for South Manchester.

We have had no representations from Manchester airport. We have received one letter from British Airways based at Manchester Airport.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the contribution of an extension of the role of Metrolink in the economic competitiveness of Greater Manchester *(a)* in its present form and *(b)* with the completion of the phase three extension; [188021]

(2) what assessment he has made of the cost-to-benefit ratio of the phase three extension to the Greater Manchester Metrolink; [188022]

(3) what assessment he has made of the benefits to the local economy of the phase three extension to the Manchester Metrolink; [188023]

(4) what assessment he has made of *(a)* the contribution of the Manchester Metrolink to the process of creating a shift from car usage to public transport and *(b)* the likely impact of the phase three extension on that process; [188024]

(5) what assessment he has made of whether alternative public transport options have the capacity to meet passenger demand in the absence of the phase three Manchester Metrolink extension taking place; [188026]

(6) what estimate he has made of the projected traffic levels on *(a)* the M56, *(b)* the M60, *(c)* the M62 and *(d)* all major routes within the area of the proposed

phase three extension of the Manchester Metrolink over the next (i) five, (ii) 10 and (iii) 20 years if the Metrolink extension (A) is and (B) is not put in place; [188029]

(7) what estimate he has made of *(a)* the additional road space needed in the Manchester area in the absence of the Metrolink extension and *(b)* the cost of providing that additional road space; [188030]

(8) what assessment he has made of the implications for air quality along the proposed routes of the Metrolink phase three extension *(a)* of building and *(b)* of not building the extension. [188034]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport's consideration of Manchester Metrolink and the Phase III extensions was based on an assessment undertaken by the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE). This took account of the impact on: the regional and local economy; shift from car use to public transport; cost and capacity of alternative public transport and road options; the effect on the local and regional road network; and changes in air quality. The Department's judgement of the benefit cost ratio for the Phase III extensions (Oldham/Rochdale, Ashton-under-Lyne and East Didsbury) is 1.6:1.

The Secretary of State took the decision not to approve Metrolink Phase III—along with the proposed schemes in Leeds and South Hampshire—because of a further substantial increase in costs. As the Secretary of State announced on 20 July, no government could accept the schemes as they are on the basis of their escalating costs and he could therefore not approve Phase III of Metrolink in its current form. In Manchester, costs had doubled and the project was reduced to less than the three lines originally proposed. The Department is working closely with GMPTE on developing alternative proposals.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has instructed officials to undertake a fundamental review of public transport options in Greater Manchester. [188025]

Mr. McNulty: It is for the Greater Manchester Transport Executive to consider the transport solutions that best meet the needs of the area. We will be working closely with the Manchester authorities as they undertake this work.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funds he is making available to keep the Oldham and Rochdale line open for local railway services in the absence of the phase three Metrolink extension; and what funds he is making available for the cost of upgrading the infrastructure. [188027]

Mr. McNulty: There are no current plans to upgrade the infrastructure. The existing heavy rail services will continue to be provided and funded under the current First North Western Franchise and its planned replacement.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guarantees he has offered regarding the funding of essential costs of track and systems renewals on the existing Manchester Metrolink. [188028]

Mr. McNulty: None. It is for the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, as the promoters of Metrolink, to decide if track and systems renewals are essential and to make its own priorities and bid for funding if appropriate.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance he sought from Greater Manchester Police before reaching a decision over the phase three extension to the Manchester Metrolink. [188032]

Mr. McNulty: The decision to withdraw funding approval for Metrolink Phase 3 was taken because of escalating costs. Therefore, there was no guidance sought from Greater Manchester Police before reaching this decision.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consultations he has undertaken with Greater Manchester Health Authority regarding the role of Metrolink in *(a)* improving access to health care and *(b)* reducing traffic congestion on hospital sites. [188033]

Mr. McNulty: It is for the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE), as promoters of Metrolink, to undertake any consultation with the Greater Manchester Health Authority throughout the development and assessment of the Metrolink and to present its findings to the Department for Transport. GMPTE's original assessment of the scheme did include information on access to health care, however, no information was provided specifically on reducing traffic congestion on hospital sites.

Motorway Traffic Officers

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to introduce motorway traffic officers to the *(a)* M62, *(b)* M1, *(c)* M606 and *(d)* M621 motorway in West Yorkshire. [189498]

Mr. Jamieson: The programme for implementation of the traffic officer service in West Yorkshire on the M62, M1, M606 and M621 will commence in autumn 2005.

Ports

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when his Department intends to conclude the updating of The Project Appraisal Framework for Ports, published in 2003. [189099]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government announced its intention to update the Project Appraisal Framework for Ports in paragraph 7.29 of the Future of Transport White Paper. This will form part of the review of the ports policy framework to be launched after autumn 2005.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Autumn 2005 review date for a response to the global growth in shipping traffic and new port capacity. [189106]

Mr. Jamieson: We expect that, by Autumn 2005, the Secretary of State for Transport will have taken decisions on the proposals for major container port development currently outstanding and due to be determined by him. As the Secretary of State said in his statement to the House on 20 July we intend to take a long-term approach to port development and will

review the policy framework for ports by the end of next year. Para 7.28 of The Future of Transport makes clear that one of the key issues that the review will show we should respond to forecast global growth in shipping traffic by providing new port capacity.

Railways

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost implications are of giving control over the railways in the Greater London Authority area to the Mayor of London; and if he will make a statement.[186722]

Mr. Darling: "The Future of Rail" white paper set out proposals for the Mayor to be able to buy additional services or propose savings on rail services in London. Transport for London would pay any additional costs (or recoup any savings).

The white paper also set out a number of issues in respect of London for further consideration or work. Assessing the cost implications of the various options will be an important part of this further work.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what Government subsidy was given to rail providers for the last year for which figures are available; and what it was calculated to be *(a)* per passenger and *(b)* per passenger mile. [189575]

Mr. McNulty: Details of subsidy paid to each train operator in 2003–04 are set out in Appendix 3 to the Strategic Rail Authority's annual report 2003–04. Total numbers of passenger journeys made with each train operator in 2003–04 are shown in Section 8 of the Strategic Rail Authority's National Rail Trends Yearbook 2003–04. Details of subsidy per passenger kilometre travelled with each train operator in 2003–04 are set out in Appendix 5 to the Strategic Rail Authority's annual report 2003–04.

Copies of the annual report and the yearbook are available in the Libraries of the House.

Roads

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the level of road congestion on *(a)* motorways and *(b)* all roads has been in each year since 1997. [186853]

Mr. Darling: The measure that has been used is derived from comparing actual traffic speeds with those that would be achievable in the absence of congestion. Full details of the methodology are available on the Department's website at www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_transstats/documents/page/dft_transstats_021863.pdf

Under this measure the estimated average congestion delay on motorways in England was 3.8 seconds lost per vehicle kilometre in 2000. Congestion in large urban areas in England was estimated as 24.8 seconds lost per vehicle kilometre in 2000 and 24.9 seconds lost per vehicle kilometre in 2002. These are the latest figures currently available. Estimates have not been made for years prior to 2000.

The Department has always acknowledged the limitations of measuring congestion in this way and is currently developing new, more detailed data sources and new measures of traffic congestion.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his estimate is of the total cost to the Government of public expenditure on road investment taken from the Capital Departmental Expenditure limit, but excluding capital grants to the private sector within the Resource Department Expenditure Limit, in each year from 2001–02 to 2010–11 *(a)* at outturn prices and *(b)* at today's prices. [164715]

Mr. Jamieson: Figures for outturn and forecast public expenditure on road investment on the English strategic roads network within the Department's Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit to 2005–06 are set out in the following table. Future spending is being reviewed as part of the Spending Review 2004 and announcements about spending levels beyond 2005–06 will be announced in due course.

The expenditure in 2001–02 and 2002–03 is higher since in those years structural maintenance was scored as capital expenditure. From 2003–04 onwards it scores as resource expenditure to bring the statistical treatment for budgeting purposes into line with accounting practice under Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB).

£ million

Financial year	*Outturn prices*	*2003–04 prices*
2001–02	1,022	1,086
2002–03	1,081	1,111
2003–04	649	649
2004–05	799	781
2005–06	563	537

The Government's policy as set out in "A New Deal for transport: Better for Everyone" (1998 Cm 3950) is that there are a number of trunk roads which mainly serve local and regional traffic and are more appropriately managed at local level. Therefore the Highways Agency has been transferring responsibility (together with an appropriate level of resources) over to local highway authorities to enable decisions to be better integrated with local transport and land use planning issues. The result will be to reduce the trunk road network by 30 per cent. or around 3,000 km in total. So far about two thirds of these roads have been detrunked. The data have not been adjusted to take this into account.

Trunk roads (excluding motorways) within Greater London were transferred to Transport for London in July 2000.

US Visas

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his Answer of 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1389W, on US visas, what form representations to US authorities on the abolition of the crew list visa scheme have taken; what further representations the Government intends to make; and if he will make a statement on this proposal. [189535]

Mr. Jamieson: The representations referred to, took the form of two submissions to the US State Department. The first letter, in February 2003, on

behalf of the UK and a number of other governments, put forward arguments in favour of retaining the crew list waiver scheme. A second letter was sent in September 2003 seeking to ameliorate the effects of the US proposals. We have no current plans to make further specific representations, but shall keep the matter under review.

The US proposals are based on a judgment by a sovereign government about the appropriate immigration and border controls to meet, inter alia, their national security requirements.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Bogus Prizes

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will regulate the practice of offering bogus prizes, via tickets and scratch cards, which have to be claimed using expensive premium telephone lines; and if she will make a statement. [187749]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The practice of offering bogus prizes to be claimed using premium rate telephone lines is already regulated by the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS) through a Code of Practice approved by the Communications regulator, the Office of Communications (Ofcom).

British Nuclear Fuels

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions *(a)* she, *(b)* other departmental ministers and *(c)* departmental officials have had with the European Commission on the proposed restructuring of British Nuclear Fuels plc; and what the state aid implications are. [187605]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department has not specifically discussed the re-organisation of BNFL with the European Commission. The re-organisation will result in aid to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. The Government notified this aid to the European Commission in December 2003. The notification included details of the proposed re-organisation.

Carbon Sequestration

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what investment is being made in carbon sequestration technologies. [188477]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since 2001 we have either provided, or have committed to, some £518,000 of funding in support in of a variety of projects and studies investigating carbon sequestration. Additionally, we are developing a Carbon Abatement Technology Strategy of which carbon sequestration technologies are expected to be a major component. It is planned to publish this Strategy around the turn of the year.

Civil Service (Job Losses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which services within her Department will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review. [189642]

Ms Hewitt: As the Chief Secretary to the Treasury has already explained, full details of the workforce changes announced in the Spending Review are being worked through and we are consulting all stakeholders including unions and staff. Departments will come forward in due course with details of workforce changes once plans are finalised.

Electricity

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on her policy towards locational pricing structures for electricity transmission. [188681]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government, with Ofgem, consulted on the criteria that should govern the transmission charging methodology under the British Electricity Trading and Transmission Arrangements (BETTA) due to come into affect in April 2005. http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/consultations/transcharging_doc:pdf

It is now for the National Grid Company as GB System Operator to devise a suitable charging methodology in consultation with the industry that facilitates effective competition and, as far as practicable, is reflective of costs. It is then for the industry regulator, Ofgem, to approve this methodology.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry under what regulations Welsh Water is barred from generating electricity. [188941]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: There is nothing in the Electricity Act 1989, as amended, which would bar Welsh Water from generating electricity. Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 details what consents are required to construct, operate or extend a generating station. Generating electricity is a licensable activity and standard licence conditions have to be met, unless exempt under the Electricity (Class Exemptions from the requirement for a licence) Order 2001. It is the regulator's office, the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) which grants licences.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what impact the recent increase in the wholesale price of gas has had on predictions for the costs of various forms of electricity generation as laid out in the energy White Paper. [189043]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The recent increase in the wholesale price of gas, if sustained, will impact on the cost of gas-fired generation as against other forms of generation. Some of these other forms of generation, including low carbon options, would look relatively more attractive compared with gas-fired generation

Employer Training

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* employers and *(b)* staff in each Tyne and Wear district have been assisted by the Tyne and Wear Employer Training Pilot since it began. [188710]

Jacqui Smith: The information is as follows.

(a) The total number of employers in Tyne and Wear assisted by the Employer Training Pilot since it began is 911.

The total number of employers by each Tyne and Wear district are as follows:

	Number of employers
Newcastle	302
North Tyneside	109
South Tyneside	88
Gateshead	204
Sunderland	208

(b) The total number of employees in Tyne and Wear assisted by the Employer Training Pilot since it began is 7,170.

The total number of employees by each Tyne and Wear district are as follows:

	Number of employers
Newcastle	2,374
North Tyneside	645
South Tyneside	624
Gateshead	1,789
Sunderland	1,738

EU Nuclear Regulation

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the revised proposed legislative texts produced by the European Commission on the safety of nuclear installations and radioactive waste management, released on 8 September 2004; what evaluation has been made of the differences between the new texts and those in the proposed council directives Cmd. 2003/32, released in January 2003; and what comments on these proposals were made by the United Kingdom to the Commission. [189102]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: On 8 September 2004, the College of Commissioners agreed to adopt the European Commission's revised proposals dealing with nuclear installation safety and radioactive waste management and these were formally circulated to Member States on 14 September 2004. A full evaluation is being made readiness for discussions in the relevant Council Working Group. However, the texts do not differ greatly from those considered by the Council under the Irish Presidency. The UK has made it clear to the Commission on several occasions that it would prefer any Community initiative in these fields to be developed on the basis of non-legally binding instruments.

End-of-Life Vehicles Directive

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made in implementing the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive; and if she will make a statement. [188725]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The End-of-Life Vehicles Regulations 2003 (S.I.2003/2635) came into effect in England and Wales on 3 November 2003, and equivalent legislation was introduced shortly after in Scotland and Northern Ireland. These Regulations implement a number of provisions in the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive. Consultation on draft Regulations to implement the remaining provisions of the Directive, which take effect from 2006, was carried out earlier this year. It is the Government's intention to present the End-of-Life Vehicles (Producer Responsibility) Regulations 2004 to the House shortly.

European State Aids

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total value is of applications to the European Commission to allow state aids that have been *(a)* approved, *(b)* approved with modifications, *(c)* declined and *(d)* considered but deemed not to fall within state aid rules, broken down by member state, for the last five years. [189519]

Mr. Alexander: Comprehensive information on spending on state aids is published by the European Commission and is available on the Commission's website at http://europa.eu.int/comm/competitio/state_aid/scoreboard/.

The latest report includes information on the value of state aid spending in 2002, trends in spending between 1998 and 2002, and the percentage and numbers of cases approved or rejected by the Commission between 2001 and 2003, all broken down by member state. The report does not include full statistics on the number of applications approved with modifications, or considered but found not to fall within state aid rules, or a breakdown of their value, however, and we do not have independent estimates of these across EU member states.

Gas and Electricity Consumer Council

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Gas and Electricity Consumer Council in protecting the interests of gas and electricity consumers. [189146]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since its establishment in November 2000, the Council has been an effective representative of the consumer interest, both in investigating and resolving individual complaints and in strategically engaging with the industry and Ofgem to address sectoral problems, for instance, mis-selling and the transfer process.

Gas/Oil Prices

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the relationship between changes in wholesale gas prices and oil prices. [189484]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: In Continental Europe, where the energy markets are not fully competitive, gas prices are contractually linked to oil prices. In comparison the UK has gas-to-gas competition. However, due to arbitrage across the interconnector, we are also importing Continental European prices. Our analysis suggests that though the link between oil and gas prices exists, it is complex and dynamic.

Ofgem launched a probe into the price movements of last autumn and more recently into forward gas prices. We await the conclusions of this probe.

India

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the opportunities for British companies to contribute to transport infrastructure projects in India; and what assistance her Department is providing to British companies who are involved in bids for such projects. [187130]

Mr. Alexander: The modernisation of India's existing transport infrastructure is a major priority for the Government of India. The UK has particular interest in Airport and Port Modernisation and Privatisation. There have been two UK Trade and Investment supported missions to India over the last two years in the airports sector to assess and identify opportunities, and future missions for both the airports and ports sectors are being planned. There have also been two inward visits to the UK, by Indian officials, for each of the sectors within in the same period. There are many projects being planned or constructed across the country. UK companies are closely involved in these projects either in planning or construction. The UK Trade and Investment team is assisting several companies in their dealings with the Government both in bidding for tenders and managing the relationship where contracts have been won.

Internet Fraud

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with the telecommunications industry about internet dialler fraud. [189131]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government have been in ongoing discussions with the telecommunications industry in order to find solutions to this problem.

Jaguar (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on discussions her Department has held with Ford Motor Company regarding the future of Jaguar Motor Car Productions in Coventry. [189387]

Jacqui Smith: Ministers and officials are in regular contact with the management of Ford Motor Company, as with other major manufacturers in the UK.

Jaguar's announcement on Friday 17 September, covering their plans for the Brown's Lane site, is obviously disappointing, particularly given the workforce's efforts to improve quality and productivity at Brown's Lane. However, given the company's financial performance, tough decisions had to be taken.

I have encouraged Jaguar's management to ensure that their workforce and trade unions remain informed and consulted, and that they discuss what further steps might be taken to mitigate further job losses. However, it's important to note that no compulsory redundancies have been announced.

I am pleased that the company has not taken the decision to close Brown's Lane. Jaguar's Headquarters and administrative centre will remain in Coventry, as will the company's historic Wood Veneer Manufacturing Centre. And I am encouraged that the world leading R and D Centre at Whitley is being retained and welcome the employment opportunities for Brown's Lane workers created by the growth and success at Aston Martin.

I hope that the announcement will help enable Jaguar to address its financial difficulties thereby securing a sustainable long-term future for the company, its products and its workforce here in the UK.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions her Department has had with trade unions at national level about the future of Jaguar Motor Car Productions in Coventry. [189388]

Jacqui Smith: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has discussed the situation at Jaguar with both the company and trade union representatives.

Laura Ashley

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with Laura Ashley regarding the proposed downsizing of the workforce in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [189613]

Jacqui Smith: None.

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the proportion of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's income which, in each of its first five years of operation, will derive from operating spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plants at Sellafield. [188775]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 15 September 2004]*: The Government expects that approximately half of the NDA's total commercial income in the three years covered by the 2004 Spending Review will derive from the management of spent nuclear fuel on behalf of commercial customers.

Nuclear Power Plants

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether she has established a timetable to review the prospects for new building of nuclear power plants. [188611]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government are continually assessing progress towards the four goals of energy policy set out in the Energy White Paper published 2003: 'Our energy future—creating a low carbon economy'. There has been no change to the position set out in the White Paper. If the Government were to take the view that, at some point, nuclear build might be necessary, there would need to be the fullest public consultation and the publication of a further white paper setting out proposals, before the Government reached a decision.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place in the Library a copy of the communication, dated 3 September 2004, from the

European Commission in respect of the difficulties faced by the Commission nuclear inspectors in applying Euratom safeguards to the B-30 nuclear waste storage silo at Sellafield; and what response Her Majesty's Government has made to the communication. [188612]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Officials tell me they have no knowledge of such a communication in the Department.

I refer the hon. Member to my answer to his question of 1 September, which stated that, as of 7 September the UK authorities had received no formal or substantive response from the Commission to the plan presented on 1 June in respect of the B30 plant. The only formal communication since received (late 10 September) has been a letter from the Commission confirming an appointment with the UK authorities to discuss these issues at official level.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will review her Department's policy on the economic position of nuclear power in the light of the recent increase in the wholesale price of gas. [189042]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The 2003 energy White Paper concluded that, although the economics of nuclear power currently make it an unattractive option, the nuclear option should be kept open. But the conclusions of the White Paper remain the same. We have no proposals for new nuclear build but the Government do not rule out the possibility that at some point in the future new nuclear build might be necessary to meet our carbon targets. Before any decision to proceed with building of new nuclear power stations there would need to be the fullest public consultation and the publication of a White Paper setting out proposals.

The Department continues to monitor the economics of all low carbon generation options, including nuclear, in the light of changes in the cost of fossil fuel generation.

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will review her Department's position that nuclear power is uneconomic in the light of the recent report by the Royal Academy of Engineering. [189044]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department has seen the recent report by the Royal Academy of Engineering on nuclear power. The conclusions are based on assumptions such as the discount rate and plant capital cost which are relatively favourable to nuclear generation compared with other low carbon generation options. The Department does not therefore see any reason to change the position on nuclear power stated in the 2003 energy White Paper.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions she has had with the Scottish Executive on the future of nuclear energy generation in Scotland. [188680]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: There have been no such recent discussions.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will publish the advice that Bectel has given to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, including its major report into the future of the nuclear industry. [188421]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Bechtel has advised on the procedures and technical systems that the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority will need to adopt to manage the clean up and decommissioning of civil nuclear sites by contract. That advice has been provided in various forms by the Bechtel consultants working with officials to establish the NDA.

Bechtel has not provided any wider report into the future of the nuclear industry as a whole.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with the British Nuclear Group/BNFL over the future of the Berkeley site. [188422]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My officials were recently made aware of British Nuclear Group's proposal to establish a special Task Force to look at the future of its Berkeley site.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what contingency plans she has put in place in the event of there being insufficient engineering staff to run the remaining Magnox reactor sites. [188423]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Reactor sites personnel will work closely with the regulators to ensure that sufficient engineering staff are available. Operators of Magnox reactor sites, as with other nuclear licensed sites are required to comply with the Conditions attached to their licence by HSE. These Conditions require that, before a licensee makes an organisational change, including changes to engineering support staff, it must consider the safety implications. HSE can, if necessary, prevent the change from taking place until satisfied that the safety implications are understood and that there will be no lowering of safety standards. Similar considerations apply regarding compliance with the limits and conditions of the authorisation issued to the site licensee by the Environment Agency under the Radioactive Substances Act 1993.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what security lapses have occurred in respect of trains carrying nuclear material since September 2003; and if she will make a statement. [188927]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The movement of civil nuclear material in the UK is conducted in accordance with the Nuclear Industries Security Regulations 2003, which are administered and enforced by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS).

In December 2003, OCNS inspectors conducted a spot check of the security arrangements in place at Willesden Brent Sidings in London where BNFL's Direct Rail Services (DRS) marshal trains carrying spent nuclear fuel. This disclosed that approved guarding arrangements were not being carried out satisfactorily. Immediate action was taken by DRS to rectify the matter and there has been no recurrence.

Fuller details of the incident, and the remedial action taken by DRS are contained in the 2004 Annual Report by the Director of Civil Nuclear Security, a copy of which is available in the Libraries of the House.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether nuclear material is transported *(a)* to and *(b)* from Bradwell power station; and if she will make a statement. [188928]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* Bradwell nuclear power station ceased generation in March 2002 and is in the process of defuelling. Therefore no fuel is transported to the site, only from the site. This is scheduled for completion in 2005.

Radio Devices

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received on the use of iTrips and similar such devices; and if she will make a statement. [188626]

Ms Hewitt: I am not aware of any representations about the use of iTrips or similar devices.

Research and Development

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of public investment in research and development went to projects for which all or part of the results are kept from publication on grounds of commercial confidentiality in the latest period for which figures are available; and what trends the Government have identified relating to past and future variations in this proportion of public investment in research and development in the UK. [188077]

Ms Hewitt: The information is not available. In general, the Government tries to keep to a minimum results produced from publicly funded projects which are kept from publications on grounds of commercial confidentiality.

Rural Phone Boxes

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on Government policy on BT's proposed withdrawal of rural phone boxes. [188454]

Mr. Timms: The regulation of the provision of public call boxes is a matter for Ofcom. Ofcom is due to consult publicly on the matter this autumn in the context of universal service provision of telecoms services.

Science and Innovation Investment Framework

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what definition of the terms *(a)* public sector and *(b)* business research and development used in the paper Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–2014, published in July, with particular reference to table 1.1 of that paper. [188075]

Ms Hewitt: The sources for the statistics quoted in the Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–2014 paper are the UK Office for National Statistics R&D surveys for the UK data and OECD for international comparisons. R&D statistics for OECD countries are compiled in line with guidelines set out in the OECD's Frascati Manual.

(a) Public sector includes:

All UK-based departments, offices and other bodies which furnish, but normally do not sell to the community, those common services, other than higher education, which cannot otherwise be conveniently and economically provided, as well as those that administer the state and the economic and social policy of the community;

UK-based non-profit institutions controlled and mainly financed by government, but not administered by the higher education sector; and

UK-based non-market, private non-profit institutions serving households.

(b) The business sector includes:

All UK-based firms, organisations and institutions whose primary activity is the market production of goods or services (other than higher education) for sale to the general public at an economically significant price;

The UK-based private non-profit institutions mainly serving them.

The public sector is essentially composed of UK Government Departments, the Research Councils, Higher Education Institutions and private non-profit institutions. The business sector is all private enterprises in the UK.

Sellafield

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the court action being taken by the European Commission in respect of access arrangements for nuclear inspections at Sellafield, with particular reference to pond B30. [188054]

Nigel Griffiths: The Commission issued a press release dated 3 September 2004. The Department continues to seek a formal response on the detailed basis for the Commission's action, but I understand as of 10 September has yet to receive this. We have also continued to emphasise that the UK remains keen to engage in a full and co-operative dialogue with the Commission aimed at satisfactorily resolving the remaining Euratom Treaty safeguards issues at the B30 plant.

Access for nuclear safeguards inspections is provided according to the terms of Chapter 7 of the Euratom Treaty and the UK's safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The European Commission's published reports on its implementation of Euratom safeguards show that there is very considerable inspection effort in the UK (some 2400 days in 2002)—about half of which effort is at the Sellafield site. Safeguards inspectors have not been denied access for their verification and inspection activities at the Sellafield site, or elsewhere in the UK. Safeguards inspectors, as much as anyone else, have of course to be protected by UK regulations relating to radiological dose/safety—this is a factor in their access to the B30 plant. It has also been clearly acknowledged that poor visibility caused by the condition of the material in the B30 pond hinders safeguards verification there.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had relating to the termination of fuel reprocessing at Sellafield, with particular reference to *(a)* the timescale and *(b)* the cost to public funds. [188061]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Discussions have taken place as part of the wider process of restructuring BNFL. BNFL expects to complete their existing order book for reprocessing spent fuel at THORP by around 2010. Operation of THORP beyond completion of the existing order book would be dependent on there being new contracts for reprocessing further spent fuel at the plant which, in the first instance, is dependent on there being customer demand.

The Government's position on the future of THORP was set out in the July 2002 White Paper on Managing the Nuclear Legacy. We expect existing THORP contracts to be honoured. There are currently no proposals for new contracts for reprocessing further spent fuel at THORP. Before any such new THORP contracts could be concluded or changes made to existing contracts that increased the volume of spent fuel to be reprocessed at THORP, the approval of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry would be required. Before making a decision on any such future proposal, the Government would review it against the specific criteria that were set out in the White Paper and would consult publicly.

Small Businesses

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has commissioned on reducing the administrative burden for small businesses. [186664]

Nigel Griffiths: In August 2004, the Department commissioned Kingston University to undertake the first stage of a research project designed to identify the effects of regulation on small businesses at different stages of growth.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent action her Department has undertaken to support small businesses in the City of Newcastle upon Tyne. [186842]

Nigel Griffiths: Businesses can also access various DTI funding streams via Business Link Tyne and Wear.

Tyne and Wear Small Business Fund, through the Regional Development Agency's Single Programme Funding, (managed by Tyne and Wear Development Company and delivered by each local authority) is a 50 per cent. Capital Equipment Grant of between £500 and £2,500 available to pre-start and new businesses—up to 12 months old.

The core funding provided to Business Link Tyne and Wear, has provided a foundation on which the Business Link has sourced additional funding projected at £14.5 million for the benefit of businesses in Tyne and Wear, for the year 2004–05. In 2003–04 around £7.5 million was made available to SME's based in Tyne and Wear as part of projects managed by Business Link Tyne and Wear. One of these projects offers a subsidy of up to 50 per cent. for management development training and upskilling the workforce to SME's across Tyne and Wear.

The Employer Training Pilot, was piloted in Tyne and Wear during financial year 2003–04, and has been made available to businesses throughout the north east from April 2004. This helps businesses to improve the skills of their workforce by providing training tailored to their needs.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received following the cross-cutting review of Government services for small businesses about *(a)* lack of consumer focus and *(b)* inefficiency charged to recipients of Government grants through expensive collateral costs, including consultants' and accountants' fees; and if she will make a statement. [188814]

Nigel Griffiths: I have received many representations from businesses and business representative organisations about improving the customer focus of Government services, in particular by simplifying and improving the accessibility of the support available.

The Department has responded to this customer feedback in a number of ways. For example, following DTI's recent work on its business support portfolio, the range of support available has been rationalised to nine easy to use and easy to access products. Information on the website and in brochures is written in plain English, explaining what the products are and how to access them. Application processes have also been reviewed to make them easier for the customer to comply with. The changes mean that it is no longer necessary for businesses to make use of external professional advice or intervention to apply for and use the business support products.

Responding to concerns expressed by small businesses that they find it difficult to establish their regulatory responsibilities, my Department has published a "No-Nonsense Guide to Government rules and regulations for setting up your business". This brings together in one place, information about all the regulatory requirements applying to start-up and developing businesses.

Working with other Departments, the DTI has also improved the customer focus of its e-services through the launch of the businesslink.gov web portal in April. The site joins up national e-government services for the UK's four million small and medium-sized businesses, providing a single access point to information from all Departments that are important to small businesses, such as the Inland Revenue and the Health and Safety Executive. The site is currently securing about 100,000 visitors each week, and has recently won the International Visual Communication Association's Gold Award for the best website of 2004.

Solar PV

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department will take *(a)* to encourage further investment in the UK solar PV manufacturing industry and *(b)* to safeguard jobs in this sector when the first phase of the solar PV major demonstration programme ends. [188225]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The DTI has this week announced a further £6 million of funding to extend the Major Photovoltaics Demonstration Programme (PV MDP)

until March 2006; this brings the total funding allocated to this Programme to £31 million. In addition the Department has committed a total of £10 million to the large scale and domestic field trials. The DTI also supports Solar PV through its Technology Support Programme and through the Research Councils. This demonstrates the Governments intention to continue to support this industry and should encourage industry to continue to invest as well.

A low carbon buildings programme, as recommended by the DTI/Carbon Trust Renewables Innovation Review, is expected to supersede these two programmes and help safeguard jobs in this sector. We continue to work closely with the Regional Development Agencies on investment by indigenous employers and on attracting inward investment. The Department particularly welcomes the announcements earlier this year on investment in solar manufacturing capability by Sharp and Romag.

Telephone Charges

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on *(a)* the fraudulent misuse of premium rate numbers on the internet and *(b)* Government efforts to solve the problem. [188475]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The regulation of Premium Rate Services is a matter for the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services, with statutory backing from the Office of Communications (Ofcom).

The Government have recently asked Ofcom to review the regulation of Premium Rate Services (PRS) and Ofcom is due to report back at the beginning of October.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consideration has been given to banning premium rate internet lines as a means of tackling fraudulent misuse of premium rate numbers. [188476]

Mr. Timms: The regulation of premium rate services is a matter for the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS), with statutory backing from the Office of Communications (Ofcom).

The Government have recently asked Ofcom to review the regulation of Premium Rate Services (PRS) in order to examine strengthening ICSTIS' powers and Ofcom is due to report back at the beginning of October. ICSTIS, the Government and Ofcom have been considering all options, including banning PRS internet lines, for dealing with their fraudulent misuse.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she has taken to tackle improper premium rate charges for telephone calls being added to telephone bills through internet connections; and if she will make a statement. [188546]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The regulation of Premium Rate Services is a matter for the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS). The Government recently asked the Office of Communications (Ofcom) to carry out a review of PRS regulation in order to examine strengthening ICSTIS' powers. It is due to report back at the beginning of October.

Tissue Products

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will introduce legislation on the accurate labelling of tissue products; and what recent representations she has received from the Association of Makers of Soft Tissue Papers on the labelling of tissue products. [188104]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We have received no representation from the Association of Makers of Soft Tissue Papers. I have received your related letter of 2 September 2004 and will respond in due course. There are no plans to introduce legislation on the labelling of tissue products.

Unsolicited Goods and Services Act 1971

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many prosecutions there have been under the Unsolicited Goods and Services Act 1971 *(a)* since the introduction of the Act and *(b)* in each of the last five years. [188664]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: The Department of Trade and Industry does not collect statistics relating to the number of prosecutions made under the Unsolicited Goods and Services Act 1971.

Local authority trading standards departments are responsible for enforcement of the Act and will each keep a record of prosecutions they have taken.

Weapon Component Exports

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps are being taken to block the practice by some armaments manufacturers and exporters of exporting components of particular weapons to particular states where they can then be assembled and so avoid Government refusal to export particular weapons. [188131]

Nigel Griffiths: HMG assesses export licence application for component against the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria in the same way as main equipment. Full account of the equipment's potential end-use and destination as well as the stated end-use and destination is taken when making our licensing assessment. HMG also considers whether components are for use in licensed production and if so take account of any associated risks in the licensing assessment. HMG would not issue a licence where there was a clear risk the equipment would be misused or diverted. On making this decision HMG use information form a wide variety of sources, including overseas posts, NGOs, intelligence and historical licensing records.

Working Hours

Denzil Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her estimate is of the average number of hours worked by UK employees in the latest year for which figures are available. [184354]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The average of hours worked (that is total hours excluding overtime) for the last year is as follows:

Spring	*Hours*
2004	34.38
2003	34.45

These figures are produced monthly in Labour Market Trends, an ONS publication.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Accounting Practice

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office who the Finance Director of the *(a)* Central Office of Information and *(b)* Cabinet Office is; what accountancy qualifications each Director holds; and on how many occasions there has been a qualified opinion on (i) the resource accounts and (ii) other accounts of each in the last five years. [183433]

Ruth Kelly: The Finance Director of the Central Office of Information is Graham Beasant, who is a Chartered Management Accountant.

In the last five years:

No Resource Accounts have been qualified.

No Trading Fund Accounts have been qualified.

The Finance Director of the Cabinet Office is Jerry Page, who is a Chartered Management Accountant.

In the last five years:

Resource Accounts 1999–2000 received a qualified opinion and Resource Accounts 2002–03 received a disclaimer opinion, (that is the Comptroller and Auditor General was unable to form an opinion because the Accounts were not presented to him in sufficient time).

Appropriation Accounts ceased in 2000–01 with the introduction of Resource Accounts. During their life, no Appropriation Accounts were qualified.

The main reason for the disclaimer opinion on the 2002–03 accounts was because of deficiencies in the Cabinet Office financial systems and processes, which meant that the accounts took several months to prepare. The Cabinet Office is currently undertaking a major overhaul of its financial systems and processes to help it meet the Treasury's Faster Closing timetable, and consequently future years' accounts should be produced much more quickly, avoiding any disclaimed opinions.

Drugs

Paul Flynn: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how much the report produced by the Strategy Unit about the impact of interventions on the drug supply chain from international production to distribution within the UK cost; and whether it was funded using public money. [187545]

Mr. Milburn: The Strategy Unit took forward a study on high-harm-causing drugs, working closely with the Home Office and other key Departments. The study reviewed the impact of interventions on the drug supply chain from international production to distribution within the UK.

The Strategy Unit undertakes a range of public and private work. The total budget for the Unit for the last financial year (2003–04) was £4.7 million.

The Government's National Drug Strategy and a press notice are available on the Home Office website at www.drugs.gov.uk/ReportsandPublications/NationalStrategy/1038840683

Public Shareholdings

Gregory Barker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if she will make a statement on her Department's authority over the Government's public shareholder interests. [189074]

Ms Hewitt: I have been asked to reply.

While my Department has no direct authority over all of the Government's public shareholder interests, the Shareholder Executive, now located in the DTI, was set up last year as a small cross-cutting team with the remit to improve fundamentally the professionalism of Departments in exercising their shareholder roles. Its Chief Executive reports directly to the Cabinet Secretary in relation to this role. The Shareholder Executive discharges its responsibility by providing advice to a range of Departments on their shareholdings and by being directly responsible for a number of other shareholdings. Specifically, it reports to me on the DTI's shareholder role in relation to Royal Mail, BNFL, UKAEA and ECGD, to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury in respect of Partnerships-UK and Royal Mint (once the current review of the Mint is completed) and to the Secretary of State for International Development on Actis.

Strategy Unit

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many projects undertaken by the Strategy Unit since its creation have had a direct impact on *(a)* the Bridgwater parliamentary constituency and *(b)* the South West; and what assessment he has made of their effect on those areas. [186539]

Mr. Milburn: The Strategy Unit carries out a range of functions including:

long-term strategic reviews of major areas of policy;

studies of cross-cutting policy issues;

working with Departments to promote strategic thinking and improve policy-making across Whitehall; and

work to improve the quality and standards of Government social research.

A full list of the unit's projects is available on its website at www.strategy.gov.uk.

No assessment of the regional impact of the unit's work has been carried out.

DEFENCE

Aircraft Carriers (Escorts)

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what level of escorts the two proposed aircraft carriers will require. [188799]

Mr. Ingram: The level of escort required by aircraft carriers is dependent upon the environment in which it is operating, although routinely such ships operate as part of a Task Group. Current surface escort ships include Type 42 Anti-Air Warfare Destroyers and Type 22 and 23 Frigates. The capability currently provided by Type 42 will be enhanced by the introduction of the Type 45 destroyer, equipped with the Principal Anti-Air Missile System (PAAMS).

Armed Forces Staffing Levels

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the UK armed forces full-time strength *(a)* numbers and *(b)* requirements are for each of the three forces. [189803]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to Tri-Service Publication (TSP) 3:UK Armed Forces Strengths and Requirements.

This is available in the House of Commons Library and is updated on a monthly basis.

TSP 3 for 1 August 2004 was published on 14 September 2004. The 1 September 2004 issue is due for publication between 29 September and 13 October.

AWE Aldermaston

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what environmental impact assessment has been conducted on the planned hydrodynamics explosives testing facility at AWE Aldermaston; and what his estimate is of the cost of the facility. [189341]

Mr. Ingram: A number of options for such a facility are still under consideration and mature costings are therefore not available. Environmental impact is one of a range of issues that will be addressed in the normal way as our plans develop.

Chinook ZD576

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who defined the terms of reference of the RAF Board of Inquiry into the aircraft accident of Chinook ZD576 on 2 June 1994; and who advised the President of the Board of Inquiry of the terms of reference. [189324]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* The Air Officer Commanding No. 1 Group, as the convening Officer, with advice from No. 1 Group Flight Safety Staff, drafted the Terms of Reference. The Board, including the President, were then given a brief by the Air Officer Commanding 1Gp on their Terms of Reference before starting the Board of Inquiry.

Civil Emergencies

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the likely impact of proposed changes in defence spending on resources available to respond to UK civil emergencies. [189499]

Mr. Ingram: Our White Paper "Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities" made clear our continued commitment to supporting the civil authorities charged with the safety and security in the United Kingdom, both through routine tasks and our preparedness to support them in a time of crisis. The changes we have announced, underpinned by the increases in defence spending provided in the 2004 Spending Review, will make our armed forces even more flexible and adaptable.

Civil Service (Job Losses)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which services within his Department will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review. [189640]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 16 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 1659W, by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Coastal Protection (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact on security of his decision to decommission three coastal protection vessels in Northern Ireland. [187419]

Mr. Ingram: The decision to withdraw from service by April 2007 the three hunt-class patrol vessels from Northern Ireland coastal waters reflected the Chief Constable's and General Officer Commanding's assessment of the improved security situation in Northern Ireland.

Colchester Garrison

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether the sale of family accommodation and land at Colchester Garrison to Annington Homes included provision for Annington to share with the Government the proceeds of future sales to others; and if he will make a statement; [187992]

(2) how many units of family accommodation at Colchester Garrison were sold to Annington Homes; [187993]

(3) what the average price per dwelling received was from the sale of family accommodation at Colchester Garrison to Annington Homes. [187994]

Mr. Caplin: Under the terms of the 1996 Sale Agreement the Exchequer benefits from a Profit Share arrangement following subsequent disposal by Annington Homes Ltd. of surplus houses handed back by the Ministry of Defence. This arrangement applies for the first 15 years following the 1996 sale and is based on a sliding percentage of the profit made by the Company after allowable overheads have been deducted. To date the Exchequer has received approximately £100 million under this arrangement.

1,400 properties in the Colchester area were included in the 1996 sale and leaseback agreement with Annington Homes Ltd. The average price received for all properties included in the 1996 arrangement with Annington Homes Ltd was in the region of £29,000.

Colombia

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will end UK military aid to Colombia; and if he will make a statement. [189751]

Mr. Ingram: No. British military assistance to Colombia is focused primarily on Explosive Ordinance Disposal training, and provision of British military education. It complements Colombian efforts to reduce the number of deaths, both civilian and military, from explosive devices, and introduces Colombian military personnel to British defence concepts in key areas such as Rules of Engagement and democratic and accountable control of the armed forces. In view of the clear humanitarian benefits this British military assistance offers to the Colombian people, we do not intend to suspend it.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what British military assistance has been received by the Colombian Army 2nd Division. [189752]

Mr. Ingram: The Colombian Army 2nd Division has received no specific British military assistance.

Contract DC4BESL/1002

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the time scale for the supply of equipment for the contract DC2ESL/3122 Op Telic. [184350]

Mr. Ingram: The invitation to tender, which included this Operation Telic clothing requirement, sought the best delivery schedule possible. The deliveries against orders placed are expected to meet the required delivery date of January 2005.

Cooking Oils

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what plans his Department has to sell its used cooking oils to overseas purchasers; and if he will make a statement; [189290]

(2) if he will make a statement on his Department's plans to collect used cooking oils and sell them to be used in the manufacture of diesel. [189293]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Defence Attachés

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost was of defence attachés in each financial year since 2001–02. [187125]

Mr. Ingram: The overall cost of Defence Attachés in each financial year since 2001–02 are not held centrally. Costs readily available are as follows:

Financial Year	*Costs identified (£ million)*
2001–02	37.2
2002–03	37.1
2003–04	38.1

Under the terms of the MOD/FCO Service Level Agreement, costs are shared with the FCO which pays 30 per cent. of the total in respect of accommodation, fixed communications, security and some other support costs. The figures above are the 70 per cent. total costs of Defence Attaches attributable to the Defence Budget. These figures include:

Salary.

Cost of Allowances, Travel and Subsistence.

Direct Representational Expenses.

Utilities, vehicles, office machinery, IT, children's school fees.

Medical/Dental costs.

Personal Security enhancements.

Associated Support costs.

Defence Aviation Repair Agency

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list his Department's turnover for *(a)* the Defence Aviation Repair Agency for each of the financial years 2001–02 to 2003–04 and *(b)* the Army Base Repair Organisation for each of the financial years (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04. [189192]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* Turnover figures for both the Defence Aviation Repair Agency (DARA), and the Army Base Repair Organisation (ABRO) are published annually in their Annual Report and Accounts, copies of which are held in the Libraries of the House. They are also accessible on the Agencies' website: www.dara.mod.uk and www.abro.mod.uk respectively.

DARA's Turnover Figures

Financial Year	*£ million*
2001–02	228.9
2002–03	196.6
2003–04	189.5

ABRO's Turnover Figures

Financial Year	*£ million*
2002–03	157.2
2003–04	150.8

Defence Diversification Agency/Council

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the activities of the Defence Diversification Agency are; who the senior employee is; how much it spent in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04; and what its budget is for 2004–05. [188918]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Diversification Agency continues to pursue its original aims of encouraging the wider use of defence science and technology in the civil sector, encouraging the transfer of suitable civil technology into military programmes and assisting the defence industry with their own diversification planning. The Agency is headed by Professor Damien McDonnell OBE. Gross expenditure in 2001–02 was £2.6 million, in 2002–03 £4.1 million and 2003–04 £4.6 million. The budget for the current year is £5.5 million.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the members of the Defence Diversification Council; and how frequently it meets. [188919]

Mr. Ingram: The formation of a Defence Diversification Council has not been pursued pending the completion of an internal review of the Defence Diversification Agency.

Defence Information Infrastructure Contract

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to announce the preferred bidder for the Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) contract. [188264]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* It is intended that the identity of the Preferred Bidder for the Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) contract will be announced early in 2005.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the consequences for jobs and skills in North West England of decisions he may take on the Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) contract. [188265]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* No discussions have taken place between my right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Defence and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry with reference to the impact of the Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) (DII(Future)) contract. However, as part of the Assessment Phase for DII (Future), officials from the Supplier Relations Group in the Defence Procurement Agency have liaised with the Aerospace and Defence Unit of the DTI in respect of the UK impact of the respective bidders' proposals.

Defence Spending Review

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the implications of *(a)* the Defence Spending Review and *(b)* the proposals set out in his oral statement on future capabilities for defence on 21 July for (i) RAF Leeming, (ii) RAF Linton on Ouse, (iii) AAC Dishforth and (iv) Alanbrooke Barracks; and if he will make a statement. [186618]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence White Paper "Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities" published on 21 July set out our future plans for Defence. The White Paper took account of the Spending Review 2004 settlement for Defence. As the White Paper set out, we intend to disband a Tornado F3 squadron based at RAF Leeming by the end of October 2005. The Hawk squadron will continue to be based there. The future role of the base will be considered as part of a wider review of Defence Airfields. RAF Linton on Ouse and AAC Dishforth are also within the scope of the Defence Airfield Review, which will be completed in 2005.

There are no plans to close Alanbrooke Barracks at Topcliffe. We are, however, examining the type of unit that is based there as a result of work on the Future Army Structure. The future need for the Airfield at the barracks is to be considered under the Defence Airfield Review. This is not expected to have any impact on the Army's use of the barracks.

Departmental Recycling

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the latest available 12 month figures are for the proportion of the Department's redundant documentation, waste paper and card that is recycled; and if he will make a statement on the Department's recycling policy. [188694]

Mr. Caplin: At this current time the Ministry of Defence does not hold data on the proportion of its paper, cardboard and redundant documentation that is consigned for recycling.

MOD policy on waste management and recycling is set out in Joint Services Publication 418, the MOD Environment Manual, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. Departmental policy also takes account of the requirements of the waste targets contained within the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate.

Departmental Staff

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* regular military personnel, *(b)* Territorial Army and other part-time military personnel and *(c)* civilian personnel have been employed by his Department in (i) total, (ii) Yorkshire and the Humber, (iii) North Yorkshire and (iv) City of York in each year since 1979. [188952]

Mr. Caplin: The information requested is as follows:

(a) (i) The total number of UK regular forces as at 1 April for each year since 1979 is as follows:

	Total
2004	207,020
2003	206,920
2002	204,690
2001	205,650
2000	207,620
1999	208,640
1998	210,140
1997	210,820
1996	221,870
1995	233,340
1994	254,490
1993	274,850
1992	293,440
1991	298,060
1990	305,710
1989	311,650
1988	316,900
1987	319,850
1986	322,510

	Total
1985	326,220
1984	325,910
1983	320,620
1982	327,650
1981	333,760
1980	320,600
1979	314,900

(ii) The total number of UK regular forces in (ii) Yorkshire and Humber, (iii) North Yorkshire and (iv) City of York as at 1 July for each year since 1979 is given in the following table:

	Yorkshire and Humber	North Yorkshire	York
2004	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003	n/a	n/a	n/a
2002	13,840	12,070	680
2001	12,800	11,030	650
2000	13,060	11,240	740
1999	11,040	9,590	700
1998	12,090	10,220	750
1997	10,960	9,500	810
1996	12,150	10,130	940
1995	12,320	10,620	560
1994	12,790	10,820	2,070
1993	13,340	11,790	1,130
1992	15,770	13,430	1,050
1991	15,260	12,660	1,110
1990	15,520	12,840	1,040
1989	15,250	12,290	1,100
1988	15,360	12,290	1,210
1987	14,450	11,120	1,180
1986	14,750	11,520	1,090
1985	14,770	11,730	1,150
1984	14,780	12,030	1,160
1983	14,870	11,750	1,150
1982	13,500	10,470	620
1981	13,610	10,620	630
1980	14,620	11,520	670
1979	13,920	11,100	700

Notes:
1. The figures in part *(a)* are for UK regular forces, both trained and untrained; they therefore exclude Gurkhas, full-time Reserve Service personnel, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and mobilised reservists.
2. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
3. n/a denotes unavailable.

(b) (i) The total number of Reserve forces is given in the following table as at 1 April for each year since 1979:

	Total
2004	245,020
2003	257,880
2002	271,520
2001	282,550
2000	293,100
1999	305,440
1998	317,880
1997	321,980
1996	326,640
1995	328,780
1994	333,490
1993	334,270
1992	340,950
1991	339,550
1990	332,010
1989	320,260
1988	313,520
1987	307,790
1986	297,800
1985	286,950
1984	276,800
1983	273,460
1982	275,550
1981	272,990
1980	262,030
1979	255,280

Notes:
1. All tables include Mobilised/Activated Reservists but exclude Reservists serving in a Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) role.
2. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

(ii), (iii) and (iv) Reserve Service personnel data by location are unavailable.

(c) (i) The number of full-time equivalent civilian personnel in the MOD as at 1 April for each year since 1979 is as follows:

	Total
2004	109,050
2003	107,580
2002	110,090
2001	118,170
2000	121,290
1999	123,010
1998	126,290
1997	133,330
1996	135,360
1995	141,140
1994	148,790
1993[1]	159,570
1992	139,450
1991	140,200
1990	141,370
1989	141,320
1988	143,400
1987	164,000
1986	169,460
1985	174,080
1984	181,180
1983	190,330
1982	197,490
1981	208,760
1980	218,030
1979	224,700

[1] Figures from 1993 onwards are calculated according to the revised definition of civilian personnel. Prior to this, numbers given are for permanent, full-time equivalent staff, non-industrial and industrial, including Trading Funds and excluding those on career breaks, long-term sick leave, secondment etc.

Note:
All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

(ii) The number of full-time equivalent civilian personnel in the Yorkshire and the Humber economic planning region /Government Office Region as at 1 July for each year since 1979 is as follows:

	Total
2004	3,940
2003	3,540
2002	3,450
2001	3,340
2000	3,270
1999	3,430
1998	3,490
1997	3,430
1996	3,830

	Total
1995	4,550
1994[1]	4,970
1993	5,310
1992	5,550
1991	5,710
1990	5,960
1989	5,780
1988	5,890
1987	6,040
1986	6,300
1985	6,340
1984	n/a
1983	n/a
1982	n/a
1981	n/a
1980	n/a
1979	n/a

[1] Figures from 1994 onwards are calculated according to the revised definition of civilian personnel. Prior to this, numbers given are for permanent, full-time equivalent staff, non-industrial and industrial, including Trading Funds and excluding those on career breaks, long-term sick leave, secondment etc. No figures are available prior to 1985.

Notes:

1. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. n/a denotes unavailable.

(iii), (iv) Reliable data are not available below Government Office Region level.

Detainees (US)

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assistance the UK has provided to the US authorities in the detention and interrogation of terrorist suspects; and if he will make a statement. [185050]

Mr. Ingram: Three United Kingdom forces personnel were involved in interrogation and debriefing of individuals held by United States Authorities at Abu Ghraib prison in early 2004, some of whom had suspected links to terrorism. In addition, UK armed forces personnel who are part of the Iraq Survey Group have been involved in interrogation and questioning of US detainees. In no other current operation have UK military personnel interrogated US detainees.

Far East Prisoners of War

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many former Far East prisoners of war in Pendle received an ex gratia award of £10,000. [188571]

Mr. Caplin: The information requested could only be found by manually checking the individual claims of all successful applicants under the Ex Gratia Payment Scheme for Far East Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees, a number now approaching 24,000. This work could be carried out only at disproportionate cost.

FRES Programme

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the *(a)* total budget and *(b)* budget timetable for the Future Rapid Effect System programme. [188783]

Mr. Ingram: The full Future Rapid Effect System (FRES) programme cost has yet to be established, but the provision for acquisition could be in the region of £6 billion. Whole life costs are estimated at £49 billion. FRES is in the early stages of its Assessment Phase, during which a range of options to meet the requirement will be considered. Once we are clearer as to the options available we can better determine the funding profile.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which other countries will be part of the Future Rapid Effect System programme; and whether it will be compatible with the equivalent US system. [188784]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Rapid Effect System is expected to support joint operations with NATO allies. Co-operation during the Assessment Phase is likely to focus on harmonising requirements for interoperability in support of coalition operations and mitigating common areas of technology risk. However, opportunities for collaborating on sub-systems and sharing information on technologies and requirements will be explored during the Assessment Phase, and the scope for future collaboration assessed prior to the Main Gate investment decision.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which present and future vehicles will carry the Future Rapid Effects System. [188785]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Rapid Effect System (FRES) will not be carried on present and future vehicles. FRES is the generic name for the capability being sought to enhance the deployability of Land Forces. It is anticipated that the capability will be provided by a family of medium-weight, networked armoured vehicles. Concurrently, FRES will replace the CVR(T) series, Saxon and elements of the existing FV430 series.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Future Rapid Effect System will be operational without other countries providing spares or holding necessary hardware. [188786]

Mr. Ingram: As laid down in our Defence Industrial Policy, we are firmly committed to promoting a strong and competitive UK defence manufacturing industry. Our policy enables us to evaluate industrial capabilities and take decisions on whether there is a need to retain these in the UK against defined criteria. This will be one factor taken into account as part of the main investment decision.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Future Rapid Effect System will be operational by 2010. [188787]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Rapid Effect System (FRES) has recently achieved Initial Gate approval, and is now in its Assessment Phase. Part of this Assessment Phase work will be to identify and reduce risk in the programme to enable us to define an appropriate In-Service Date (ISD) in both capability and programme terms for endorsement at Main Gate. The ISD will not be formally endorsed until then, but our initial planning assumption is to introduce the early variants of FRES around the end of the decade, with a phased approach to achieving full operational capability.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what international peacekeeping and stability roles the Future Rapid Effect System will have; and what role it will have in post conflict reconstruction. [188788]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Rapid Effect System (FRES) will be the central pillar of a capable, coherent and highly deployable medium force with broad utility across the spectrum of operations. It is envisaged that its wide operational utility and its ability to deploy rapidly will enhance the UK's ability to contribute to appropriate peacekeeping, stability and post-conflict resolution operations.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the projected cost is of each Future Rapid Effect System unit. [188789]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Rapid Effect System Project is in the early stages of its Assessment Phase; it is therefore too early to determine the unit cost. Part of the Assessment work will focus on developing a series of affordable options for meeting the requirement.

Gurkha Service Personnel

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received regarding the provision of *(a)* pensions and *(b)* other forms of support to Gurkha Service personnel who have served with HM forces; and if he will make a statement. [179190]

Mr. Caplin: I receive representations from members of both Houses and from interested individuals and organisations about a range of issues, including pensions and other forms of support to Gurkha Service personnel. These have included comparisons between British and Gurkha soldiers' pay and pensions; confusion about the benefits Gurkhas are entitled to; and comments about their treatment by successive British Governments.

Gurkha pay, allowances and pensions are regularly reviewed. In terms of welfare provision to Gurkhas following discharge from the Army, MOD makes a substantial annual grant to cover the administrative costs of the Gurkha Welfare Trust in support of the charity's work in Nepal.

HMS Vanguard

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the original date was for the re-commissioning of HMS Vanguard; what the current forecast is; what procedures have still to be completed; what the reasons are for the delay; what the *(a)* original cost estimate was and *(b)* what the current cost estimate is; and if he will make a statement. [189384]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Vanguard was originally due to return to the fleet in the third quarter of 2004. Her return to fleet is currently forecast for the second quarter of 2005. The main procedures still to be completed are working up of the nuclear reactor, preparations for and undertaking sea trials.

The underpinning reasons for the delay stem from the fact that this is the first time a Vanguard Class submarine has undergone a Long Overhaul Period or been refuelled. It is also the first fit of a new design reactor core and the first use of DML's new nuclear refitting and refuelling facility for Vanguard Class submarines. As is usual with major refits and Long Overhaul periods, there has also been an element of work that cannot be pre-planned in the regeneration of the equipment that has been dormant during the Long Overhaul Period (Refuelling).

The direct cost of the Long Overhaul Period (Refuelling) remains within the originally approved total of approximately £210 million (at outturn prices). However, the Department is currently negotiating with Devonport Management Ltd. on consequential costs as a result of the delay to HMS Vanguard leaving the dockyard. It is too early to say what the outcome of these negotiations will be.

Infantry Battalions

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the expected financial saving will be from the reduction of infantry battalions; and who will take the decision on which infantry battalions are to be disbanded. [188793]

Mr. Ingram: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced to the House on 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343–50, plans to transform the armed forces to ensure they are structured, equipped and trained to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. As part of this transformation the Army will restructure its infantry, taking into account the decision to cease arms plotting and the planned reduction in the number of infantry battalions as a result of the improving situation in Northern Ireland. The manpower freed up from the reductions in infantry battalions will be reinvested across the Army in a rebalancing exercise, to strengthen key enabling capabilities such as signals, logistics, engineers and intelligence and to fill gaps elsewhere in the infantry.

The Army is working on the details of the new structure and recommendations will be made to Ministers for approval before the end of this year.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the interval was between overseas or Northern Ireland operational tours for each infantry battalion since 1 June 1997, and what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* date of each operational tour on which each infantry battalion was deployed. [187340]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 7 September 2004]:* The details of operational tours and tour intervals for each infantry battalion since 1 June 1997 are not held centrally and can only be provided at disproportionate cost. I can, however, provide the details from 1 July 2001 to 1 July 2004 and these can be found in the following table.

Deployments have been defined as unaccompanied unit level operational tours.

Regiment	Operational tour	Interval	Operational tour	Interval	Operational tour	Interval	Operational tour
1st Battalion. The Grenadier Guards	Northern Ireland. November 2001-May 2002	14 months	Falkland Islands July 2003 - October 2003	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Coldstream Guards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Scots Guards	Northern Ireland. May 2001-November 2001	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Irish Guards	Iraq February-June 2003	5 month	Northern Ireland December 2003—March 2004	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Welsh Guards	Bosnia April-September 2002	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 Battalion. The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)	Bosnia. October 2002-March 2003	7 months	Iraq November 2003—April 2004	—	—	—	—
1 Battalion. The Royal Highland Fusiliers (Princess Margaret's Own Glasgow and Ayrshire Regiment)	Falkland Islands. November 2003-April 2004	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Kings Own Scottish Borderers	Northern Ireland. September 2001-March 2002	14 months	Iraq July - October 2003	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Black Watch (The Highland Regiment)	Kosovo July -November 2001	15 months	Iraq February-June 2003	12 months	Iraq July 2004-	—	—
1st Battalion. The Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons)	Kosovo January-May 2002	10 months	Bosnia April-October 2003	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)	Iraq January-July 2004	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires)	Kosovo May -December 2002	16 months	Iraq April 2004 -	—	—	—	—
2nd Battalion. The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires)	Northern Ireland June-November 2003	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	Iraq February-June 2003	4 months	ISRTF November 2003—May 2004	—	—	—	—
2nd Battalion. The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	Northern Ireland December 2001-June 2002	10 months	Northern Ireland April-August 2003	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Royal Anglian Regiment	Afghanistan March-September 2002	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd Battalion. The Royal Anglian Regiment	Northern Ireland June-December 2002	3 months	Afghanistan March-October 2003	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Kings Own Royal Border Regiment	Falkland Islands November 2001-February 2002	26 months	Northern Ireland June 2004 -				
1st Battalion. The Kings Regiment	Iraq July-November 2003	6 months	Kosovo May 2004-	—	—	—	—
1* Battalion The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire	Bosnia April 2004-	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment)	Afghanistan April 2004-	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Queens Lancashire Regiment	Northern Ireland March-September 2001	21 months	Iraq July-October 2003	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)	Iraq March-July 2003	0 months	Kosovo July—November 2003				
1st Battalion. The Royal Irish Regiment (27th (Inniskilling), 83rd, 87* and The Ulster Defence Regiment)	Northern Ireland June-December 2001	13 months	Iraq February-May 2003	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion The Cheshire Regiment	Northern Ireland June-December 2002	15 months	Iraq April 2004-	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers	Northern Ireland June-December 2001	28 months	Iraq April 2004 -	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion. The Royal Regiment of Wales (24*741* Foot)	Kosovo November 2001-May 2002	16 months	Iraq November 2003—April 2004	—	—	—	—
1* Battalion. The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment	Northern Ireland December 2002-June 2003	11 months	Falkland Islands (Sub Unit) May 2004	—	—	—	—

Regiment	Operational tour	Interval	Operational tour	Interval	Operational tour	Interval	Operational tour
1st Battalion, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment (29th/45th Foot)	Northern Ireland May-December 2003	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's)	Kosovo November 2002-May 2003	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion, The Light Infantry	Iraq February-June 2003	5 month	Iraq November 2003—April 2004	—	—	—	—
2nd Battalion, The Light Infantry	Falkland Islands November 2002-July 2003	2 months	Iraq September-November 20003	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets	Northern Ireland May-November 2002	10 months	Iraq September-December 2003	3 months	Northern Ireland March 2004 -	—	—
2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets	Bosnia June-November 2001	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles	Sierra Leone January-July 2002	14 months	Bosnia October 2003-April 2004	—	—	—	—
2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles	Bosnia November 2001-May 2002	17 months	Afghanistan October 2003-April 2004	—	—	—	—
1st Battalion, The Parachute Regiment	Iraq February-July 2003	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment	Afghanistan January-March 2002	3 months	Falkland Islands (Sub Unit) July—September 2002	0 months	Northern Ireland September 2002-April 2003	7 months	Iraq December 2003-March 2004
3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment	Northern Ireland December 2001-May 2002	0 months	Falkland Islands (Sub Unit) May-July 2002	5 months	Iraq February-July 2003	10 months	Northern Ireland May 2004-

Note:
Intervals have been rounded where deployment began other than at the start or end of the month.

Iraq

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the wording is of the aide memoire card on the law of armed conflict supplied to UK military personnel deploying to Iraq; how many of these cards have been issued; and how many have been printed. [182732]

Mr. Ingram: A copy of the aide memoire will be placed in the library of the house. 20,000 copies were printed and issued as part of a training programme for troops deployed to Iraq.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether members of his departmental staff were informed in July 2003 that the Secret Intelligence Service in that month had withdrawn reporting from a source who claimed that the production of biological and chemical agents had been accelerated by the Iraqi regime, because the source of the reporting had subsequently been deemed unreliable. [185787]

Mr. Hoon: We have nothing further to add to the remarks that were made in the debate on Iraq on 20 July.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of HM Forces were injured in Iraq *(a)* during the war and *(b)* subsequently; and in each case how many were returned to the UK for medical treatment. [188136]

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many British troops have been repatriated from Iraq to the UK because of physical or mental illness; [188779]

(2) how many British troops have been injured in *(a)* combat and *(b)* non-combat duties in Iraq. [188718]

Mr. Ingram: 155 UK military personnel were injured in combat during decisive combat operations but we do not hold centrally the number medically evacuated in the period.

To date 2,703 UK military personnel have been medically evacuated from Iraq. We do not hold centrally records of the number of injured personnel who were treated locally and then returned to duty without being medically evacuated.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to make a separate status of forces agreement with the Iraqi Government. [188317]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans at the present time to make a separate status of forces agreement with the Iraqi Government.

Under Article 59 of the Transitional Administrative Law (the law for the administration of Iraq during the transition period—promulgated by the Iraqi Governing Council in March 2004), the Iraqi Interim Government has no powers to conclude any binding international agreements, which would include status of forces agreements. This power will belong to the elected Transitional Government.

Until the Transitional Government is in place, Coalition Provisional Authority Order 17 covers the terms of the MNF presence in Iraq, and includes those areas which would normally be covered in a status of forces agreement.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what safeguards have been put in place by his Department to prevent the mistreatment of detainees in Iraq. [188321]

Mr. Ingram: All United Kingdom armed forces personnel deployed to Iraq are trained to treat prisoners in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. In addition, each major unit has a number of personnel specially trained in prisoner handling.

In Theatre there are clear procedures for the running of the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility (DTDF). Their operation is monitored through regular inspections and visits.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans his Department has to provide security *(a)* before, *(b)* during and *(c)* after elections in Iraq. [188342]

Mr. Ingram: There are some 9,200 UK personnel committed to Iraq whose role is to assist the Iraqi Interim Government and Iraq Security Forces in the provision of security.

Iraqi Government and Multinational Force commanders continue to consider the levels and dispositions of forces required in Iraq in the months ahead, to support the process leading to the election of a Transitional Assembly and Government early in 2005.

If it is judged that further changes to the UK military contribution in Iraq would be appropriate to support this process, we will of course inform the House at the earliest opportunity. At present, however, no decision has been taken.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British troops serving in Iraq have subsequently been invalided out of the armed forces. [188778]

Mr. Ingram: As at 31 July 2004 centrally held records show that 46 service personnel who had been deployed on Operation Telic, between 18 January 2003 and 30 June 2004, have subsequently been medically discharged from the Armed Forces either as a result of injuries received or as a result of disease-related causes.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of HM forces have lost their lives in Iraq since 1 July 2003. [188828]

Mr. Ingram: Between 1 July 2003 and 10 September 2004, 23 members of the UK armed forces were killed while engaged on operations in Iraq.

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will reintroduce the free parcel service to troops in Iraq. [189488]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my written ministerial statement of 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 70WS, and subsequent answers of 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1155W, to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock), 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1605W, to the hon. Member for Mid-Norfolk (Mr. Simpson), 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1527W, to the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Randall), 15 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 811W, to the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Pike) and 1 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 713W, to the hon. Member for Batley and Spen (Mr. Wood).

There are no plans to reintroduce the free postal packet service to Service personnel deployed in the Iraq theatre of operations.

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact of the deployment in Iraq on the ability of the armed forces to assist in UK civil emergencies, with particular reference to the flooding in Cornwall during August. [189500]

Mr. Ingram: No special assessment is necessary. It continues to be the case that, if asked to provide assistance, the Armed Forces would draw on the most appropriate resources available at the time. In the case of the flooding in Cornwall during August, help was provided by Search and Rescue assets permanently based in the South West.

Kenley Airfield

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for future use of Kenley Airfield. [189399]

Mr. Caplin: The future use of Kenley Airfield is kept under review. However, there are no current plans to cease defence gliding activity on that site.

Meteorological/Hydrographic Offices

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list his Department's turnover for the *(a)* Meteorological Office and *(b)* UK Hydrographic Office for each financial year from 1997–98 to 2003–04. [189193]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 16 September 2004]*: Turnover figures for the Meteorological Office and UK Hydrographic Office are included in their Annual Reports and Accounts which are placed in the Libraries of the House and, from 1999–2000, published on the web sites www.met-office.gov.uk and www.hydro.gov.uk respectively.

The Met Office turnover figures are:

Financial Year	*Turnover (£ million)*
1997–98	154.8
1998–99	152.9
1999–2000	151.0
2000–01	154.4
2001–02	154.8
2002–03	157.4
2003–04	160.8

The UK Hydrographic Office turnover figures are:

Financial Year	*Turnover (£ million)*
1997–98	39.9
1998–99	43.6
1999–2000	44.9
2000–01	49.1
2001–02	53.2
2002–03	56.1
2003–04	63.1

Military Operating Structures

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the operating structures of the *(a)* Queen's and Light Division and *(b)* Prince of Wales and King's Division. [188782]

Mr. Ingram: I have assumed that the hon. Member is referring to the Regimental structure of the Divisions in Question and have answered the question accordingly. This information is provided in the following table:

Division	*Comprising of*
The Queen's Division	The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment
	The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers
	The Royal Anglian Regiment
	The London Regiment
Light Division	The Light Infantry
	The Royal Green Jackets
Prince of Wales Division	The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment
	The Cheshire Regiment
	The Royal Welch Fusiliers
	The Royal Regiment of Wales
	The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment
	The Staffordshire Regiment
King's Division	The King's Own Royal Border Regiment
	The King's Regiment
	The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire
	The Green Howards
	The Queen's Lancashire Regiment
	The Duke of Wellington's Regiment

MOD Land

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the land in Scotland not owned or leased by his Department but over which it has limited rights, including areas of foreshore; and if he will make a statement. [173439]

Mr. Caplin: The information requested is set out as follows.

List of current land over which MOD has limited rights

Location			*Date*
DERA Hebrides Range	South Uist	Restrictions and access	1 November 1968
DERA Hebrides Range	South Uist	Compensation payment for restrictive rights over areas of land known as danger areas	19 May 1973
Galloway Trg. Area	Galloway Forest	Training area	1 January 1987
Cultybraggan Trg. Camp	Cultybraggan	Land for dry training	23 September 1989
Tighnablair Trg. Area	Cultybraggan	Land for Army training	1 June 1990
Barry Buddon	Barry Buddon	Lightkeepers House	1 September 1990
Lossie Forest Trg. Area	Lossie Forest	Land for training	1 January 1992
Tighnablair Trg. Area	Cultybraggan	Land for Army training	16 May 1992
Castle Kennedy Trg. Area	Castle Kennedy Airfield	Army training	1 January 1993
Ardgarten Trg. Area	Ardgarten Forest	Training land	1 July 1993
Glutt Field	Glutt Field	Firing range	16 February 1994
Ardgarten Training Area	Glencroe Hill	Training land	1 June 1994
Loch Ewe Trg. Area	Gairloch Estate	Army training area	1 October 1995
Loch Ewe Trg. Area	Inveran Estate	Army training area	1 October 1995
Loch Ewe Trg. Area	Big Sands Estate	Army training area	1 October 1995
Cultybraggan Trg. Camp	Lochearn	Training rights	1 April 1996
Cultybraggan Trg. Camp	Bennybeg Crags	Climbing Training	1 April 1996
Charterhall	Charterhall	Training Area	12 August 1996
Wyvis Estate	Evanton	Training area	21 October 1996
Grantown-on-Spey	RAF OAC Grantown-on-Spey	Area of land for training	1 April 1997
Grantown-on-Spey	RAF OAC Grantown-on-Spey	Area of land for training	1 April 1997
Inverness	Leiterchuillin Crags	Lease of training rights	1 April 1998
Wolfehopelee Forest	Wolfehopelee Forest	Training area	1 January 1999
Grandtully	Aberfeldy	Training rights	1 July 1999
Dalbeattie	Edingham Fibua Site	Training rights	15 January 2000
Loch Fyne	Noise Trials Range	Lease of land	20 March 2000
Loch Ewe Trg. Area	Tournaig Estate	Training rights	1 April 2000
Galloway	Galloway	Access track to trg. area	1 April 2001
Loch Ewe Trg. Area	Aultbea Estate	Training rights	1 April 2002
Machrihanish	Machrihanish Trg. Area	Land for military training	1 April 2002
South Kintyre	South Kintyre Trg. Area	Land for training	1 April 2002
South Kintyre Trg. Area	South Kintyre	Land for military training	1 April 2002
South Kintyre	South Kintyre Trg. Area	Land for military training	1 April 2002
Balduff Training Area	Balduff	Lease of land for military training	1 May 2002
Balduff Training Area	Balduff	Lease of land for military training	1 May 2002
Balduff Training Area	Balduff	Lease of land for military training	1 May 2002
Balduff Training Area	Balduff	Lease of land for military Training	1 May 2002
Huntleys Cave	Grantown-on-Spey	Rock climbing	1 April 2003

Location (no particular establishment overseeing)	*A right in Perpetuity is usually associated with a facility owned by the MOD and restricts the landowner in undertaking certain types of activity or development. The Terminable rights are in association with leased with leased land and usually terminate at the same time as the lease expires*	*Start date*
Southqueensferry	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	July 1863
Milltown	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	February 1955
Saxa Vord	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	March 1960
Rona and Raasay Isles	Restrictive rights Terminable	April 1961
Craigowl Hill	Restrictive rights Terminable	February 1962
Skipness	Restrictive rights Terminable	February 1963
Aultbea	Restrictive rights Terminable	October 1963
Blackdog	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	February 1964
Cultybraggan	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	November 1966
Benbecula	Restrictive rights Terminable	September 1967

Location (no particular establishment overseeing)	*A right in Perpetuity is usually associated with a facility owned by the MOD and restricts the landowner in undertaking certain types of activity or development. The Terminable rights are in association with leased with leased land and usually terminate at the same time as the lease expires*	*Start date*
Burntisland	Restrictive rights Terminable	December 1967
South Uist	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	November 1968
Coveśea	Restrictive rights Terminable	December 1968
Uig	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	June 1969
Wick	Restrictive rights Terminable	November 1969
Machrihanish	Restrictive rights Terminable	December 1971
Eskdalemuir	Restrictive rights Terminable	September 1972
Crimond	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	June 1973
Clyinder	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	October 1973
Applecross	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	October 1974
Respeath	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	November 1975
St. Kilda	Restrictive rights Terminable	April 1976
Castlelaw	Restrictive rights Terminable	September 1977
Barry Buddon	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	March 1978
Perth	Restrictive rights Terminable	April 1981
North Uist	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	May 1981
Aviemore	Restrictive rights Terminable	November 1982
Charterhall	Restrictive rights Terminable	May 1985
Strathallen	Restrictive rights Terminable	August 1986
Drymen	Restrictive rights in Perpetuity	March 1987

Nimrod

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to retain the skilled workforce at Woodford between the development and production phases of the Nimrod MRA4 through the commissioning of lead items. [188148]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 667W.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost is of the upgrade of the Nimrod R1 aircraft, how many aircraft are involved; when the work is due *(a)* to begin and *(b)* to be completed; what the life span of the upgraded aircraft will be; and if he will make a statement. [188150]

Mr. Ingram: Under Project Helix the mission systems on the RAF's three Nimrod R1 aircraft are due to be upgraded, together with associated ground stations and training facilities. The assessment phase for the project began in April 2004 and the demonstration and manufacture phase is planned to start in 2007. The full project is due to be completed in 2018 at an estimated total cost of over £400 million (VAT inclusive).

Under current plans the Nimrod R1 will have a service life well into this century.

Operational Deployments

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the last three operational deployments were and what the length between each has been for *(a)* 40 Commando, *(b)* 42 Commando, *(c)* 45 Commando and *(d)* Head Quarters, Royal Marines. [189402]

Mr. Ingram: The last three operational deployments of the Royal Marine units specified are:

40 Commando

A single company was deployed to Afghanistan from November 2001 to November 2002, followed by a gap of one month before the whole unit was deployed to Operation Telic (Iraq) from January 2003 to April 2003. A further gap of 14 months ensued before re-deployment of the whole unit to Operation Telic in July 2004.

42 Commando

The whole unit was deployed to Operation Silkman (Sierra Leone) from September 2001 to November 2001; a subsequent gap of three months was followed by deployment of the whole unit to Operation Banner (Northern Ireland) for the period March 2002 to September 2002, thence a gap of four months before it deployed to Operation Telic from February 2003 to May 2003.

45 Commando

The whole unit was deployed to Operation Jacana (Afghanistan) for the period April 2002 to July 2002. A gap of six months ensued before the bulk of the unit was deployed to Operation Telic for the period February 2003 to May 2003. A subsequent gap of six months was followed by deployment of the whole unit to Operation Banner from December 2003 to June 2004.

Headquarters Royal Marines

Headquarters Royal Marines was disestablished as a result of the Fleet FIRST reorganisation in 2002. However, it was not a deployable headquarters. HQ 3 Commando Brigade however, deployed to Operation Agricola (Kosovo) from August 2000 to February 2001, with a gap of 12 months before deployment to Operation Jacana from March 2002 to July 2002. A further gap of five months was followed by deployment to Operation Telic from January 2003 to May 2003.

The dates given represent when the main bulk of the unit was deployed, because the deployment to, and recovery from an operation, are protracted and multi-phased.

Parachute Battalions

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* schedule and *(b)* operations of the three Parachute battalions has been over the last three years. [188791]

Mr. Ingram: The details of the operational deployments of each Battalion of the Parachute Regiment over the last three years are shown in the following table. Deployments have been defined as unaccompanied Battalion level operational tours.

Unit	*Date*	*Location*
1 Para	May and August 2000 (two short deployments)	Sierra Leone
	January–June 2001	Northern Ireland
	January–June 2003	Iraq
2 Para	January–March 2002	Afghanistan
	September 2002–March 2003	Northern Ireland
	December 2003–April 2004	Iraq
3 Para	January–June 2002	Northern Ireland
	January–June 2003	Iraq
	May 2004 to date	Northern Ireland

Provigil

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel have been prescribed Provigil and similar drugs in each of the last six years; what quantities of drugs have been dispensed; and for what reasons. [187496]

Mr. Caplin: Provigil may be prescribed within the Defence Medical Services for legitimate clinical reasons in the same manner as it would be used by the NHS. It is prescribed for the treatment of specific sleep disorders including narcolepsy. Information is not held centrally about the number of Service personnel who have been prescribed Provigil nor the quantities prescribed. However, the quantities purchased by the Medical Supplies Agency between 1999 and 2004 (21,600 tablets) would be consistent with the treatment, through Service primary care facilities, of three to five patients per year at normal rates of usage for the product.

Public Relations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the salary costs to the Department were for employees working in public relations and publicity in each year since 1997. [183850]

Mr. Caplin: Salary costs for staff working in public relations and publicity within the Department's central communications organisation from 2001–02 to 2003–04 were as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	5.3
2002–03	5.5
2003–04	5.9

Figures for years prior to 2001–02 are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The figures do not include information about staff working in public relations and publicity at command or unit level throughout the Department. Information about this is not held centrally and again could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

QinetiQ Ltd.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what income has been received from the equity stake in Qinetiq Ltd.; who exercises the rights of the controlling equity stake on behalf of the Government; and who approved the higher leveraged equity scheme in QinetiQ for senior managers on behalf of the Government. [188713]

Mr. Ingram: Total proceeds to date from the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency Public Private Partnership (DERA PPP), of which the sale of an equity stake is just a part, amount to some £211.1 million. This comprises proceeds from the sale, proceeds from the redemption of debt and from the redemption of preference shares.

A key feature of the DERA PPP was to bring in a strategic partner to improve the management of QinetiQ and help grow the business in preparation for its transfer to the private sector. Although continuing to hold a majority equity stake, operational control of the company is exercised by the Carlyle Group as the Government's strategic partner. Control of the Government's equity stake is exercised by the MOD, via shares held in trust by the MOD Finance Director on behalf of the Secretary of State.

An Incentive Scheme for QinetiQ employees, including a component for senior managers, was approved by Ministers at the time of the transaction.

Quick Reaction Alert Aircraft

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made in equipping *(a)* RNAS Yeovilton, *(b)* RAF Marham and *(c)* RAF St. Mawgan to support quick reaction alert aircraft since his statement of 18 July 2002. [189079]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 September 2004]*: RAF Marham and RAF St. Mawgan became fully equipped to support quick reaction alert aircraft in June 2004. RNAS Yeovilton is due to become fully equipped for supporting quick reaction alert aircraft in the summer of 2005.

RAF Croughton

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reason an American colonel has been appointed as base commander of RAF Croughton. [189523]

Mr. Ingram: RAF Croughton is made available to the United States Visiting Force (USVF) under the terms of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) of 1951. As is the case at all RAF stations made available to the USVF, the United States appoint an installation commander who is responsible for the US mission at the base. At RAF Croughton, a USAF lieutenant colonel fulfils this role.

Regimental Changes

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Army Board first consulted the colonels of the 19 regiments over impending changes. [188796]

Mr. Ingram: The Colonels Commandant of the Infantry were first briefed about a possible successor arrangement to the infantry arms plot by members of the Army Board during a meeting on 29 March. The Colonels Commandant have met several times since then to discuss changes to the Infantry structure. It is usual for the Colonels Commandant to brief and consult informally with Regimental Colonels after such meetings.

Regimental Recruitment

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the recruiting levels were for the regiments in the *(a)* Queen's, *(b)* King's, *(c)* Prince of Wales and *(d)* Light Divisions over the past three years for (i) officers and (ii) other ranks. [188797]

Mr. Caplin: The following tables show the numbers of officers and other ranks enlisted into the Queen's, King's, Prince of Wales' and Light Divisions for the last three financial years (April-March).

Officers

These figures show the regiments joined by officers once their training at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst had been completed.

Queen's Division

Financial year	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
The Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment	6	10	12
The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	14	10	8
The Royal Anglian Regiment	7	9	10

King's Division

Financial year	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
The King's Own Royal Border Regiment	4	7	5
The King's Regiment	2	3	4
The Prince of Wales' Own Regiment of Yorkshire	4	4	3
The Green Howards	2	9	5
The Queen's Lancashire Regiment	3	4	4
The Duke of Wellington's Regiment	5	5	2

Prince of Wales' Division

Financial year	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment	4	6	3
The Cheshire Regiment	1	9	1
The Royal Welch Fusiliers	1	6	5
The Royal Regiment of Wales	1	4	8
The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment	6	8	4
The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment	6	5	5
The Staffordshire Regiment	3	3	7

Light Division

Financial year	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
The Light Infantry	11	10	10
The Royal Green Jackets	10	8	11

Other Ranks

Infantry other ranks recruits are enlisted into a Division and not a Regiment. These enlistment figures are taken from the beginning of the training process. Some recruits may have changed employment and cap badge during training.

Financial year	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Queen's Division	854	833	765
King's Division	733	733	595
Prince of Wales' Division	976	784	850
Light Division	590	588	464

Saudi Armed Forces Project Office

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total cost was of the Saudi Armed Forces Project Office which was recharged to the Saudi Government in each financial year from 1997–98 to 2003–04. [188598]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* The Saudi Government covers the costs of the participation of the Saudi Armed Forces Project Office in the Al Yamamah programme.

The total cost of the Project Office for each financial year from 1997–98 was:

	£ million
1997–98	26.4
1998–99	23.6
1999–2000	25.0
2000–01	27.0
2001–02	24.7
2002–03	32.8
2003–04	29.4

Submarines

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether a decision has been taken to retrofit the Vanguard Class Ballistic Missile Submarines with a Combat Management System based upon Microsoft Windows 2000; and if he will make a statement. [188102]

Mr. Ingram: No decision has been made on whether to modify the Combat Management System onboard Vanguard Class Submarines, to enable the system to operate on Microsoft's Windows 2000 software. However, an independent review concluded that Windows 2000 operating software, when used in conjunction with the original application software, is both safe and secure. As a result, some Trafalgar Class submarines are being modified to incorporate Windows 2000 into the Tactical Command System, which is used in the launch process for Spearfish torpedoes and Tomahawk missiles.

Sudan

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many United Kingdom armed forces personnel he plans to commit in the event of United

Nations intervention in Sudan; what estimate he has made of the likely cost of such a mission; and if he will make a statement. [188066]

Mr. Ingram: We currently plan to commit three United Kingdom staff officers to the proposed UN Mission in Sudan following a Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the southern-based Sudan People's Liberation Movement/ Army. This Mission will deploy once the final agreements have been signed by the parties. One officer is currently deployed within the UN Advanced Mission. The UK Assessed Contribution to UN Peacekeeping is 7.43 per cent. in addition to any costs associated with the deployment of UK personnel, which we will meet. We would expect that the UK contribution would be in the region of £20 million, should the Mission deploy as currently envisaged.

In the Darfur region of Sudan, a separate African Union mission is operating. No UK military personnel are currently committed to it. The AU mission is still evolving and any request for UK military support will be considered. We are currently not aware of any UN plans for involvement in this region.

Super Garrisons

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the establishment of super garrisons. [187991]

Mr. Ingram: We intend to enhance operational capability and value for money in a number of ways, including through our strategy for the Defence Estate. This envisages concentrating units into fewer, larger sites. In the case of the Army, such sites have been referred to informally as "super garrisons". No decisions, however, have yet been taken on their establishment or possible location.

Territorial Army (Iraq)

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what funding is being provided to Territorial Army personnel returning from service in Iraq. [186497]

Mr. Caplin: Such personnel are given paid leave up to a maximum of 40 days, depending on the length of their deployment. The final day of this period of leave is considered to be the last day of mobilised service. In addition, and depending on personal circumstances, TA personnel may continue to receive the Reserve Standard Award (RSA) and the Reserve Hardship Award (RHA) until their last day of mobilised service.

For those self-employed TA personnel returning from Iraq, are-training grant under the Employers Financial Assistance Scheme is also available.

Terrorism (Russia)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what communications his Department has had with the Russian Government over security strategies to deal with terrorist threats. [189147]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence and Russian Federation conduct a bilateral Defence Relations Activity Programme designed to develop confidence, promote understanding and discuss security interests. In the last 18 months, the following principal activities have included exchanges related to security strategies to deal with terrorist threats:

Visit by the Russian Defence Minister in July 2004.

Visit by a party of senior Russian officers to the UK, in January 2004, for seminars and discussions under the auspices of the International Institute of Strategic Studies.

Defence Staff Talks were reinstated in December 2003, following a five year gap. The MOD's Policy Director hosted the Russian MOD delegation in London.

Chief of the General Staff visited Moscow, St. Petersburg and the North Caucasus Military District, in June 2003.

In March 2003, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff had discussions with his counterpart, in Moscow.

The NATO-Russia Council is another forum where these issues are discussed.

Troop Deployment

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British troops are in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan. [188488]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 September 2004]:* As at 9 September 2004, there are about 8,000 British troops in Iraq and about 640 in Afghanistan.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which battalions of the Army are committed to Northern Ireland; where they are based; and what the average length of duty in Northern Ireland is of each battalion. [187420]

Mr. Ingram: The following resident infantry battalions are currently based in Northern Ireland on accompanied tours of roughly two years:

2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, Holywood

2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment, Ballykelly

1st Battalion The King's Own Scottish Borderers, Omagh

2nd Battalion The Royal Green Jackets, Ballykinler

The following infantry battalions are currently committed to Northern Ireland on a six month unaccompanied tour of duty:

1st Battalion The King's Own Royal Border Regiment, Dungannon

1st Battalion The Royal Green Jackets, Bessbrook

In addition there are three home service battalions of The Royal Irish Regiment whose headquarters are at Holywood, Portadown and Omagh respectively.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many troops were deployed in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [187421]

Mr. Ingram: The number of armed forces personnel (Army, Navy and RAF), under the command of the General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland (GOC NI), stationed in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997 are set out in the following table.

As at 31 July	Number of armed forces personnel
1997	16,566
1998	16,107
1999	14,778
2000	13,812
2001	13,763
2002	13,669
2003	13,571
2004	11,450

The GOC NI also has under his command troops that are rear based in Great Britain that can be called forward to the Province as and when required. In addition other troops can be made available to the GOC NI from Land Command if required for example during the marching season.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Rights Protesters

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is considering to protect smaller organisations and businesses from criminal damage committed by *(a)* the Lobster Liberation Front and *(b)* other animal rights protesters. [188895]

Caroline Flint: The Government are determined that legitimate business activity will not be prevented by extremists.

We announced on 30 July in our paper "Animal Welfare—Human Rights: Tackling Animal Rights Extremism" a number of changes to strengthen the law on protests outside homes and harassment.

These new proposals will strengthen on-going action by the Government, police and Crown Prosecution Service and the courts to enforce existing legislation robustly and to ensure effective co-ordination to combat the criminal activities of extremists.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the activities of the Lobster Liberation Front. [187482]

Caroline Flint: We are in regular contact with the police about the activities of all extremist groups. Our position towards such groups is clear. We support the right of everyone to express strongly held views and to campaign legally to persuade people to change their mind and the law. We will not however tolerate those who use harassment, intimidation and violence to prevent others from carrying out their lawful business.

Dorset police have made an assessment of their activities and have given advice.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the recent attack on the Lander family of Swanage by the Lobster Liberation Front. [187483]

Caroline Flint: I cannot comment on the individual case, but the Government is determined to tackle extremists who attempt to stop people going about their legitimate business. No one has the right to harass and intimidate individuals or their families.

We announced on 30 July in our paper "Animal Welfare—Human Rights: Tackling Animal Rights Extremism" a number of changes to strengthen the law on protests outside homes and harassment. These new proposals will strengthen on-going action by the Government, police and Crown Prosecution Service and the courts to enforce existing legislation robustly and to ensure effective co-ordination to combat the criminal activities of extremists.

Animal Experimentation

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he last met *(a)* the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection and *(b)* the National Anti-Vivisection Society. [188100]

Caroline Flint: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has not met either organisation. The last meeting between a Home Office Minister and the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection took place in October 2001.I was due to meet the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection in February 2004, but that meeting was postponed. I met the National Anti-Vivisection Society in January 2004.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the *(a)* persons and *(b)* organisations (i) he, (ii) his Ministers and (iii) his officials have met in connection with animal experimentation since 1 January. [188101]

Caroline Flint: Home Office Ministers and officials have regular meetings with the scientific community and animal protection groups in connection with the implementation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. It is not practicable to list all of the meetings held. However, since 1 January 2004, in addition to meetings with licence holders and other staff working in establishments licensed under the 1986 Act, meetings have been held with the:

Animal Procedures Committee
Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
Canadian Council on Animal Care
Coalition for Medical Progress
Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department of Health
Department for Trade and Industry
European Centre for the Validation of Alternative Methods
Federation of European Laboratory Animal Science Associations
Food Standards Agency
Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments
Health and Safety Executive
Institute of Animal Technicians
International Council for Laboratory Animal Science
Laboratory Animal Breeders Association
Laboratory Animals Science Association
Laboratory Animals Veterinary Association
Medical Health Regulatory Authority
Medical Research Council
National Anti-Vivisection Society
National Centre for Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Uncaged Campaign
United States Department of Agriculture.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the written ministerial statement of 1 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 7WS, on the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, whether the publishing of anonymised information in relation to section 24 of the Animal Act 1986 *(a)* will include information on whether all possible alternative methods to animal experimentation were exhausted and *(b)* will be compulsory to all bodies undertaking animal experimentation; and whether bodies deemed to be in contravention of the Animals Act 1986 will have their licence removed immediately. [188153]

Caroline Flint: The ministerial statement of 1 July made clear that the Government are pressing ahead with plans to publish anonymised information about projects licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 as part of the Home Office publication scheme under the Freedom of Information Act.

All new project license applicants will be required to provide the information for publication as part of the licence application process—so it will be mandatory but not retrospective.

Final decisions have yet to be taken on the precise details to be provided, as field trial work is still in progress. However, it should be noted as regards alternatives to animal use, that under the 1986 Act the Home Office can only license projects when satisfied that no such alternatives exist.

Action taken on contraventions of the 1986 Act is determined by the particular circumstances of each case. Revocation of a license can be among the options to be considered.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, during his Department's monitoring of the Imutran xenotransplantation programme under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, primates were found dead in procedures of moderate severity. [187047]

Caroline Flint: Yes. 17 animals died between observation periods in procedures of moderate severity out of over 500 non-human primates used in the Imutran studies between July 1994 and March 2000. The evidence available at the time suggested that death occurred quickly with little suffering being experienced by the individual animals. None of the deaths raised issues of non-compliance with the relevant license authorities.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement outlining his Department's definitions of *(a)* moderate severity and *(b)* substantial severity in animal experiments. [187048]

Caroline Flint: The categorisation of severity limits of protocols is explained in paragraph 5.42 of the Guidance on the Operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (HG321). Protocols regarded as moderate include toxicity tests which do not involve lethal endpoints and many surgical procedures, provided that suffering is controlled and minimised by effective post-operative analgesia and care. Protocols that have the potential to cause greater suffering but include controls which minimise severity, or terminate the protocol before the animal shows more than moderate adverse effects, may also be classed within the moderate severity limit. Protocols regarded as substantial are those that may result in a major departure from the animal's usual state of health or well-being. These include acute toxicity procedures where significant morbidity or death is an endpoint; some efficacy tests of anti-microbial agents and vaccines; major surgery; and some models of disease, where welfare may be seriously compromised. If it is expected that even one animal would suffer substantial effects, the procedure would merit a 'substantial' severity limit.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the results were of his Department's most recent monitoring of the progress made by Imutran in achieving each of the objectives in its project licence for xenotransplantation research. [187049]

Caroline Flint: The Imutran xenotransplantation research licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 began in 1994 and ended in 2000. At different points in time, and on different projects, Imutran tackled a number of different, but related, scientific objectives. With one exception, all of the predicted benefits relevant to the licensed studies taken into account in the cost benefit assessment of their project licence applications were delivered. However, by the middle of 1999 it became clear that they were not making progress in identifying a clinically potentially safe and effective means of preventing or controlling delayed forms of xenograft organ rejection and that the incidence of surgical technical failures was rising. We concluded that no new studies should be undertaken unless and until the cause of the technical problems was identified and remedied and an acceptable revised strategy for making scientific progress was devised. As a result, and after discussions with Imutran, its main programme of work was suspended by administrative agreement rather than formal suspension of the licence authorities. Some more basic work was allowed to continue in pursuit of secondary objectives. The Imutran project licences were eventually surrendered to the Home Office for revocation in July 2000.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes his Department has accepted and agreed to the original objectives in the project licence to Imutran for xenotransplantation research. [187050]

Caroline Flint: The Imutran research licensed by the Home Office under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 involving pig to non-human primate xenotransplantation studies began in 1994 and was carried out under three separate project licences. These licences set out related objectives aimed at furthering Imutran's overall strategy ultimately to produce a means of making xenotransplantation clinically feasible. The specific objectives of the licensed work included the production of healthy, genetically altered pigs whose organs would not produce hyperacute rejection when transplanted into other species; demonstration of proof of concept; characterisation of other forms of xenograft rejection; and, having

developed an immunosuppression strategy appropriate for human clinical use, the study of the biocompatibility and performance of solid organ and tissue xenografts. More detailed scientific objectives were also set within this general framework. These detailed objectives were reviewed and refined at intervals while the work was in progress. Where authorised, amendments were largely made to those parts of the programmes characterising later forms of xenograft rejection and its management. The precise technical content of the amendments is commercially confidential.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will order an independent public inquiry into the Imutran xenotransplantation research programme; and if he will make a statement. [187057]

Caroline Flint: No. We have considered the matter very carefully, but concluded that the issues, including those regarding compliance with the authorities granted to Imutran Limited under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 for its xenotransplantation research programme, do not merit such an inquiry. In November 2000, my right hon. Friend the then Home Secretary (Mr. Straw) asked the Chief Inspector of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate to carry out a routine assessment of compliance with the relevant authorities issued to Imutran Limited under the 1986 Act. The Chief Inspector's report, which covered five years work, was published on 13 July 2001 and copies placed in the Library. It confirmed that the general level of compliance was good. No new evidence justifying any form of further inquiry into these matters was found by the Chief Inspector nor has any subsequently been presented by any other source.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what systems are in place to ensure that the relationships between his inspectors involved in monitoring licences for animal experiments and the companies concerned are clear and objective. [187085]

Caroline Flint: Members of the Inspectorate are highly professional and dedicated and have the complete confidence of Government Ministers. The general civil service codes apply, and in addition inspectors are accountable for their professional conduct to the relevant professional bodies (the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and the General Medical Council). As Government employees, they have no conflicts of interest with respect to places, or persons, regulated under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. They are not part of the management structure of the designated establishments, nor do they have any proprietary interest in the outcome of any licensed research programme. In addition, there is an active joint inspection programme, with more than one inspector visiting most places during the course of the year as part of the national inspection programme. Regulated places are also re-assigned between inspectors at regular intervals.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many primates have been involved in projects regulated under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 over the last 10 years *(a)* unclassified, *(b)* mild, *(c)* moderate and *(d)* substantial; in classifications of severity of suffering and if he will make a statement. [188715]

Caroline Flint: This information is not collected centrally. The numbers of scientific procedures involving non-human primates since 1994 are given in table 20 of the annual Command Paper "Statistics" of scientific procedures on living animals, 2003 (Cm 6291), a copy of which is in the Library.

A short table, giving the number of project licences in force at the end of that year according to severity bands, has been included in each annual publication since 1998. It is not, however, possible from that to identify the species used.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many animals have died following procedures which broke International Air Transport Association regulations; and if he will make a statement. [189390]

Caroline Flint: I am unable to provide the information requested. Although specific instances may be reported to the Home Office as and when they occur, we do not routinely record the deaths in transit of animals destined for use under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, or the surrounding circumstances. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is responsible for the enforcement of regulations governing the transportation of animals to the United Kingdom.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason his Department did not take action in respect of the case of the three primates found dead en route to Huntingdon in 1998. [189393]

Caroline Flint: In fact, immediate action was taken. The three animals destined for use in research licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 were found dead on arrival at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris from the Philippines on 5 August 1998. When the Home Office was notified of the deaths we immediately suspended authority to acquire animals from the source establishment until the causes had been properly investigated and any necessary action taken to prevent a recurrence. The problem was also promptly notified to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food as the Department then responsible for enforcement of the regulations relating to the transportation of animals. While it was not possible to identify the causes of death, it was considered likely that a combination of the large size of the animals in relation to the transport containers and inadequate ventilation were a contributory factor. The source establishment co-operated fully and ensured that the size of the transport containers was increased and ventilation improved. No problems were detected with a further batch of animals imported in December 1998.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the evidential basis is for the statement in paragraph 5.12.3 of the Home Office Chief Inspector's June 2001 Compliance Review, that a moratorium was voluntarily proposed and implemented by Imutran management in 1999; and if he will make a statement. [189112]

Caroline Flint: Paragraph 5.12.3 of the report on compliance with the authorities issued under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 to Imutran Ltd. for xenotransplantation research, by the then Chief

Inspector of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate, is based on Home Office and Imutran Ltd. records. The Imutran progress report for January to June 1999 was the starting point for the discussions which led to the moratorium on the Imutran research. The terms of the moratorium were agreed after supplementary enquiries into the content of the report.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department has taken with regard to its contract with Imutran following the Home Affairs Select Committee's Report; and what representations he has received. [189392]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office has no contract with Imutran Limited. Until 2000, staff of that company were licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 to conduct xenotransplantation research. The work started in 1994 and the licences were surrendered in July 2000 following a decision by Imutran and its parent company to move the research programme to North America. The Home Office submitted evidence to the Home Affairs Committee in connection with the Imutran research in October 2003. As far as we are aware the Committee has not published a report on the research. The Home Office has received correspondence from Members of Parliament, a campaign group and members of the public about the research and has responded fully to all of the issues raised.

Anti-social Behaviour Orders

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-social behaviour orders have been made in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Braintree district. [188558]

Ms Blears: The number of notifications, as reported to the Home Office, of anti-social behaviour orders issued within Essex, from 1 April 1999 up to 31 March 2004 (latest available) is 25. Of these none have had restrictions imposed specific to the Braintree district council area.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) have been made in each year since their introduction; how many of these were issued to children and young people; and how many and what percentage of those charged with breach of an ASBO have subsequently been sent to young offenders institutes. [189095]

Ms Blears: The available information is given in the attached tables.

Table A: the number of Anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued at all courts, as reported to the Home Office, by period and age group

England and Wales

Period	Total issued	Age 10 to17	Age 18 to 20	Age 21 +	Age not known
1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000	104	—	—	—	[1]104
1 June 2000 to 31 December 2000	135	61	21	38	15
1 January 2001 to 31 December 2001	322	184	50	77	11
1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002	402	232	41	108	21
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	1,023	509	147	366	1
1 January 2004 to 31 March 2004	469	183	85	201	—
Total	2,455	1,169	344	790	152

[1] Data collected by police force area on numbers of ASBOs only.

Table B: Number and percentage of young persons aged 18 to 20 who were prosecuted for breach of their ASBO and subsequently found guilty and sentenced to detention in a Young Offender Institution (YOI), from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2002[1]

	Number	Percentage
Total proceedings for breach of an ASBO of which:	60	100
Sentenced to detention in YOI	30	50
Total found guilty of breach	57	95

[1] These figures have been compiled through a manual matching process between ASBO breaches reported on the Home Office Court Proceedings Database and data held on the ASBO database. Breach data for 2003 will be available in late Autumn.

Note:
Figures are based on principal disposal (severest penalty imposed) where more than one breach record exists.

Asylum Seekers/Immigration

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* cases and *(b)* children under 18 years were covered by the one-off exercise to allow families who applied for asylum to stay, before 2 October 2000, who had at least one dependant currently under 18 years who had been living in the UK since 2 October 2000, and who were not covered by the specified exclusions set out in the Minister of State's letter of 29 October 2003; and (i) how many of those cases and (ii) for how many children under 18 years decisions are outstanding. [186956]

Mr. Browne: An announcement detailing the results of the exercise including the available statistical information will be made when the exercise is completed and all those potentially qualifying applicants have had the opportunity to respond to our queries.

Good progress has been made in considering the cases originally identified. The bulk of these cases have been processed with the majority, where the applicants have responded to our queries, having been decided. We rely on the applicants we contact replying to our queries promptly and those not doing so are being reminded.

Anomalies we removed on 19 August, will result in a number of previously excluded applicants being reconsidered. In addition, we are encouraging applicants who believe that they should qualify to contact the Immigration Nationality Directorate to have their status assessed.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many accommodation units the National Asylum Support Service has rented from *(a)* private landlords and *(b)* local authorities in North East Lincolnshire for asylum-seekers in each year since 2002; and how many of these are currently empty. [187297]

Mr. Browne: The information is not available in the precise format requested. The number of occupied bed spaces changes from day to day as asylum seekers move through the asylum process.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the occasions since 1997 on which he has been found by *(a)* the administrative court, *(b)* the court of appeal and *(c)* the House of Lords to have acted unlawfully in immigration, nationality and asylum matters; and what action (i) he and (ii) his Department has taken to remedy the unlawfulness in each case. [186377]

Mr. Browne: This information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Statistics are published by the Home Office on the number of asylum cases going before the administrative court on judicial review, but not on immigration and nationality cases. The asylum statistics exclude cases relating to asylum support (NASS) for the years 2000 and 2001. In addition, they do not indicate whether the grounds of the challenge were unlawfulness, procedural impropriety or irrationality. It is also not unusual for a challenge to be made on more than one ground.

The information in the following table gives the number of judicial review applications that were made in asylum cases and the outcome of judicial review hearings.

Statistics on the numbers of appeals to the court of appeal and House of Lords are not collected by the Home Office.

All judgments made by the courts are carefully considered, and appropriate action is taken to remedy adverse findings. A successful challenge to certification of an asylum application as clearly unfounded would, for example, normally result in the withdrawal of that certificate.

Data on Home Office actions in response to a successful challenge in the courts are not collected centrally, and could be obtained only by retrieval and examination of individual case files which would be at disproportionate cost.

Asylum appeals
Applications for judicial review, and outcomes, excluding dependants[1], 1997 to 2003[2]

Number of principal appellants
Applications for permission to apply for judicial review

	Applications	*Decisions[3]*	*of which: granted permission to apply*	*Percentage of applicants granted permission to apply[4]*
1997	1,350	1,250	320	26
1998	1,890	1,220	300	25
1999 Q1 Q2, and Q4[5]	1,790	1,125	395	35
2000[6]	1,920	2,095	555	26
2001[6]	2,210	2,300	290	13
2002	3,075	2,980	260	9
2003[2]	2,170	2,240	235	10

The outcome of judicial review hearings

	Allowed[7]		*Dismissed[8]*		*Withdrawn*	
	Total	*As percentage of total determined*	*Total*	*As percentage of total determined*	*Total*	*As percentage of total determined*
1997	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998	—	—	—	—	—	—
1999 Q1 Q2, and Q4[5]	135	57	25	11	75	32
2000[6]	365	48	300	40	95	12
2001[6]	260	68	60	16	60	16
2002	25	30	60	67	5	3
2003[2]	30	35	55	62	5	3

[1] Figures based on administrative court data. Figures (other than percentages) rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] Provisional figures.
[3] Decisions do not relate to applications in any given period.
[4] The number of which granted permission to apply as a percentage of decisions.
[5] Estimated figures.
[6] Figures exclude judicial reviews brought in cases relating to asylum support (NASS).
[7] The decision of the respondent (in this case, the Home Office or the immigration appeal tribunal) was quashed. These figures include consent orders where the JR was conceded by the respondent.
[8] The decision of the respondent was upheld.

Cannabis

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the level of cannabis abuse since it was reclassified. [188289]

Caroline Flint: The British Crime Survey provides annual figures on the levels of drug use including cannabis. The figures for 2003–04 will be available in December. The level of cannabis use among 16–24 year olds has shown a decline from 28.2 per cent. having used the drug in the previous 12 months in 1998 to 25.8 per cent. in 2002–03.

Chechnya

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from the Chechyna region

of the Russian Federation were deported in the past 12 months; and to which destinations in the Russian Federation they were sent. [187973]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of people deported from the UK to the Russian Federation, including those of Chechen origin, and on the destinations to which they were deported, is not available except by examination of individual case files which would incur disproportionate cost.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he will reply to the letter to him dated 26 July from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Farag Alkailani; [188002]

(2) when he intends to reply to the letter to him dated 26 July from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Farag Elkailani. [188855]

Mr. Blunkett: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 23 September 2004.

Criminal Records Bureau

Tim Loughton: Criminal Records Bureau checks have revealed convictions are employed in social services departments. [188925]

Ms Blears: *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* Information is not available to indicate how many people who have received a Disclosure which have revealed convictions are employed within Social Services.

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) does not make judgements on an applicant's suitability for a position and does not therefore record such information. The Bureau's role within the recruitment process is to provide an employer, through a Registered Body, with the necessary information that enables an informed and responsible recruitment decision to be made.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in reducing the time taken by the Criminal Records Bureau to produce reports on individuals. [189307]

Ms Blears: For the period July 2003 to July 2004, the Criminal Records Bureau has achieved its service standards for processing Standard and Enhanced Disclosure applications. On average, over 90 per cent. of Standard and Enhanced Disclosures have been issued within two and four weeks respectively.

Departmental Administration Costs

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of printing headed notepaper for his Department was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available.[184453]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 16 July 2004]:* The Home Office does not hold any figures on the cost of printing headed notepaper for the financial year 1996–97 and to obtain this information would incur disproportionate costs.

I am able to provide details on the cost to the Home Office of printing headed notepaper for the last financial year.

FY 2003–04: £35,303

Distraction Burglaries

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to promote schemes which help prevent distraction burglaries, with particular reference to the British Gas Password Scheme. [188854]

Ms Blears: The Home Office has produced a range of booklets, audio and video tapes giving advice to individuals and to practitioners, particularly those who work with older people, on measures which can be taken to reduce distraction burglary. They were promoted at a series of 11 regional conferences between November 2001 and March 2002 and are used at national, regional and local levels to raise awareness of distraction burglary and the preventative measures that can be taken.

In particular, the leaflet 'How to beat the bogus caller' gives both the important message to 'Lock, Stop, Chain and Check' before admitting someone and highlights the fact that many utility companies operate password schemes for older and vulnerable people. To date, over six million leaflets have been distributed nationwide.

Drug Treatment

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse has undertaken in Weston-super-Mare since its creation; and how many drug treatment centres it has inspected in the town. [188671]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have been asked to reply.

The National Treatment Agency (NTA) South West regional team, in its role of performance managing drug action team (DAT) treatment plans, carries out quarterly monitoring of the North Somerset DAT, of which Weston-Super-Mare forms a part. The NTA team has also:

given specific additional support to the DAT to improve the quality of its strategic planning;

brought in the expertise of the National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) to support redesign of the local drug treatment system, focusing specifically on prescribing services; and

worked with the DAT and local drug treatment providers to reduce waiting times and improve access. This information is shown in the table.

Waiting time (weeks) by treatment time

	June 2004	*December 2001*
In-patient	1	31
Residential rehabilitation	0	31
Specialist prescribing	3	31
General practitioner prescribing	3	31
Day care	6	31
Structured counselling	4	5

The NTA has not carried out any inspections of drug treatment agencies in England, as this has not been in its remit. However, The NTA is currently working with the Healthcare Commission on an inspection and review programme for drug treatment services, using the badge and authority of the Healthcare Commission and the expertise of the NTA. A pilot scheme is currently in development for roll-out in 2005–06. This will mean all treatment services in Weston-Super-Mare will be subject to a review at some point in the next three years.

European Weapons Directive

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the progress of the European Weapons Directive, and what the position of the UK Government is on each of its principal recommendations. [188708]

Caroline Flint: Such changes as were necessary to meet the requirements of Council Directive No. 91/477/EEC on the control of the acquisition and possession of weapons were incorporated into domestic legislation by means of the Firearms Acts (Amendment) Regulations 1992. There are no outstanding recommendations for action although the Commission is currently reviewing the operation of the directive.

Faith Communities

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent consultations have been carried out by his Department with representatives of faith communities; and if he will make a statement. [188596]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* Outlined as follows are details of recent consultations conducted by the Home Office in which representatives of faith communities have been consulted:

Counter Terrorism Powers: Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society

A discussion paper was published the 25 February 2004 entitled "Counter Terrorism Powers: Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society" which launched a six-month consultation process on the future of counter terrorist powers. Representatives of faith community groups have played an active and important part in this consultation process both by submitting written responses and in attending consultation events.

Needs of Faith Communities in Major Disasters

Work is currently under way to update a document originally produced by the Church of England entitled 'Needs of Faith Communities in Major Disasters'. The Cabinet Office and the Home Office, who are jointly funding the update, worked with representatives from the nine main faith communities and the British Humanist Association to update their individual entries. The document is currently out with emergency planners for consultation and will be issued in the autumn.

Strength in Diversity

The Strength in Diversity pamphlet was published on 19 May 2004 and forms the framework for a robust debate on issues such as citizenship and identity, eradicating racism, tackling inequality and building cohesive communities.

The 'Strength in Diversity' pamphlet was sent to a wide range of faith representatives including the main faith umbrella bodies and a meeting was held with faith representatives to discuss the consultation pamphlet. The consultation period ends on 17 September and the recommendations will form the basis of the Community Cohesion and Race Equality Strategy to be published in the autumn.

Burial Law and Policy in the 21st Century

A six month consultation exercise on burial law and policy in the 21st Century concluded on 31 August 2004. This gave a unique opportunity to consult with members of the public, professionals and faith representatives to establish burial legislation and policy which is streamlined, accessible and inclusive.

A number of faith representatives were included in the consultation process, including the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Office of the Chief Rabbi, National Council of Hindu Temples, Sikh Council for Inter-faith Relations, the Muslim College and the Muslim Council of Britain.

Ministers of Religion from Abroad: consultation on the English Language Requirement

In June 2004 representatives of all the major faith communities were consulted on a proposal by the government to introduce an amendment to the Immigration Rules in which individuals applying for leave to enter the United Kingdom as Ministers of Religion would be required to demonstrate that they were competent in the use of spoken and written English—proposed at level 6 of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

After listening to the views and concerns of faith groups at round table meetings the proposal was modified so that for the time being Ministers of Religion will only be required to have a basic grasp of spoken English before coming to the UK (level 4). It is intended to raise this to level 6—a competent speaker and writer—after two years. The rule change is now in effect.

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS)

The introduction of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has been subjected to two formal written consultations in which over 400 responses have been received. Many of these have been from representatives of faith communities. All responses have been analysed and continue to be used to inform the development of the new structure.

Domestic Violence Consultation Paper: 'Safety and Justice'

The Domestic Violence Consultation Paper 'Safety and Justice' was published in June 2003. Representatives of all the major faith communities were consulted (for a full list of organisations consulted see answer to written PQ 151654—30 January). In addition, the Home Office produced—and made available in both paper and electronic format—a summary leaflet, which was also translated into Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Somali, Urdu, Vietnamese and Welsh.

The Home Office received a total of 470 responses to 'Safety and Justice'. A list of organisations that responded can be found at Annex A of the 'Summary of Responses to "Safety and Justice: the

Governments Proposal on Domestic Violence", copies of which are available in the Library and at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimepol/crimreduc/domviolence/publist.html.

The Prison Service Chaplaincy Council

The Prison Service Chaplaincy Council is made up of representatives from all the major faith traditions. It meets six times each year, and provides both a forum for consultation on a broad range of prison issues (policy and practice) and advice and guidance on all matters relating to prisoner faith issues.

Football Banning Orders

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of banning orders for football supporters whose club has been relegated from the Football League who try to attend the grounds of other clubs in the Conference League which at the time that the banning order was put in place were *(a)* in and *(b)* not in the Football League. [188619]

Caroline Flint: On 14 September, two Statutory Instruments were laid before Parliament: the Football (Offences) (Designation of Football Matches) Order 2004 and the Football Spectators (Prescription) Order 2004. Subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House, the Statutory Instruments will come into force on 11 October 2004. The effect will be to extend football banning order and football offences legislation to cover all domestic matches involving a member club of the Premier League, Football League, Football Conference and the League of Wales. Once enacted, any individual subject to a banning order will be precluded from attending any match involving a Conference League club.

Gurkhas

Miss Widdecombe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 324W, on Ghurkhas, when he expects to announce the findings of the review of immigration laws as applied to Ghurkhas; and if he will make a statement. [188251]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: Officials are seeking to bring the review of policy in respect of Ghurkhas who have served in the British Army to an early conclusion, but at this time I cannot say when that might be. The current arrangements for the recruitment of Ghurkhas have served us well for 50 years. We must therefore ensure that as part of this review we carefully examine the broader implications that any change in policy might have to ensure that these special arrangements in respect of Ghurkhas are not undermined.

Hate Crime

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the Government will introduce a hate crimes register; and if he will make a statement. [186874]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government have no plans to introduce a hate crimes register.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the results of the Home Office's Understanding and Responding to Hate Crimes project. [186886]

Fiona Mactaggart: This project was a joint initiative between the Metropolitan Police Service (MRS) and the Royal Holloway University of London, with funding from the Home Office. The MRS project team has produced fact sheets covering hate crime information from January to June 2001 for domestic, racial, and homophobic incidents, as well as sexual assaults. These factsheets have been disseminated to borough Community Safety Units (CSUs) in London as reference material. Further information is available on the metropolitan police website at http://www.met.police.uk/urhc/.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 524W, on departmental officials, whether the secondee from Deloitte & Touche contributed to the specification of the basis on which tenders were invited for the identity card project; and whether the secondment was arranged after a competitive process. [188705]

Mr. Browne: No. The secondee from Deloitte did not contribute to specification of the basis on which tenders were invited for the identity card project.

In common with general practice for secondments to the Home Office, the secondee from Deloitte was identified and appointed on a short-term basis as part of a bilateral arrangement with the company. Other secondees to the identity card programme have been appointed on a similar basis.

Justice and Home Affairs Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the outcome was of the Justice and Home Affairs Council held on 19 July; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [185933]

Caroline Flint: I represented the United Kingdom at the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council in Brussels on 19 July.

The Council held an orientation debate on the new JHA multi-annual work programme. I said that the programme should focus on visible action with the aim of bringing practical improvements to EU citizens. Member States agreed on this and most Member States agreed the programme should focus on action that may be taken forward under the existing treaties. Most Member States agreed that mutual recognition should remain the cornerstone of judicial co-operation and that more effective use should be made of Europol. On Immigration and Asylum there was broad support for the emphasis the Presidency had placed on practical co-operation, implementation and the evaluation of existing measures, but differing views on the need for further harmonisation of legislation. One delegation noted that adequate funding would need to be made available to support the new work programme. The

Presidency intends to prepare a final draft of the new programme for discussion at the September informal JHA Council.

The Commission presented its Communication Towards Enhancing Access to Information by Law Enforcement Agencies' (10745/04) which emphasised the importance of wider access to national databases for law enforcement authorities, a common approach to the analysis of criminal and intelligence matters and the need to promote the idea of intelligence-led policing. The Communication was noted by the Presidency who said they would feed it into the discussion on the new JHA multi-annual work programme.

The EU Counter-terrorism co-ordinator updated Member States on work currently being undertaken. The Counter-terrorism co-ordinator agreed with member States on the need for strengthened co-operation between law enforcement and emergency services and for a more concerted approach to civil crisis management within the EU. The Counter-terrorism co-ordinator also indicated work was being taken forward to look at ways for closer constructive engagement with moderate Islamic civil society. The Counter-terrorism co-ordinator also noted the Council would in due course examine how Eurojust may be better able to contribute to counter-terrorism efforts.

Greece updated the Council on its national plan for security at the Olympic games.

In light of growing pressure for the creation of a European register of criminal convictions, the Commission said it was preparing a draft Council Decision for October, which would promote the exchange of information on criminal convictions for serious offences, in particular murder, sexual crimes and terrorism. It was also planning to publish a Framework Decision on the mutual recognition of convictions by December. In approaching this work, the Commission took the view that it was unnecessary to create a single, central European database. Instead they favoured granting national authorities wider access to Member States existing registers. I supported the Commission, stressing that any initiative should include terrorist offences, and noting that attention should also be paid to the supervision of offender's post-conviction.

The Council discussed the position of Europol director and most Member States agreed it would be necessary to begin the process for selecting a new director of Europol again.

On Immigration and Asylum, the Commission presented the Communication on the Establishment of a Single Procedure for the Processing of Applications for Protection in the Member States. The Commission emphasised that introducing unified procedures at a national level for all asylum claims would have benefits in terms of speed and efficiency.

This was followed by a presentation by the Commission on its Communication on Common Readmission Policy (SEC (2004) 946 final). The Commission noted that there had been some improvements in the negotiation of readmission agreements but the overall picture was mixed. The ED needed to fine-tune its approach, for example: lighter negotiating mandates and compensatory measures where agreements covered third country nationals. The negotiation of readmission agreements with countries covered by the EU's New Neighbourhood Policy should be a priority.

The annual report on Migration and Integration (COM (2004) 508 final) was presented by the Commission. The Commission said that the report underlined the fact that the EU needed further immigration for economic and political reasons. The Commissions view was that while it was appropriate for the rules, particularly on economic migration, to be left to the Member States, there was also a need to move forward at a Community level. The Commission proposed speedy agreement in the Council on common principles on integration and that issues should be mainstreamed within wider policy frameworks.

Finally, I have placed in the Library a copy of the list of "A" points which were approved at the Council (Document PTS A 36 11478/04).

Mobile Phones

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to publish statistics on the number of motorists found using hand-held mobile phones while driving since 1 December 2003. [189507]

Paul Goggins: Data on police action (written warnings, fixed penalty notices and court proceedings) for 2003 on the new offence of driving whilst using a hand held mobile telephone will not be available until early 2005.

2004 data will be published in autumn 2005.

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidence he possesses to support the statement by the Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety that the Neighbourhood Watch name and logos are Crown copyright; and why this evidence was not made available before the National Neighbourhood Watch Association registered the name and logo in its name. [188656]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 13 September 2004]:* The hon. Member may be aware that there is a legal dispute concerning the National Neighbourhood Watch Association's registration of the Neighbourhood Watch name and logos as its trade marks. As the question relates to issues in current legal proceedings, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further.

Overseas Police Secondments

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers are seconded to work in Iraq; from what force areas they are seconded; what the periods of their secondment are; at what cost they are employed in Iraq; what plans he has to increase their numbers; and if he will make a statement. [172324]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

There are currently 44 serving UK police officers seconded to the UK Consulate-General in Basra and the UK Embassy in Baghdad. In addition, 65 officers are

posted to the Jordan International Police Training Centre near Amman in support of training Iraqi police officers there.

These officers are drawn from 36 of the 52 police forces in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and from the Ministry of Defence Police. Their deployments vary from six to 18 months.

The cost of supporting these officers in Iraq and Jordan from 1 April to August 2004 is estimated at £2.4 million.

There are no current plans to increase these numbers.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers are seconded to work overseas in countries other than Iraq; from which forces they originate; what the cost was in April; and from which budget the costs are paid. [172328]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The Government do not hold centrally information about the total number of serving police officers seconded to work overseas. However, the total number of police officers seconded from UK police forces to UN, EU, and OSCE policing/peacekeeping missions is currently 145.

These officers are drawn from 37 of the 52 police forces in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and from the Ministry of Defence Police.

The provisional out-turn estimates for supporting officers in these missions in the Financial Year 2003–04 was £15.6 million.

These costs are met from the peacekeeping element of the Global and African Conflict Prevention Pools, managed jointly by the FCO, MOD and DfID.

People-smuggling Operations

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people-smuggling operations were disrupted in the last year for which figures are available. [187083]

Mr. Browne: Reflex, the multi agency task force on organised immigration crime disrupted 38 groups involved in organised immigration crime between April 2003 and April 2004.

Between April 2004 and the end of June 2004 there have been 15 further disruptions.

In addition to the work underway within Reflex, the Immigration Service also undertakes routine investigations against those involved in immigration related crime, including facilitators, procurement or supply of forged documentation and illegal working. Figures are not yet available for the number of smuggling operations disrupted as a result of this activity.

Police (Suffolk)

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of *(a)* anti-social behaviour and *(b)* alcohol-related crime there have been in each of the last seven years in (i) the Suffolk constabulary, (ii) the western area of the Suffolk constabulary and (iii) the eastern area of the Suffolk constabulary. [187191]

Ms Blears: There is currently no data on the number of incidents of Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) due to the subjective nature of ASB itself. The latest data collected on ASB relate to the public perception of ASB in England and Wales and is measured by the British Crime Survey (BCS). Our Anti Social Behaviour strategy is aiming to reduce people's perception of anti social behaviour, as measured by the British Crime Survey (using a measure combining seven strands of anti social behaviour) by 2005–06 against the 2001–02 baseline. Latest figures show that the overall level of perceived ASB has fallen. The proportion of people estimated to perceive a high level of disorder in their local area fell from 19 per cent. to 16 per cent. between 2001–02 and 2003–04.

BCS data show that nearly half of victims of violent crime thought that their attacker was under the influence of alcohol. However, because alcohol-related incidents are not a recorded crime category, we are unable to reliably measure them.

This summer, the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers jointly ran an Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign. This campaign saw 92 Basic Command Units participating in concerted activity with partners to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence and disorder. Ipswich was one of these participating BCUs. Results from this campaign show that, in these 92 areas across eight weekends, there were over 1,000 arrests per week for alcohol-related offences.

Police Complaints Commission

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests of *(a)* police officers and *(b)* civilians have been made in response to investigations carried out by the office of the Police Complaints Commission for England and Wales in each of the last four years. [188643]

Ms Blears: It is assumed that the question refers to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) which was established under the Police Reform Act 2002 and commenced operations on 1 April 2004. It replaced the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) which ceased operations on 31 March 2004.

I understand from the IPCC that since 1 April 2004 there have been no arrests of police officers or civilians in response to its investigations none of which have yet reached this stage.

The PCA did not keep records of arrests in response to cases with which they were involved.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many investigations carried out by the Police Complaints Commission for England and Wales have resulted in *(a)* successful prosecutions and *(b)* disciplinary charges being brought in each of the last four years. [188644]

Ms Blears: It is assumed that the question refers to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) which was established under the Police Reform Act 2002

and commenced operations on 1 April 2004. It replaced the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) which ceased operations on 31 March 2004.

I understand from the IPCC that since 1 April 2004 there have been no successful prosecutions or disciplinary charges brought as a result of its investigations, none of which have yet reached this stage.

With regard to the PCA, records were not kept of successful prosecutions or disciplinary charges brought in connection with cases with which it was involved. The Home Office Statistical Bulletin on Police Complaints and Discipline (England and Wales) for the 12 months to March 2003 does however give figures on discipline / misconduct proceedings that resulted from substantiated complaints overall. These are:

	1999–2000	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Disciplinary Proceedings—under the Police (Discipline) Regulations 1985	130	63	56	24
Misconduct Proceedings—under the Police (Conduct) Regulations 1999	16	83	78	88
Total	146	146	134	112

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost of the office of the Police Complaints Commission for England and Wales has been in each of the last three years. [188649]

Ms Blears: It is assumed that the question refers to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) which was established under the Police Reform Act 2002 and commenced operations on 1 April 2004. It replaced the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) which ceased operations on 31 March 2004.

Accounts for 2003–04 for both the PCA and the IPCC, which existed in shadow form during that year, are currently being audited by the National Audit Office. Once finalised they will be published in accordance with statutory requirements.

	PCA total cost (£)
2002–03	5,420,675
2001–02	4,520,384
2000–01	3,787,696

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff are employed *(a)* part-time and *(b)* full-time in the office of the Police Complaints Commission for England and Wales. [188650]

Ms Blears: It is assumed that the question refers to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) which was established under the Police Reform Act 2002 and commenced operations on 1 April 2004. It replaced the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) which ceased operations on 31 March 2004.

The IPCC currently employs 264 full-time staff and five part-time staff. These are made up of permanent staff, those on fixed term contracts, public appointees, secondees and temporary staff.

Police Misconduct

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the policy of police authorities in England and Wales is on suspending a police officer against whom serious allegations of misconduct have been made by a member of the public pending inquiries into the allegations; and if he will make a statement; [189100]

(2) the policy is of police authorities in England and Wales when serious allegations of misconduct have been made against serving police officers by a member of the public as to whether such an officer is suspended from duty pending enquiries into the allegations that have been made; and if he will make a statement. [187608]

Ms Blears: Under the terms of the Police Reform Act 2002, the chief officer of a force is solely responsible for recording complaints about all officers complained against, up to and including the rank of Chief Superintendent, including special constables, and all police staff. The police authority for the force is solely responsible for recording complaints against all officers above the rank of Chief Superintendent including the chief officer.

Regulations 4 and 5 of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2004 define the circumstances in which an officer may be suspended. The decision to suspend officers up to and including the rank of Chief Superintendent is taken by the chief officer of the force; for officers ranked higher than Chief Superintendent the decision lies with the police authority.

Home Office guidance states that the decision to suspend should be taken only when the presence of an officer on duty may be detrimental to criminal or disciplinary investigations or proceedings, or when it is in the public interest to do so. This will normally apply only in cases where the complaint or allegation is of a serious nature likely to result in disciplinary or criminal conviction, and an officer is likely to be dismissed, required to resign or demoted. Where the decision to suspend is based on the necessity of maintaining public confidence, an officer must be informed in writing of the specific factors relevant to this decision.

Suspensions are subject to review by the suspending authority at least monthly, to determine whether the conditions that required the suspension still apply. A police authority may also consult with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for professional advice on the suspension of a senior officer. A police authority must obtain approval from the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) before suspending a senior officer, except in urgent cases, where approval must be obtained within 24 hours of the suspension beginning.

Press Officers

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many press officers are employed in his Department. [187160]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department currently employs 39 Press Officers. (Press Officers within the Home Office are employed at the Information Officer (IO) and Senior Information Officer (SIO) grades.)

Last year, the Press Office news desk answered 60,039 calls, issued 583 press notices and held 29 media briefings.

Proceeds of Crime Act 2002

Mr. Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assets have been recovered under the terms of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002; and how these proceeds have been disbursed since the Act came into force, broken down by region. [189466]

Caroline Flint: In 2002–03, the last year for which full data are available, a record amount of criminal assets was recovered, under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and earlier legislation, totalling £47 million.

Receipts from recovered criminal assets are allocated to a range of initiatives. The Recovered Assets Incentive Fund was set up last financial year to incentivise asset recovery by asset recovery agencies, including law enforcement and prosecuting authorities. £15.5 million a year for three years has been allocated to the Fund. These sums have been fully committed over the three year period to projects, agreed by the Association of Chief Police Officers and others, that will increase the confiscation of criminal assets.

Of £46.5 million that will be available under the Fund over three years, up to £12 million a year has been allocated to set up four new multi-agency Regional Asset Recovery Teams (RARTs) to disrupt organised crime groups, confiscate more criminal assets and to tackle money laundering. A successful pilot in the West Midlands has been rolled out to the North West, North East, Wales and London. The teams comprise staff from the police, National Crime Squad, Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, National Criminal Intelligence Service, Crown Prosecution Service, Assets Recovery Agency and the Inland Revenue.

An additional seven million a year for three years has been made available separately from the Recovered Assets Incentive Fund for community based projects. Last year four million of the total available was allocated to the Adventure Capital Fund to regenerate communities across England. The remaining three million was allocated to regional government offices, of which £1.5 million funded anti-gun crime initiatives and £1.5 million funded capacity building in crime and disorder reduction partnerships, seven million available this year, three million has been committed to funding a community justice centre pilot scheme in Liverpool; two million to fund support services for victims of crime in England and Wales; and two million to fund new and existing projects to tackle gun crime in England and Wales.

A new police incentivisation scheme introduced this year will enable police forces in England and Wales, and the Police Service of Northern Ireland, to receive a share of the criminal assets they recover locally, in the following year. Separate arrangements exist in Scotland. The scheme has the full support of the Association of Chief Police Officers in England and Wales. Police forces will benefit by receiving a third of all the recovered assets above £40 million in 2004–05, increasing to half for 2005–06. There will be no restrictions on how the police should spend this money so there may be scope in the future for them to devote some of the funds to community-based projects aimed at crime reduction.

For 2006–07 onwards, we are working up a new incentive scheme under which all agencies involved in asset recovery will, where possible, be able to get back 50 per cent. of the assets they recover.

Public Relations/Marketing

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent by his Department on public relations and marketing consultants in each of the last three years. [189297]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office has appointed public relations agencies to support a number of campaigns over the last three years, but has not made use of independent PR consultants over this period.

The Home Office has made occasional use of external marketing consultants to help develop marketing strategies which contribute to the delivery of departmental business objectives.

Spending over the last three years was.

	£000
2001/02	Nil
2002/03	Nil
2003/04	260,000

Special Constables

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to offer financial rewards to special constables. [188424]

Ms Blears: As some Police Forces felt that the payment of an allowance to Special Constables might be beneficial, we introduced The Special Constables (Amendment) Regulations 2002, which came into effect on 10 January 2003. This allows police authorities to submit proposals, recommended by the Chief Constable, for locally funded allowance schemes. Proposals require the Secretary of State's approval. Police Authorities may secure funds from outside sources to help run these schemes.

Four schemes have been approved so far. These are in Cumbria (Workington), West Midlands (H2 Operational Command Unit), Thames Valley (Thames Forest area) and Humberside (forcewide).

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will secure the removal of the special constable crest from the epaulettes of police uniforms in order to counter perceptions that special constables are inferior to those employed permanently. [188425]

Ms Blears: It is for chief officers to decide what, if any, means of identification should be present on the uniforms of their force's special constables. Forces

adopt a wide range of means of identifying their special constables, with some using the special constable crest on epaulettes and some not.

Home Office advice when asked has been that decisions on how to identify specials in a particular force should be properly evaluated, and include an assessment of any risks to their safety.

Tetra

Ms. Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the take-up of TETRA by each police authority in England; and what cost there has been to each police authority in addition to the costs met by his Department. [187431]

Caroline Flint: Airwave will be available to all police forces in England, Wales and Scotland. Currently Airwave is available to 40 forces, and it has more than 68,000 users. Initial feedback suggests that police users are delighted with the new system. Airwave will be available to all forces by the end of April 2005. Costs over and above those met by the Home Office are a matter for individual police authorities.

Vehicle Clamping

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what regulations govern the activities of vehicle clamping companies; what recent correspondence he has received regarding such activities; and what action he plans to take to restrict those activities. [187950]

Ms Blears: The number of letters received on the issue of wheel clamping is not available centrally.

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) was created under the powers of the Private Security Industry Act 2001 to regulate this and other areas of the private security industry.

On current plans it will become an offence to engage in wheel clamping activities without an SIA licence with effect from 28 February 2005.

There will be three checks on individuals applying for licences:

An identity check of the licence applicant.

A criminal record check to see if they have any relevant previous convictions.

A check on professional competence to do the job.

The requirement to show professional competence will include sections on proper payment procedures; correct identification and use of signs, lines and enforcement vehicles; and discretionary parking and customer care skills.

Visas

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which Government Department is responsible for altering the terms of a seasonal agricultural worker's visa issued at the British embassy in Bulgaria. [188449]

Mr. Browne: I understand that the matter has now been resolved with the hon. Member.

Witness Protection

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have entered a witness protection programme in each year for which figures are available, broken down by police force. [184962]

Paul Goggins: This information is not currently available. The Home Office, in conjunction with the Scottish Executive, the Northern Ireland Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers, has appointed an independent consultant to carry out an assessment of witness protection arrangements nationally. The assessment is covering all cases where witness protection is afforded by UK law enforcement agencies including the police. It will provide us with valuable information about the numbers and circumstances in which witness protection is provided.

The assessment commenced on 2 January; it was announced in the White Paper 'One Step Ahead—a 21st century strategy to defeat organised crime' which I published on 29 March. The assessment is due to be completed over the summer, and a final report will be available in the autumn.

However, even after completion of this assessment, we are not intending to make available publicly any of this information below national level. Such information broken down by individual police force is obviously operationally sensitive and could compromise the integrity of witness protection programmes and the officers who work on them.

999 Services

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the centralisation of the 999 police service in Essex; and if he will make a statement. [184512]

Ms Blears: The Home Office has not received any representations recently on emergency call-handling by Essex police.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Biodiversity Action Plan

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what definitions of the 45 priority habitats identified under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan have been established and agreed within the statutory nature conservation agencies in each county of the UK; and where such definitions have been, or will be, published. [189284]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 16 September 2004]*: Initial definitions for each of the 45 priority habitats are provided in the relevant priority habitat action plans on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan website (www.ukbap.org.uk). These have been agreed by the statutory nature conservation agencies in the UK. The Countryside Council for Wales published a technical guide to the priority habitats of Wales in 2003. Work to produce a comprehensive interpretation manual for priority habitats at a UK level is well advanced and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee aims to publish this document by the end of this financial year.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has taken pursuant to the Biodiversity Action Plan to integrate biodiversity considerations into policies and programmes affecting *(a)* agriculture, *(b)* water and wetlands, *(c)* woodland and forestry, *(d)* towns, cities and new developments and *(e)* coasts and seas; and if she will make a statement. [189285]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* In October 2002 the Government published 'Working with the grain of nature', a biodiversity strategy for England. The strategy aims to facilitate implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) in England, and to ensure that biodiversity is an integral consideration of all policies and programmes. It sets out work plans for integrating consideration of biodiversity into the main economic areas that affect it including agriculture, water and wetlands, woodland and forestry, towns, cities and development and coasts and seas.

Implementation groups have been established to take forward the work plans for these key sectors. They include representatives from government, the agencies, conservation NGOs, and other relevant organisations. A first annual stock take on progress with the strategy was published in October 2003 and a full report will be published in 2006.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of assessments made in 2002 in relation to UK status and trends for the Biodiversity Action Plan priority species were based on *(a)* survey data and *(b)* estimates. [189286]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* There are currently 391 species action plans (SAPs) being implemented as part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). In 2002 Lead Partners were asked to report on progress with targets set in the plans and to estimate the current status and trend of the species.

71 per cent. of the status assessments received were based on survey data and 29 per cent. were either based on estimates (17 per cent.) or no source was given for the assessment (12 per cent.). For trends, 59 per cent. of the assessments received were based on survey data and 41 per cent. were either based on estimates (32 per cent.) or no source was given for the assessment (9 per cent.).

The UK Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group has been investigating the gaps in survey coverage revealed by 2002 reporting and expects the next BAP reporting round in 2005 to show a substantial improvement.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has taken to improve the *(a)* surveillance and *(b)* monitoring of biodiversity since the 2002 biodiversity reporting round; what plans she has for new measures; and if she will make a statement. [189287]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* Defra and the statutory nature conservation agencies have an extensive ongoing programme of biodiversity surveillance and monitoring mostly undertaken in partnership with the voluntary sector. Since 2002 these programmes have produced: a new atlas of the British flora; annual trends in populations of wild birds; new partnerships for surveillance of bats and other mammals; the first complete assessment of the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest in England; and, an internet gateway providing access to over 15 million species records in the National Biodiversity Network. We are also contributing funds to a major new project to assess the abundance of whales, dolphins and porpoises in European Atlantic waters.

As part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, a Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group has been established with a mandate to improve the monitoring and reporting of status and trends in priority habitats and species. The Group is currently planning to undertake a major review of status and trends in 2005.

Bovine TB

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether a distinction is made in the transport regulations of tuberculosis positive tested cattle between those over and under 30 months of age. [188495]

Mr. Bradshaw: All TB reactors, both under and over 30 months (OTM) of age must be transported to slaughter under licence (TB 24(C)).

Because TB reactor cattle under 30 months (UTM) of age are excluded from OTM slaughterhouses and vice versa, they must be transported separately.

Combined Heat and Power

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Government continues to estimate that between 300–500 MWe of Micro-CHP capacity will be operational by 2010, as stated in its CHP strategy. [188678]

Mr. Morley: The estimate of 300–500 MWe of Micro-CHP capacity operational by 2010 is still the best estimate we have available. Its reliability will depend upon how successful this new technology is in penetrating the market. We will keep the estimate under review as the market develops.

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many combined heat and power plants benefit from business rates exemption. [187578]

Mr. Morley: CHP plants can claim business rate exemption direct from their Valuation Office, on the strength of a Good Quality CHP certificate and Secretary of State (exemption) certificate. Records are not held centrally of how many plants currently benefit from the exemption.

CITES

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what additional controls she is proposing to deal with trophy hunting, with specific reference to discussions at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. [188118]

Mr. Morley: We believe that sufficient controls already exist to regulate the trade in hunting trophies and this issue has not been included in the agenda for discussion at the Conference of CITES Parties, which is to take place in Bangkok next month. The EU can prohibit the importation of particular species as hunting trophies if it considers the hunt to be unsustainably managed.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what rules govern hunted trophy imports into *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the EU; and if she will make a statement. [188934]

Mr. Morley: Under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), trade in hunting trophies is permitted only where the specimens were lawfully acquired and the trade will not be detrimental to the conservation of the species. This applies both to imports to the UK and to the EU as a whole.

Import permits are not needed for trophies of species listed in Appendix II of CITES, where these are being imported as personal effects, although the owner will need to provide customs with a copy of the permit issued by the exporting country.

Where there is evidence that hunting trophies are being imported illegally, or that the trade is unsustainable, we shall not hesitate to take action as appropriate. Such action could include making formal representations to the CITES Standing Committee or the EU member states to suspend trade, and advice to HM Customs and Excise to seize trophies that have been imported illegally.

Colchester Oyster

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received to request the European Union to give Protected Geographical Indicator (PGI) status to the Colchester oyster; what action she has taken to secure PGI status; and if she will make a statement. [187972]

Mr. Bradshaw: An application to register 'Colchester Oyster' as a Protected Geographical Indication under the EU Protected Food Name scheme was received earlier this year. Officials have assessed the application against the scheme criteria and are now finalising the application in consultation with the applicant group. The next step will be to consult formally other interested parties within the UK. Subject to the findings of that consultation process, the application will be submitted to the European Commission to consider.

Combined Sewer Overflows

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department has taken *(a)* to assess and *(b)* to deal with problems created by combined sewer overflows since 1997; and what plans she has for further action. [188901]

Mr. Morley: As part of the five yearly Periodic Reviews of water company price limits, in 1999 and 2004, the Secretary of State has issued guidance to the Office of Water Services (Ofwat) on what is to be achieved by the water industry in England concerning combined sewer overflows and other intermittent discharges.

Within this framework the Environment Agency and water companies identify and assess problematic combined sewer overflows for improvement in the next five years.

Following the Periodic Review in 1999 a programme of around 4,500 problematic overflows are to be improved by 2005. A further programme is proposed for improvement in the next Periodic Review period from 2005 to 2010.

Conservation Support

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of how much of the money raised through import permits for hunting trophies is returned to support conservation in the country of origin; and if she will make a statement. [189152]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 16 September 2004]:* It is not possible to make such an assessment as the countries concerned are not required to provide this information.

Cormorants

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the inclusion of cormorants in the issue of licences to kill. [188961]

Mr. Bradshaw: All wild birds, including the cormorant are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which implements the EC Wild Birds Directive in Great Britain. Licences can be issued under Section 16 of the 1981 Act to kill or take certain birds for specific reasons, either on an individual or general basis. Licences can be granted to kill or take cormorants where it can be shown that such action will prevent serous damage to fisheries or inland waters. These licences are issued on an individual basis.

The general licences allow authorised persons, such as landowners or occupiers, to kill or take these pest birds, such as pigeon, and corvids, as well as to destroy nests and oil or prick eggs of these birds all year round, subject to specified conditions. Bird species considered for placing on a general licence are those which are considered a pest and numbers are plentiful such as pigeons. Although number of cormorants have increased, the estimated GB population size of 23,000 with an England population of just over 11,000 is not sufficient to warrant a general cull without leading to local extinctions and impacts on biodiversity.

I announced on 16 September new measures to deal with the conflicts between cormorants and the fishing community. This does not include the inclusion of the cormorant onto a general licence.

Crustacean Fishing

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the status of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1954/2003—Western Waters; [188894]

(2) whether under Council Regulation (EC) No. 1954/2003—Western Waters, UK shell fishermen could be prevented from fishing by the end of 2004; [188890]

(3) whether under Article 12 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1954/2003—Western Waters, Spanish fishermen will be permitted to fish for crab stocks in UK waters; and what her policy is on that provision. [188892]

Mr. Bradshaw: Council Regulation (EC) No. 1954/2003 establishes an effort management regime for EU vessels over 15 metres overall length fishing for demersal species, scallops and edible and spider crabs in ICES divisions V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X and certain parts of the waters managed by the Fisheries Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) and for vessels over 10 metres overall length fishing for these species in the biologically sensitive area in that part of area VII off the south and west coast of Ireland. The Regulation prohibits directed fishing for these species in Western Waters without a permit and provides for the setting of annual fishing effort allocations for each member state for each area and fishery described above. Those effort allocations are contained in Annex I of Council Regulation 1415/2004 and include effort allocations for UK vessels fishing for crabs in ICES areas V, VI, VII and VIII. These are based on the historic fishing activity of the UK crabbing fleet and so I would not expect UK shell fishermen to be prevented from fishing from the end of 2004. In the unlikely event that any of the UK crab effort allocations were in danger of being exhausted, Article 12 of Regulation 1954/2004 would allow the UK to submit a request to the Commission for an adjustment to its effort allocation either by an increase in the permitted fishing effort in a particular area or by a shift in fishing effort between areas. Such a request would need to be accompanied by a scientific assessment of the stock situation.

Regulation 1415/2004 provides effort allocations for Spain for crabs in ICES areas VIII, IX and CECAF but not in ICES areas V, VI, VII or X. Any request by Spain under Article 12 of Regulation 1954/2003 for increased effort allocations for crabs in UK waters would also need to be accompanied by a full scientific assessment of the stock situation which we would expect to be subject to rigorous scrutiny.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to improve the monitoring of UK fisheries to prevent *(a)* illegal incursions from foreign fishing fleets, *(b)* criminal behaviour directed by animal rights groups against lobster fishermen and *(c)* the theft of clams from Poole harbour. [188896]

Mr. Bradshaw: United Kingdom Fisheries Departments maintain aerial and sea surveillance within UK waters to ensure compliance with fisheries legislation by all fishing vessels including those from foreign fleets. These arrangements are regularly reviewed. An essential element of effective enforcement at sea is co-operation between member states. This is something that the Government fully support. The UK is a signatory to the declaration by the recently-formed Scheveningen Group whose aim is to improve co-operation between North Sea coastal member states. We also intend to play a constructive part in discussions on the Community Fisheries Control Agency, one of whose key roles will be to co-ordinate member states' enforcement activities.

British sea fishery officers are not empowered to deal with criminal behaviour by animal rights activists. The Government announced on 30 July in the paper "Animal Welfare—Human Rights: tackling animal rights extremism" a number of changes to strengthen the law on protests outside homes and harassment. These new proposals will strengthen on going action by the Government, police and Crown Prosecution Service and the courts to enforce existing legislation robustly and to ensure effective co-ordination to combat the criminal activities of extremists.

The theft of clams from Poole harbour is a matter for the Southern Sea Fisheries Committee to consider. Under the Poole Fishery Order 1985 (SI 1985 No. 847) the Committee is responsible for imposing and enforcing licensing and other restrictions on the fishing or taking of clams in a large area of Poole harbour. The Committee is also responsible for regulating fisheries elsewhere in the harbour under other legislation.

Departmental Car Use

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what changes there have been in *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions and *(b)* single occupancy car commuting in her Department against the baseline year. [188258]

Alun Michael: The baseline year for collecting these figures in Defra was 2002–03. Figures for 2003–04 show:

(a) an 11 per cent. reduction in road transport vehicle CO^2 emissions

(b) a 1 per cent. increase in single occupancy car commuting.

Departmental Estate

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what total floor space area of buildings was owned or leased by her Department and its agencies in each year from 1997. [188161]

Alun Michael: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was created on 8 June 2001. The total floor space area of buildings owned or leased by the Department and its agencies, including space occupied by other Government Departments or let to external organisations is:

	Square metres
2001–02	415,939
2002–03	388,810
2003–04	383,184

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the most significant sustainable development impacts are which she has identified in relation to the operation of her Department's estate. [188162]

Alun Michael: The most significant negative sustainable development impacts have been identified as:

Environmental—Use of land and associated landfill impacts (such as leachate and methane gas production) from waste disposal; Use of non-renewable resources; Contributions to global warming due to utility use and project management practices; Contributions to ground level ozone and greenhouse effects from the use of refrigerants and materials during maintenance of buildings; Land take for the development of new properties; Atmospheric emissions contributing to global warming associated with business travel, fleet cars and staff commuting.

Social—Impact of landfill on local community from leachate and methane gas production, noise and visual impacts; Local and global health impacts associated with air emissions, global warming and volatile organic compounds (VOCs); Health, Safety and Welfare impacts of work practices and procedures.

The most significant positive impacts have been identified as:

Environmental—Reduced air emissions from effective green travel and transport planning; Protection of biodiversity through land and ground management; Reduced need for landfill and associate emissions due to increased recycling and recovery of materials; Reduced use of non-renewable resources through appropriate procurement specification and management.

Social—Reduced health, noise and visual impacts from waste disposal due to increased recycling and recovery of materials; Improved staff welfare and health benefits from effective green travel planning.

Economic—Local job creation and improvements to local transport provision resulting from office location, relocation and co-location projects.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what parts of her Department's estate will not be covered by the commitments set out in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. [188255]

Alun Michael: Our aim is for as much as possible of the Defra estate to be covered by the Framework commitments. This means that different approaches may be appropriate for each part of the Framework.

Environmental Management Systems are being introduced at Defra sites except where there are plans for disposal, where we are a minor occupier sharing with another department, or where there are very few staff.

The waste targets currently apply to sites where Defra is the major or sole occupier and there are more than 50 staff.

The entire Defra estate is covered by Framework commitments on travel, energy, water, and biodiversity.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what changes there have been in water consumption by her Department in each year from 1997. [188260]

Alun Michael: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was created on 8 June 2001.

Total water consumption in buildings for which Defra has a contractual responsibility is shown below with details of performance against the Government target of 7.7 m^3 per person per year.

	Consumption	*Percentage change*	*m^3 per person p.a.*
2001–02	434,613	—	8.11
2002–03	417,343	-4	8.00
2003–04	416,180	-0.28	7.54

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the non-office sites within the Department's estates which have been identified as being likely to provide opportunities for significant water savings. [188261]

Alun Michael: A detailed survey of Defra's non-office sites was conducted in 2000–01 to establish baselines against which water saving opportunities could be measured. The contractual nature of the work in the Department's laboratories precludes simple year-on-year savings, but during 2003–04 three non-office sites were identified as providing opportunities for significant water savings. They were the Veterinary Laboratories Agency Regional Laboratories at Winchester, Bristol and Exeter.

Departmental Services

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which services within her Department will be *(a)* affected by and *(b)* subject to job losses consequent on the cuts in the civil service announced in the Spending Review.[189635]

Alun Michael: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 16 September, *Official Report*, column 1659W.

Departmental Water/Sewerage Charges

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department and its agencies spent on water and sewerage services in each year from 1997. [188160]

Alun Michael: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was created on 8 June 2001. Expenditure on water and sewerage services in buildings for which Defra and its agencies have a contractual responsibility was:

	£
2001–02	543,004
2002–03	546,333
2003–04	508,339

Diet (Environmental Impact)

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will carry out a lifecycle analysis of the environmental impact of typical *(a)* vegetarian and *(b)* non-vegetarian diets; and if she will make a statement. [188081]

Alun Michael: The Government's broad approach to the challenges of sustainable consumption and production is set out in the framework document, "Changing Patterns", published last year. Part of the approach is to base policy development on evidence about the whole life-cycle of products and services in the economy, to help optimise the use of natural resources and minimise overall environmental impacts. Production and consumption patterns in the food chain have significant implications for resource use and for the environment, so this area will be an important part of my Department's work to build up a robust evidence

base for future policy. Officials are reviewing the body of research presently available, to help us reach a view on what further work may be desirable.

Environmental Targets

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out the Government's performance against its main environmental targets since May 1997. [189343]

Mr. Morley: The latest outturn of all Defra's outstanding Public Service Agreement targets and other targets can be found in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Departmental Report 2004 published on 29 April 2004, Cmd. 6219. Copies are available from the House Library, The Stationary Office or on Defra's website at http://defraweb/corporate/deprep/default.htm

Defra will report its next outturn against its targets in its 2004 Autumn Performance Report, which will be published later this year.

EU (Co-existence Regimes)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which EU member states have a co-existence regime in place; and if she will make a statement. [188309]

Mr. Morley: The Danish Government have adopted primary, or framework, legislation to set out their broad approach on rules for the co-existence of GM and non-GM crops. In Germany, framework legislation has been proposed but not yet adopted. In the UK, we have initiated our co-existence consultation process with a series of preliminary workshop meetings. The purpose of these is to gather information before we issue a written consultation package. Our aim is to have a co-existence regime in place before GM crops are grown commercially in the UK.

European Chemicals Agency

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff she estimates will be employed by the proposed European Chemicals Agency under the REACH proposals. [189033]

Alun Michael: The size and composition of the proposed European Chemicals Agency (to be located in Helsinki, Finland) will depend very much on the outcome of the current EU negotiations on REACH and is, therefore, difficult to estimate. Bearing this in mind, the Finnish Government have estimated that approximately 200 people from all over the EU will be employed by the Agency.

The Government support the creation of a European Chemicals Agency. However, we do not expect the Agency to be a large organisation as we expect full use to be made of the expertise that lies with member states. The Government considers that the size of the Agency must be appropriate to secure the confidence of stakeholders and ensure that REACH is operated in a transparent, consistent and harmonised way across the EU.

European Habitats Directive

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the complaint made to the European Commission about alleged contravention of the European Habitats Directive by the Irish Government in relation to the salmon drift net fishery; and what assessment she has made of the impact of the alleged contravention on salmon stocks. [189139]

Mr. Bradshaw: Since the UK Government are not party to this complaint we are not aware of how matters stand between the European Commission and the Irish Government in relation to it.

Tagging studies suggest that the Irish Salmon Drift Net Fishery takes less than 1 per cent. of salmon returning to rivers in the north-east of England, but this proportion is greater for stocks in Wales and the west of England, possibly increasing to around 10 per cent. for some rivers in the south and south-west.

Government take every opportunity to press the Irish to phase out this fishery.

Farm Prices

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the Milk Development Council Report, "Dairy Supply Chain Margins 2003–04"; and whether she has accepted the key findings in respect of farm gate and retail price movements and differentials. [189080]

Alun Michael: The lack of transparency regarding prices and margins in the dairy supply chain was an issue highlighted in the recent EFRA committee report on milk pricing. We are still considering the Milk Development Council report and assessing the contribution its recommendations could make to addressing these issues.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons London Economics was commissioned to produce a report on the impact of supermarkets on farm gate prices; and how much this report cost her Department. [189081]

Alun Michael: Defra commissioned this research in order to examine the evidence for a decline in the share of the retail price of food received by farmers and to determine the factors that could account for this. Special attention was to be given to the possible influence of supermarkets. The study was to place the UK experience within the context of other EU member states.

The report was commissioned at the time when the Competition Commission was investigating four grocery multiples bidding for Safeway and in a wider context of concerns about the declining share of farm prices as a proportion of retail spending on food.

The selection of London Economics was the result of a competitive process, based on an invitation to a number of consultancies and academics to submit proposals for this project. London Economics was paid £96,375, excluding VAT, for the report.

Farmed Ducks

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to introduce greater control of intensively farmed ducks; and if she will make a statement. [188307]

Mr. Bradshaw: The welfare of ducks is protected by the Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968, which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress. More detailed standards are laid down in the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2000 (S.I. 1870). These regulations include specific requirements on inspections, record keeping, freedom of movement, buildings and equipment and feed and water.

There is also a specific Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Ducks. Flock-keepers are required by law to have access to, and be familiar with this code, which encourages all those who care for ducks to adopt the highest standards of husbandry.

We are currently revising the duck welfare code and a three month public consultation ended on 10 September.

Fisheries

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the percentage of *(a)* plaice, *(b)* cod, *(c)* dab, *(d)* flounder, *(e)* herring, *(f)* haddock, *(g)* skate and *(h)* huss (i) landed in British ports and (ii) in the North Sea which are diseased. [186726]

Mr. Bradshaw: Fish with obvious signs of disease are not generally landed because they would not be marketable. Data on landings of diseased fish are therefore not collected. However, any unusual disease trends in fish catches and landings would be noticed by the industry and reported to Defra via the Sea Fisheries Inspectorate.

Defra undertakes a regular programme of disease surveillance of fish stocks in the North Sea, although sample sites may not necessarily be in areas of commercial fishing activity. The work is carried out by the CEFAS, Weymouth Laboratory and the programme follows standardised methodologies, which have been agreed internationally by the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) for sampling and reporting fish diseases.

The percentage of cod, plaice, herring, haddock and flounder with obvious disease signs is very low, usually less than 1 per cent. Dab are unusually susceptible to diseases and in localised areas the prevalence may be up to 10—20 per cent. with lower levels in the northern North Sea. Up to 40 per cent. of dab in some areas such as West Dogger Bank exhibit abnormal pigmentation but it is not known whether this is indicative of disease as no causative agent has been found. Studies are also being carried out on liver nodules (tumours) in dab and these indicate that the condition is present in fish in most areas but with a higher incidence of up to 14 per cent. at Flamborough and West Dogger. Insufficient number of skate and huss are caught during the monitoring programme to allow meaningful disease assessment to be made.

Gangmasters (Licensing) Act

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with representatives of the farming industry about the impact of the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004 on *(a)* machinery co-operatives, *(b)* machinery rings and *(c)* voluntary arrangements between farmers which involve the sharing of employees' time. [189120]

Alun Michael: The definition of a gangmaster in the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004 has been drafted as widely as possible to avoid creating loopholes which might be exploited by unscrupulous gangmasters. The licensing requirements in the Act would apply to the supply of labour with machinery or associated with the supply of services by a contractor, however the Act makes provision for the Secretary of State to exclude specific activities from the licensing arrangements through secondary legislation. This flexible approach will ensure licensing applies where there is a risk that gang workers will be exploited while avoiding the imposition of unnecessary burdens on bona fide farming arrangements where the risk of exploitation is minimal.

When the Gangmasters (Licensing) Bill was being debated I confirmed that the Government would bring forward regulations to exempt from the licensing arrangements farming operations which do not involve the supply of gang labour. I also confirmed that the Government would consult widely on the scope of these exclusions.

This process has started and a working group involving all key stakeholders has been brought together to work with us on this. The working group met for the first time on 2 August 2004 and will continue to meet during the autumn. A full draft of the Exclusions Regulations will be made available for comment later in the year. This will give everyone with an interest an opportunity to comment.

GM Seed Directive

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discretion the Government have not to implement a GM seed directive that has been added to the European common catalogue. [188621]

Mr. Bradshaw: The European Common Catalogue, established under Council Directive 2002/53/EC on the Common Catalogue of varieties of agricultural plant species, is an amalgam of individual member states' national lists. Varieties that have been added to the Common Catalogue can normally be freely marketed throughout the EC.

The Common Catalogue Directive makes provision for a member state to apply to the European Commission for authorisation to prohibit the use of a GM variety within its own territory, or to lay down appropriate conditions for cultivation of the variety, where either;

(a) it has established that cultivation of the variety could pose a risk to plant health of other cultivated varieties or species, or there are valid reasons for considering that it may pose a risk to human health or the environment, or

(b) official growing trials, undertaken within that member state's territory, clearly show that the variety does not have a Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) within that member state.

I assume my hon. Friend's question relates to the recent addition of 17 GM maize varieties to the European Common Catalogue. The maize varieties in question all contain the same GM transformation event, which was given EU wide approval for commercial cultivation in 1998. The approvals process addresses plant and human health and environmental safety issues.

These varieties have not undergone any official UK growing trials, as referred to in *(b)* above. Therefore at present there is no basis for the Government to seek a prohibition on the marketing of these varieties in the UK. However, they are not suited to UK conditions and it is not anticipated that any UK farmer would attempt to grow these varieties.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make monthly statements over the following 12 months on the number of hazardous waste producers contacting her Department and the agencies for which she is responsible who have been unable to find a waste contractor able to take the hazardous waste they produce, giving details of the *(a)* type of waste and *(b)* amount of waste concerned. [187172]

Mr. Morley: The Department, the Environment Agency and Envirowise each have arrangements in place to deal with inquiries from business and industry on hazardous waste, and in particular on the changes brought in by the Landfill Directive. The agency has set up a national call centre, and Envirowise has established a dedicated helpline. Inquiries to the respective organisations are on a range of issues. I have asked my officials to collate information on the inquiries received, and place this data on the Department's website. Waste producers who cannot find a waste contractor able to take their waste are encouraged to follow a number of options including contacting the agency or Envirowise. Other options are to contact a member of the Environment Services Association, their own trade association, or check the options available to them to reduce or eliminate the hazardousness of the waste.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 250W, on hazardous waste, if she will provide full details of the sampling process used to obtain the cross section of small businesses that received the survey; how many businesses were sent the survey; how many businesses returned the survey; and if she will place a copy of *(a)* the survey and *(b)* the full responses received in the Library. [187174]

Mr. Morley: The survey, about awareness of hazardous waste issues, was distributed to 199 small businesses through the Institute of Directors (54) and the Small Business Service (95 electronically and 50 by post). Approximately 37 businesses returned the survey direct to Defra (17 electronically and approximately 20 by post). The 20 hard copies were not retained, but the original survey has been placed in the Library along with the 17 electronic returns and the compiled results for all 37 responses returned as percentages.

Hydrofluorocarbon Emissions

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what revisions, indicating amounts of increase or decrease, have been made in 2004 to the estimates of UK emissions of hydrofluorocarbons occurring in 2000 which were first reported to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2002 from *(a)* mobile air conditioning, *(b)* commercial refrigeration and *(c)* metered dose inhalers; and if she will make a statement. [188777]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 15 September 2004]*: The following table shows the emissions of hydrofluorocarbons, expressed in kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, for the year 2000 that were reported by the UK to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in i) 2002; and ii) 2004.

Sector	*Emissions for year 2000 reported in 2002 (kt CO2 eq.)*	*Emissions for year 2000 reported in 2004 (kt CO2 eq.)*	*Change: [reported 2004]-[reported 2002] (kt CO2 eq.)*
(a) Mobile air conditioning	481	785	+ 304
(b) Commercial refrigeration	2265	2640	+ 375
(c) Metered dose inhalers	325	894	+ 569

This upward revision in each of these sectors is the result of recent work undertaken for Defra on emissions estimates of hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride. The reasons for the change in emissions in the specific sectors include:

(a) In the mobile air conditioning (MAC) sector, a faster penetration of MAC in the UK vehicle fleet than previously estimated and changes to emission factors used in the emissions model;

(b) For commercial refrigeration, revised activity and equipment lifetime data for certain sub-sectors and changes to the calculation methodology and emission factors used in the emissions model; and

(c) For metered dose inhalers, revised estimates of the hydrofluorocarbons bank size based on new data from manufacturers.

Imported Primates

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many primates, broken down by species, have been imported into the UK in each of the last 10 years; and if she will make a statement. [188716]

Mr. Morley: The following table shows the numbers of species imported. Current records commenced in 1997.

Scientific name and year of import	*Common name*	*Total number per species*
Aotus lemurinus	Douroucolli	
1999	1	1

Scientific name and year of import	Common name	Total number per species
Ateles fusciceps	Spider monkey	
1999	1	1
Callicebus cupreus	Ornate titi	
2001	2	
2002	11	13
Callimico goeldi	Goeldi's tamarin	
1998	1	1
Callithrix argentata	Black tailed marmoset	
2002	1	
2004	1	2
Callithrix geoffroyi	White fronted marmoset	
1999	18	
2002	5	23
Callithrix jacchus	Common marmoset	
1997	18	
1998	24	
1999	38	80
Cebus albifrons	White fronted capuchin	
1999	8	
2002	1	9
Cebus apella	Tufted capuchin	
1998	24	
1999	32	
2001	1	57
Cercopithecus ascanius	Black-cheeked white nosed monkey	
1998	1	1
Cercopithecus hamlyni	Owl-faced monkey	
1999	4	4
Cercopitecus mona	Mona monkey	
1998	10	10
Cercopithecus petaurista	Lesser white nosed monkey	
1998	10	10
Chlorocebus aethiops	Vervet monkey	
2000	1	
2002	1	2
Daubentonia madagascariensis	Aye-aye	
2001	1	1
Galago senegalensis	Senegal Galago	
1997	4	4
Galago demidoff	Dwarf Galago	
1997	10	10
Gorilla gorilla	Gorilla	
2000	2	2
Hapalemur griseus	Grey gentle lemur	
2001	2	
2002	2	4
Hylobates agilis	Dark handed gibbon	
2000	1	
2001	1	2
Hylobates gabriellae	Buff cheeked gibbon	
2000	2	
2001	3	5

Scientific name and year of import	Common name	Total number per species
Hylobates lar	White handed gibbon	
2000	1	
2001	2	3
Hylobates moloch	Silvery gibbon	
2000	2	2
Hylobates muelleri	Muller's gibbon	
2000	1	1
Hylobates spp	Gibbon	
2000	1	1
Leontopithecus chrysmela	Golden headed Lion tamarin	
2000	1	1
Leontopithecus rosalia	Golden lion tamarin	
2002	1	1
Macaca fascicularis	Crab eating macaque	
1997	704	
1998	2442	
1999	1186	
2000	1599	
2001	1967	
2002	2152	
2003	1859	
2004	655	12,564
Macaca mulatta	Rhesus monkey	
1997	184	
1998	96	
1999	124	
2000	153	
2001	46	
2002	74	
2003	2	
2004	20	699
Macaca nigra	Celebes crested macaque	
2000	5	
2002	1	6
Mandrillus sphinx	Mandrill	
2001	1	1
Nycticebus pygmaeus	Lesser slow loris	
1999	4	4
Pan troglodytes	Chimpanzee	
1999	1	
2000	1	
2002	2	
2003	1	
2004	1	6
Pitheca pitheca	White faced saki	
2002	1	1
Pongo pygmaeus	Orang-utan	
2000	1	
2001	2	
2003	2	5
Presbytis comata	Java leaf monkey	
1998	8	8
Presbytis melalophos	Mitred leaf monkey	
1998	4	4
Saguinus bicolor	Pied tamarind	
2004	1	1
Saguinus imperator		
2000	1	1

Scientific name and year of import	Common name	Total number per species
Saguinus midas	Negro tamarind	
1998	17	
1999	54	71
Saimiri boliviensis	Squirrel monkey	
1998	6	6
Saimiri sciureus	Common squirrel monkey	
1997	30	
1998	54	
1999	266	350
Trachypithecus obscurus	Spectacled langur	
1998	1	1
Varecia variegata	Ruffed lemur	
2001	2	2
Total		13,981

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* rhesus macaques and *(b)* long-tailed macaques of (i) wild-caught origin, (ii) first generation captive bred and (iii) second generation or more captive bred have been imported into the UK in each of the last 10 years; and if she will make a statement. [188717]

Mr. Morley: The following tables show the numbers of animals imported. None of them were wild caught. Current records commenced in 1997.

Rhesus macaque (macaca mulatta)

	First generation captive bred	Second generation or more captive bred
1997	0	184
1998	0	96
1999	0	124
2000	0	153
2001	0	46
2002	0	74
2003	0	2
2004	0	20
Total	0	699

Long-tailed macaque (Macaca fascicularis)

	First generation captive bred	Second generation or more captive bred
1997	628	76
1998	2,338	104
1999	927	259
2000	1,376	223
2001	1,581	386
2002	1,574	578
2003	1,474	385
2004	517	138
Total	10,415	2,149
Grand total		12,564

Japanese Knotweed

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what public protection guidance her Department has offered local authorities with regard to the use of Tordon 22k to combat Japanese knotweed. [188467]

Mr. Bradshaw: Japanese knotweed (Fallopia Japonica) is a large and vigorous weed, which is considered a troublesome pest in many parts of the country.

Tordon 22k is highly effective against Japanese knotweed when applied in line with directions for use on the label. Tordon 22k contains the active substance picloram and is fully approved for use on land not intended for cropping, nor is it appropriate for use in or near water, or near trees. There are no specific consents required to use this product but any user must follow all of the conditions of use and directions for use on the product label. This product is for professional use only as an agricultural/horticultural/industrial herbicide. Conditions relating to its sale, supply, storage and use are covered under Schedules 2 and 3 to the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986.

The Department has not issued specific guidance to local authorities on the use of Tordon 22k, however, the Pesticides Safety Directorate do publish general advice on the use of pesticides. The use of Tordon 22k is recommended in the Environment Agency's Code of Practice for the management of Japanese knotweed on development sites. The Code of Practice is available from www.environment-agency.gov.uk and is currently being revised. English Nature, the Government's statutory nature conservation advisers, refer to Tordon 22k in their herbicide handbook "Guidance on the use of herbicides in nature conservation sites" (available from www.english-nature.org.uk).

Lions

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will support the proposal to upgrade the African lion to Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species at the next Conference of the Parties. [186274]

Mr. Morley: There are very strict biological criteria that have to be met before a species can be listed on Appendix I of CITES and we also have to be satisfied that a trade ban is the most appropriate method for addressing this problem. Doubts have been expressed as to whether the proposal satisfies these very strict criteria and most of the range states are opposed to an Appendix I listing. The UK, recognising that some lion populations have declined, in common with the other ED member states, is currently keeping an open position and would like to explore the scope for an agreed solution with the range states before coming to a final decision on this matter.

Marine Planning

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress she has made in bringing to a conclusion *(a)* the review of marine nature conservation, *(b)* the marine fisheries and environment enforcement review, *(c)* the review of

coastal and marine consent and *(d)* the development of the EU marine strategy; and if she will make a statement. [188447]

Mr. Morley: The Review of Marine Nature Conservation Working Group published its report to Government on 26 July. The report detailed its investigations and made recommendations for improving protection for marine habitats, species and ecosystems in the UK maritime area. The Government are considering the Working Group's report and hopes to respond to its recommendations by the end of the year.

Defra published the Review of Marine Fisheries and Environment Enforcement on 8 July. The Review makes a number of recommendations on organisational options for inshore enforcement bodies, the promotion and licensing of sea angling and charging inshore commercial and recreational fishermen. Interested parties have until 29 September to comment. The Government will consider the Review in the light of these comments with a view to responding before the end of the year.

The Government are still considering the options for possible longer-term reform to modernise and rationalise the current complex coastal and marine consenting regime, following the work by my noble Friend the Lord Rooker on the consents review.

The draft EU Marine Thematic Strategy is being prepared by the European Commission. The UK has played an active role in the working groups, and will be participating in a stakeholder conference in November at which a first draft of the Strategy is due to be discussed. The Commission plan to submit the strategy to the European Council and Parliament by May 2005.

Organic Egg Production

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the implications for competition between UK and other EU producers of the removal of the derogation on flock size and stocking density on pre-1999 organic egg producers; [186580]

(2) what representations she has received concerning the decision to remove the derogation on flock size and stocking density for organic egg producers in production in 1999; and if she will make a statement. [186581]

Mr. Bradshaw: In July we wrote to the industry seeking their views on the expiry of the derogation. 21 responses were received from a variety of industry representatives, including the National Farmers Union, individual producers, producers associations, organic certification bodies and multiple retailers.

After careful consideration of all the representations received and taking account of the interests of the organic poultry sector as a whole, I have decided that organic poultry producers should be allowed to continue to benefit from this derogation, which permits stocking densities and flock sizes higher than normally permitted in respect of livestock producing holdings with existing buildings constructed before 24 August 1999, until 31 December 2010. This will put UK producers on an even footing with those in the rest of the European Union.

Over-30-month Scheme

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to abolish the over-30-month scheme. [188500]

Mr. Bradshaw: The future of the over-30-month Scheme is linked to any change to the over thirty months (OTM) rule. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) advised on 6 July that a move to replace the OTM rule by BSE testing of cattle born after 1 August 1996 continues to be justified on the grounds of the food-borne risk to consumers and proportionality. The Government are still considering the FSA advice. No decision has been made as yet.

Peat Bogs

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will propose Bolton Fell and Solway Moss peat bogs for Special Area of Conservation protection; and if she will make a statement. [188440]

Mr. Bradshaw: Bolton Fell and Solway Moss are being considered for designation as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Consultations on these two sites are ongoing in the light of scientific objections raised about their candidature. Once this process has been concluded, and if the sites meet the selection criteria for SAC protection, they will be designated.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list peat bog sites broken down by *(a)* area and *(b)* protected status. [188441]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no comprehensive list of all peat bogs in the UK. A list of Protected bogs according to country and their designation status has been placed in the Library of the House. National designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) in Northern Ireland underpins international designation as a candidate Special Area of Conservation. This underpinning means that there are overlaps between Sites of Special Scientific Interest and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs). Where the information is available this is shown on the list that has been placed in the Library of the House. Some cSACs may cover peat bog, but may be designated because of another natural feature of importance.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the Government's strategy for protecting peat bogs. [188442]

Mr. Bradshaw: Both blanket bog and lowland raised bog are priority habitats under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. The Action Plans are published and are posted on the UKBAP website: www.ukbap.org.uk. Statutory site designation plays an important part in the conservation of both these types of bog. Notification as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) in Northern Ireland,

provides protection for over 400 peat bogs, with many of the most important areas managed by statutory conservation agencies through agreements with site owners. Where appropriate, the designation process can include compulsory purchase of the land. The UK has proposed 106 active and degraded raised bogs as candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) under the Habitats Directive, and 107 blanket bog sites as cSACs. In addition to this site designation, the UK is also encouraging the development of non-peat alternatives as growing media and promoting the use of alternatives. Our aim is for a minimum of 40 per cent. of total market requirements to be peat free by 2005 and 90 per cent. by 2010.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what area of peat bogs has been lost to commercial peat extraction in each year since 1997. [188443]

Mr. Bradshaw: Peat extraction is measured in cubic metres. The following figures shows peat extraction every year since 1997 and are derived from the British Geological Survey's, Minerals Yearbook and the Office of National Statistics:

	Peat extraction (thousand cubic metres)
1997	1,619
1998	1,076
1999	1,653
2000	1,626
2001	1,814
2002	973
2003	2,008

There is currently planning consent for extraction from 3,990.6 ha of raised peat bog in England, of which 72 ha is lapsed. The existence of planning consent does not mean that all or part of the area is necessarily cut. For example, a recent agreement with Scotts Company (UK) Ltd. in 2001 has meant that 1,886 ha of peatland has come out of peat extraction, although planning consent still remains on part of it.

Pollution Indicators (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the key pollution indicators are within Castle Point constituency; and what the monitoring systems are for these indicators. [188434]

Mr. Morley: For water quality, the General Quality Assessment scheme (GQA) is the Environment Agency's (EA's) national method for classifying rivers and canals. The scheme provides a way of comparing water quality from one river to another and for looking at changes through time. The EA assesses water quality in four separate ways; chemistry (based on water samples), biology, nutrients and aesthetics. Water samples are collected from about 8,000 monitoring sites monthly. These represent over 40,000 kilometres of rivers and canals. To each sampling site, the Agency assigns a stretch of river that the site characterises. In the Castle Point constituency there are 2 km of monitored river; the Prittle Brook watercourse.

In terms of emissions of air pollutants with reference to sources in a local neighbourhood, the Environment Agency has developed a reporting system for industrial facilities that it regulates, whereby they report emissions of key chemical compounds from their facility to air, water or sewer. Within the Castle Point Constituency, two sites currently report to the Environment Agency's Pollution Inventory; Benfleet Sewage treatment works owned by Anglian Water and Oikos Storage Ltd 's hazardous waste treatment facility at Hold Haven Wharf, Haven Road, Canvey Island. The specific details of emissions from these sites and more detailed water quality information can be downloaded from the EA's website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk

In terms of air quality, Defra monitors air pollution at two locations in the Castle Point Constituency. There is automatic continuous monitoring of ozone, nitrogen oxides, particulate mátter (PM10), sulphur dioxide and carbon monoxide at Chalkwell Park, Westcliffe-on-Sea and at London Road, Grays. These sites are included in the national Automatic and Rural Network (AURN) of air quality monitors and hourly information on concentrations of these pollutants is published on Defra's air quality website at www.airquality.co.uk. Local authorities in the constituency carry out additional assessment of air quality as part of their responsibilities under Local Air Quality Management.

REACH

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what the latest estimate is of the cost of REACH to industry in *(a)* its phasing-in period and *(b)* the first 30 years; [189034]

(2) what further impact assessment is being carried out on the REACH proposals; and when this will be published. [189035]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows:

(a) The UK partial Regulatory Impact Assessment primarily reflects the direct costs to industry of REACH which are estimated at £515 million over the 11 year phase in period. This is equivalent to total direct costs across the EU of approximately £2.4 billion. This is in line with European Commission estimates published in October 2003 of a maximum overall cost of the revised proposal to be £7.5 billion.

This is clearly an important issue and one we will continue to develop as the proposal develops through the negotiation process. We have recently let a contract to carry out further impact assessment work to assess the indirect costs passed down the supply chain. The results of this will be published January 2005.

The European Commission has also indicted that it will perform further impact assessment work on three key areas: the withdrawal of substances, the impact on Accession States and the impacts on innovation. We welcome the Commission's further work. The results are expected to be published in December 2004.

(b) The costs to industry following the phase in period will depend upon the number of new substances developed and registered. REACH is fully expected to have a positive impact on this by reducing the testing

requirements for new substances, providing exemptions for research and development, raising the threshold for regulation from 10kg to 1 tonne and by simulating innovation into safer alternatives. Although the exact cost of registering a substance is still to be established, the current cost of notifying a new substance between 1–10 tonnes would be in the region of £100,000. Under the testing proposal put forward by the European Commission, these costs could be reduced to around £30,000.

Refrigerator Recycling

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 5 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 443W, on refrigerator recycling, why the deadline for the publication of the Environment Agency's report auditing the refrigerator recycling scheme has been missed; and when she expects the report to be published. [188750]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency expects to publish the report shortly. An early draft of the report has been shared with the operators of the facilities concerned and meetings with these operators took place in August. A final draft of the audit report has been prepared and is being checked to ensure, amongst other things, that it will not compromise any further enforcement action that the Agency may wish to take.

Renewable-sourced Electricity

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of electricity used by buildings in her Department and its agencies came from renewable sources in each year from 1997. [188159]

Alun Michael: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was created on 8 June 2001.

The proportion of electricity used in buildings for which Defra and its agencies has a contractual responsibility that came from renewable sources was:

	Percentage
2001–02	19
2002–03	40
2003–04	57

River Thames (Radioactive Discharges)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discharges of radioactivity to the river Thames and its tributaries are permitted. [187717]

Mr. Morley: Discharges of radioactivity to the river Thames and its tributaries are authorised under the Radioactive Substances Act 1993 by the Environment Agency from four licensed nuclear sites and 260 other non nuclear sites, such as hospitals, medical and veterinary establishments, universities and general industry. Discharges are made via effluent treatment plant or via sewage treatment works. The sites which are authorised and the levels of radioactive discharges are included in the Environment Agency's Pollution Inventory, which can be found on its web site, www.environmentagency.gov.uk.

RSPCA

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what extra powers, duties and responsibilities will be available to the RSPCA as a result of her agreement that they should become approved prosecutors under section 1(3)*(e)* of the Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act 2000. [188458]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 13 September 2004]*: The RSPCA's written agreement with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, which allows them to perform the functions of an 'approved prosecutor', under Section 1 (3) *(e)* of the Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act 2000, took effect from 1 September 2004 and applies in England only. The Amendment Act supplements the Protection of Animals Act 1911, by allowing a magistrates court to make an order relating to the temporary care or for the disposal, sale or slaughter of animals kept for commercial purposes, that are the subject of a prosecution brought under the 1911 Act by a 'prosecutor'.

The RSPCA is the first body to enter into a written agreement with Defra. The agreement only allows the RSPCA to intervene in cases in which they are already prosecuting under the Protection of Animals Act 1911. The court will only be able to grant an order if it appears necessary for the welfare of the animals, taking account of the evidence of a veterinary surgeon. Once the RSPCA has obtained a court order, they then have the power to enter premises to mark the animals concerned and to carry out the order.

The written agreement requires the RSPCA to issue guidance and provide proper training to ensure that the appropriate level of expertise is achieved and maintained by the staff operating under the agreement. The State Veterinary Service and local authorities will perform a full 'audit' function for every case in which the RSPCA makes an application to the courts for an order under the 2000 Act.

Sea Bass

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library a copy of the European Commission's response to her submission to close the winter bass fishery in the English Channel and Western Approaches. [188130]

Mr. Bradshaw: A copy of the European Commission's response to the UK request for closure of the offshore pair trawl fishery for bass will be placed in the Library along with a copy of the UK request.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her Department's catering policy to source sea bass from hand line fisheries; and if she will make a statement. [188138]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra and its catering service providers are working together to increase the consumption of food that has been produced in ways that help sustain productivity and reduce adverse impacts on the environment.

Defra supports the sourcing of sea bass from responsibly managed fisheries. Handlining is a relatively low impact method of fishing and so can help fisheries to remain sustainable. Advice from the international Council for the Exploration of the Seas on sea bass has been that the level of exploitation of the stock appeared to be sustainable. New advice is due shortly which we will be considering carefully with a view to ensuring that the stock remains sustainably exploited. There are also currently no restrictions at a UK or Community level on the method of fishing that can be used to target bass.

In these circumstances I consider it would be inappropriate to encourage Defra's caterers to restrict the source of bass they purchase to hand line fisheries only.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she proposes to take to persuade the European Commission of the need to close the sea bass fishery in order to reduce the by-catch of dolphins and other cetaceans. [188139]

Mr. Bradshaw: It is disappointing that the Commission did not accept the UK request for the closure of the offshore pair trawl fishery for bass to protect common dolphins. However, the Commission response to the UK request points to some ways in which progress might be made. We will be looking to build on this and the Commission's commitment to cooperate with the UK and other member states to find an effective solution to this bycatch problem.

Shellfishing

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she is taking to prevent the theft of clams from Poole harbour. [187430]

Mr. Bradshaw: The theft of clams from Poole Harbour is a matter for the Southern Sea Fisheries Committee to consider. Under the Poole Fishery Order 1985 (SI 1985 No.847) the Committee is responsible for imposing and enforcing licensing and other restrictions on the fishing or taking of clams in a large area of Poole Harbour. The Committee is also responsible for regulating fisheries elsewhere in the Harbour under other legislation.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what measures her Department is undertaking to assess *(a)* historical shellfish landings as the basis of any management plan and *(b)* current shellfish landings; [188891]

(2) if she will implement a management plan for scallops, crabs and lobsters in the Western Channel. [188893]

Mr. Bradshaw: Data on shellfish landings by UK vessels and into UK ports are collected annually and published in the United Kingdom Fisheries Statistics series. They are not collected specifically for the purpose of agreeing management plans.

The European Commission indicated in October 2003 that it would bring forward proposals for a management plan for scallops, lobsters and crabs in the Channel. It has not yet done so and we are not aware that such proposals are imminent.

Sows (Birthing Methods)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of sows were recorded as giving birth in crates in each of the last 10 years. [188147]

Mr. Bradshaw: This information is not available. The vast majority of indoor pig units—which represent about 73 per cent. of the breeding herd in England—use farrowing crates. While the Government would prefer to avoid the close-confinement of all sows, there are currently no free-farrowing systems suitable for widespread commercial adoption. Farrowing crates protect piglets from being crushed by the sow—the largest cause of piglet mortality. Defra-funded research has yet to find a solution which provides adequate protection to piglets. The results of our continued research will be fed into the 2008 review of the European pig welfare directive.

Spending Review

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what efficiency savings will be made by her Department in each financial year as announced in the Spending Review, broken down by departmental head. [185891]

Alun Michael: The overall efficiency savings to be delivered by Defra are set out as follows.

Cumulative efficiencies

£ million

	2005–06	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Defra	91	198	310
Waste services	25	120	299

Defra is required to deliver £610 million in annual efficiencies by 2007–08, which includes £300 million of efficiencies that Defra will be expected to secure within local government expenditure on waste services.

Plans are now being put in place to ensure that the Department, its agencies and NDPBs are able to deliver on the 2004 Spending Review commitments and to attribute savings by departmental head. These will address the cross-cutting and corporate nature of some of the efficiency delivering programmes.

Town Centre Regeneration

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been made of the impact of regeneration of town centres on the environment. [189237]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply.

There has been no overall assessment of the impact of the regeneration of town centres on the environment. However, there are statutory procedures which ensure that the impact on the environment of regeneration schemes in individual towns is assessed.

Under the provisions of Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Sustainability Appraisal is mandatory for Regional Spatial Strategies and, at the local level, Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. The Sustainability Appraisal undertaken must also satisfy the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC). Sustainability appraisal is an iterative process that identifies and reports on the likely significant effects of the plan and the extent to which implementation of the plan will achieve the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainable development can be defined.

Certain categories of development, including urban development projects[1], must be the subject of an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA). EIA involves a systematic assessment of a project's likely environmental effects.

Thus the environmental impact of major projects and development plan proposals for town centre regeneration, are subject to careful assessment.

[1] Circular 2/99 Environment Impact Assessment provides guidance on the regulations that implement Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended by Directive 97/11/EC

Waste Management/Services

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has assessed the use of technology for weight-based charging for waste collection and disposal in the Isle of Man; and if she will make a statement. [188070]

Mr. Morley: The Department has not to date assessed the Isle of Man's use of technology for weight-based charging for waste collection. So far, our assessments have focused on other international experience, but we will continue to explore new evidence as it becomes available.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how she proposes to implement £300 million of efficiency gains on waste services as set out in the Gershon Review. [188593]

Mr. Morley: By 2007–08, Defra will help local authorities to deliver around £300 million worth of efficiency gains on waste and street cleansing services. Building on the Waste Implementation Programme, which has been set up to ensure much improved support is provided to local authorities in implementing waste strategy on the ground, the main features of Defra's approach are to: provide best practice procurement advice, standard contracting approaches and targeted support to help local waste managers achieve effective contracts; support the use of new waste technologies, improve data for investment planning and further develop end-markets to encourage industry in providing an appropriate range of waste handling facilities without involving excessive costs; encourage tiers of local authorities and adjacent authorities to work together to increase efficiency and realise economies of scale; improve the planning process for waste facilities, which can be a cause of delay and extra cost; and, promote better awareness of waste amongst householders, since participation rates can be a determinant of local authority costs.

In taking forward this programme of key actions, Defra will continue to work closely with the Local Government Association and other Government departments, including the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Western Waters (EU Regulation)

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on the status of Council Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003 Western Waters; [187424]

(2) what access will be available to Spanish boats to fish for crab stocks in the Western Waters; [187427]

(3) what measures she is taking to improve monitoring of UK fisheries to prevent incursion from foreign fishing boats in the Western Waters. [187428]

Mr. Bradshaw: Council Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003 establishes an effort management regime for EU vessels over 15 metres overall length fishing for demersal species, scallops and edible and spider crabs in ICES Divisions V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X and certain parts of the waters controlled by the Fisheries Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) waters and for vessels over 10 metres overall length fishing for these species in the biologically sensitive area in that part of Area VII off the south and west coast of Ireland. The Regulation prohibits directed fishing for these species in Western Waters without a permit and provides for the setting of annual fishing effort allocations for each member state for each area and fishery described above. Those effort allocations are contained in Annex I of Council Regulation 1415/2004. This provides effort allocations for Spain for crabs in ICES Areas VIM, IX and CECAF but not in ICES Areas V, VI, VII or X. Member states are responsible for ensuring that the total effort of vessels flying their flag does not exceed the limits set down in Council Regulation 1415/2004. British Sea Fishery Officers, when boarding foreign fishing vessels in Western Waters, will carry out checks to ensure that the vessels have the necessary permits and are properly recording in their logbooks the time spent in each Western Waters area.

Woodland Grant Scheme

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the reasons are for the deferral of the start of the woodland creation grants scheme until 2006–07. [187153]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Forestry Commission announced in March 2003 that as a result of ongoing reviews, the need to properly consult on their proposals and to gain the necessary EU clearance the new grant scheme, which includes woodland creation grants, would not be introduced before 2005.

Subject to EU approval of the new English Woodland Grant Scheme it is expected that applications for grant woodland creation grants will be accepted by the Forestry Commission from mid 2005. This will be in time for planting to take place in the 2005/06 planting season, with grant payments being made from April 2006.

HEALTH

Abortions

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines are issued to doctors about informing the parents of girls who are 16 years or under who wish to have an abortion; and if he will make a statement. [189039]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* Guidance for health professionals on this issue is provided by the Department in "Best practice guidance for doctors and other health professionals on the provision of advice and treatment to young people under 16 on contraception, sexual and reproductive health (updated July 2004)", available from the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk . A copy of the guidance has been placed in the Library.

Air Ambulances

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received regarding the funding of Essex Air Ambulance. [187966]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Ministers received one letter from the hon. Member for North-East Hertfordshire (Mr. Heald) in September 2004, one letter from my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon (Angela Smith) in September 2004, one letter from the hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Amess) in August 2004 and one letter from the hon. Member for Billericay (Mr. Baron) in September 2002, all regarding the funding of Essex Air Ambulance.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice he has given regarding the funding of air ambulances; and if he will make a statement. [187967]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Previous research in the early 1990s did not demonstrate that the benefits of helicopter ambulances in terms of outcomes for patients were sufficient to justify investment in these services by the national health service. The Department has since commissioned primary research to examine the role and effectiveness of air ambulance services in the modern NHS. The conclusions from the first stage can be found at www.shef.ac.uk/scharr/mcru/reports/HEASrev.pdf. In light of the findings, the Department is currently considering further research.

The Department has advised that the NHS should meet the cost of clinical staff on air ambulances.

Arm's Length Bodies

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the planned timetable is for the abolition of arm's length bodies, with particular reference to the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health. [188394]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Further details about the timetable for implementation of all the recommendations in "Reconfiguring the Department of Health's Arms Length Bodies" will be published later in the year.

Breast Cancer

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations for breast cancer were carried out by the NHS in each of the last five years. [189552]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the following table. Figures are given to include and exclude chemotherapy.

Count of finished consultant episodes with an operation and primary diagnosis malignant neoplasm of breast (ICD10-C50) including and excluding chemotherapy (OPCS: X352) national health service hospitals, England 1998–99 to 2002–03

	Chemotherapy (X352) included	*Chemotherapy (X352) excluded*
1998–1999	87,141	37,687
1999–2000	95,237	45,036
2000–2001	100,150	50,718
2001–2002	97,139	50,471
2002–2003	95,898	50,768

Notes:

1. A finished admission episode is the first period of inpatient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of inpatients.
2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–3) diagnosis fields in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
3. Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data, except for 2002–03, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.

Source:

Hospital Episodes (HES), Department of Health.

Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to reduce the numbers of patients waiting for more than nine months for treatment at the Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust. [189434]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The local national health service is working to make full use of both NHS and independent sector capacity to ensure that no patients are waiting longer than nine months for inpatient treatment at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority expects that, from the end of September all patients will be offered treatment dates within the nine month maximum waiting time target. However, for personal reasons, some patients may opt for a later treatment date which may result in a waiting time of over nine months.

Cancer

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much the NHS spent on cancer treatment in each year from 2000; and what its planned level of expenditure for 2005 is; [188382]

(2) what the average level of expenditure for each patient diagnosed as suffering from cancer was in the last year for which figures are available. [188386]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Figures on the amount of money spent on an individual disease are not collectedcentrally. It is very difficult to track spending on a particular programme such as cancer, as patients undergo a number of different diagnostic and treatment episodes during their illness.

However, "Securing our Future Health: Taking a Long Term View" published in April 2002 detailed that the National Health Service spends around £2.5 billion a year on cancer services.

The national cancer director published a report in May 2003, detailing that, of the funding committed to the NHS cancer plan, an additional £199 million was spent in 2001–02 and 406 million was spent in 2002–03. We will shortly be repeating this tracking investment exercise to check whether spending on cancer services in 2003–04 reached the additional £570 million committed to in the NHS cancer plan.

Funding for cancer services in 2005 will be included in baseline money sent to primary care trusts (PCTs). It is for PCTs to decide how to spend that money, based on local circumstances and priorities. From next year, PCTs and strategic health authorities will report within their annual accounts the totality of their expenditure on a programme basis each year. This will include cancer as one of the categories of spend.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS spent on research into environmental and occupational exposures in relation to cancer in each of the last three years. [188383]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available. However, the National Health Service reported spending £104 million in 2001–02 and £103 million in 2002–03 on research relating to cancer from research and development support funding allocations. 2003–04 returns are currently being processed.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the NHS, working through its National Cancer Research Institute, has set up a strategic planning group to investigate research into exogenous causes of cancer. [188384]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) is a partnership of the major funders of cancer research including Government, the voluntary sector and industry, together with patient representatives. Its purpose is to ensure a national strategic approach on cancer research. The NCRI has undertaken a strategic analysis of cancer research in the United Kingdom and has established strategic planning groups in areas where there appears to be under-investment. One such area is prevention and risk. This encompasses interventions to prevent cancer caused by known exogenous factors. This group is due to report soon.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many research programmes the NHS is undertaking into the exogenous causes of cancer. [188385]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry and works closely with the Health Departments, other Government agencies, the National Health Service and industry.

The majority of funds for research and development in the NHS are allocated to and managed by, NHS organisations. Details of individual projects, including many concerned with the exogenous causes of cancer, can be found on the National Research Register website at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Care Homes

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* care homes and *(b)* care home places were available in Somerset in each of the last six years run by (i) Somerset county council, (ii) Somerset Care and (iii) the voluntary, independent and private sector in Somerset. [189403]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of care homes and places run by the council and the voluntary and private sector in Somerset as at 31 March for the years 1998–2001.

Rounded data

At 31 March	Residential[3] Council staffed	Residential[3] Independent sector	Nursing[2]	Total[4]
Number of homes[1]				
1998	40	160	85	285
1999	20	330	90	435
2000	25	315	85	425
2001	25	320	80	425
Number of places				
1998	350	3,345	2,825	6,525
1999	165	3,870	2,870	6,905
2000	190	3,910	2,825	6,925
2001	195	3,910	2,580	6,680

[1] Figures for residential care are for Somerset Council with social services responsibilities and for nursing care are for Somerset Health Authority.

[2] Includes places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.

[3] Dual registered homes are included under nursing homes.

[4] Figures may not add up due to rounding.

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds are available for the elderly in care homes in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough; and how many were available on average in each year since 1997. [189473]

Dr. Ladyman: Table 1 shows the number of nursing care places available for people aged 65 and over in London and by health authority.

Table 2 shows the number of residential care places available for people, aged 65 and over in Greater London and by councils with social services responsibilities.

Table 1: Nursing care places[1] for people aged 65 and over in London at 31 March, 1998 to 2001

Rounded numbers

Health Authority	*Older people[2,3]*			
	1998	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
London	9,925	11,370	10,510	11,440
Hillingdon	285	370	320	425
Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster	110	125	125	70
Enfield and Haringey	0	890	735	820
Redbridge and Waltham Forest	670	635	535	615
Barking and Havering	720	855	910	895
Barnet	720	810	820	810
Brent and Harrow	915	1,120	1,100	1,150
Camden and Islington	295	305	380	355
Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow	755	685	1,030	1,245
East London and The City	520	635	580	560
Bexley and Greenwich	880	790	910	745
Bromley	800	590	560	560
Croydon	1,040	1,185	n/a	915
Kingston and Richmond	860	825	810	765
Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham	1,350	1,555	1,690	1,515
Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth	0	0	0	0

n/a Data not available.
[1] Includes independent general nursing homes, mental nursing homes, private hospitals and clinics.
[2] Aged 65 or over.
[3] Information is not available by age band at Health Authority level for 1997.
Source:
RH(N)A

Table 2: Residential[1] care places for people aged 65 and over in London at 31 March, 1997 to 2001

Rounded numbers

Councils with social services responsibilities	*Older people[2]*				
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
London	18,875	18,110	18,710	18,540	17,510
Camden	595	595	580	515	450
City of London	0	0	0	0	0
Greenwich	525	545	205	450	405
Hackney	300	270	210	320	325
Hammersmith and Fulham	290	280	n/a	185	150
Islington	380	375	360	265	200
Kensington and Chelsea	460	330	305	335	265
Lambeth	765	595	530	530	510
Lewisham	725	685	650	580	625
Southwark	330	295	375	375	325
Tower Hamlets	400	350	510	405	310
Wandsworth	735	640	640	655	600
Westminster	260	260	245	255	265
Barking and Dagenham	535	555	555	480	485
Barnet	1,655	1,330	2,030	1,910	1,830
Bexley	390	645	485	360	400
Brent	475	155	450	380	425
Bromley	860	815	855	1,010	1,005
Croydon	830	1,130	970	930	805
Ealing	925	880	845	680	635
Enfield	690	800	825	765	780
Haringey	595	255	555	570	570
Harrow	655	660	550	615	570
Havering	975	875	895	880	820
Hillingdon	565	540	510	640	640
Hounslow	370	365	360	360	365
Kingston-upon-Thames	135	510	510	500	400
Merton	480	430	490	440	450
Newham	290	315	290	360	275
Redbridge	825	790	810	965	825
Richmond-upon-Thames	645	650	650	680	675
Sutton	510	510	490	445	440
Waltham Forest	690	685	690	710	690

n/a Data not available.
[1] Includes places in residential LA staffed, independent and dual registered homes.
[2] Aged 65 or over
Source:
RA

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on care home funding in the London borough of Havering. [189251]

Dr. Ladyman: Neither councils nor strategic health authorities are allocated funding to be spent on care homes in particular. It is for councils and strategic health authorities to decide in the light of local circumstances and priorities how much of the general funding that they receive should be spent on care homes.

CHCs

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the total floor space being rented by community health councils. [187758]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many community health councils there were in each year since 1997. [187760]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Between 1997 and November 2003 there were 184 community health councils (CHCs). Three CHCs (Bassetlaw, Southern Derbyshire and Hounslow) were closed in November 2003. CHCs were abolished on 1 December 2003 and all CHC offices were closed on that date.

Cleaner Hospitals

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which of the initiatives set out in "Towards cleaner hospitals and lower rates of infection: A summary of action" and his departmental press release 2004/0259 had previously been announced; and when. [184096]

Miss Melanie Johnson: "Towards cleaner hospitals and lower infection rates" presented an update of action by the Department on the issues of hospital cleanliness and infection control. The report set out the most up to date progress on several initiatives which were already in the public domain, including a number which had been included in "Winning Ways", published in December 2003. The report also included several new initiatives,

such as the target for reducing rates of MRSA infections, publication of surveillance by trusts, a science summit, the matron's charter and a new model cleaning contract.

Clinical Staff (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many (*a*) doctors, (*b*) nurses and (*c*) other clinical staff have been employed by (i) York District Hospital, (ii) all hospitals in York and (iii) hospitals and the community in York in each year since 1997. [188958]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) doctors[1] and general medical practitioners (excluding retainers)[2] for North and East Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and specified organisations

Numbers (headcount)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA							
All doctors	2,348	2,414	2,543	2,555	2,659	2,761	2,999
Of which:							
HCHS doctors	1,349	1,423	1,532	1,534	1,620	1,696	1,884
General medical practitioners	999	991	1,011	1,021	1,039	1,065	1,115
Selby Primary Care Group (PCG)							
All doctors	n/a	n/a	44	44	n/a	n/a	n/a
Of which:							
HCHS doctors	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
General medical practitioners	n/a	n/a	44	44	n/a	n/a	n/a
York PCG							
All doctors	n/a	n/a	134	138	n/a	n/a	n/a
Of which:							
HCHS doctors	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
General medical practitioners	n/a	n/a	134	138	n/a	n/a	n/a
Selby and York PCT							
All doctors	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	192	226	236
Of which:							
HCHS doctors	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	29	31
General medical practitioners	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	182	197	205
York Hospitals National Health Service Trust							
All doctors	271	286	292	293	285	248	301
Of which:							
HCHS doctors	271	286	292	293	285	248	301
General medical practitioners	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not applicable.

[1] Excludes medical hospital practitioners and medical clinical assistants, most of whom are general practitioners working part-time in hospitals.

[2] All practitioners (excluding retainers) include general medical service (GMS) unrestricted principals, personal medical services (PMS) contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, GP registrars, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

Notes:

GP retainers were first collected in 1999 and have been omitted for comparability purposes.

All data as at 30 September, except GP data which is as of 1 October 1997–99.

Sources:

Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

NHS hospital and community health services: Professionally qualified clinical staff by main staff and practice staff and nurses employed by unrestricted principles and equivalents (UPEs)[1] for North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire SHA and specified organisation

Numbers (headcount)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA							
Nurses	9,347	9,170	8,865	9,139	9,654	10,292	10,598
Of which:							
Qualified nurses[2]	8,708	8,578	8,241	8,467	8,974	9,574	9,845
Practice nurses employed by UPEs	639	592	624	672	680	718	753
Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical (ST&T)	2,453	2,528	2,527	2,502	2,588	3,013	3,310
Qualified ambulance staff	448	369	591	530	523	557	625
Practice staff[3] employed by UPEs (excluding practice nurses)	3,283	3,402	3,668	2,855	2,799	3,182	3,226
Selby PCG							
Nurses	n/a	n/a	14	23	n/a	n/a	n/a

NHS hospital and community health services: Professionally qualified clinical staff by main staff and practice staff and nurses employed by unrestricted principles and equivalents (UPEs)[1] for North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire SHA and specified organisation

Numbers (headcount)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Of which:							
Qualified nurses[2]	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Practice nurses employed by UPEs	n/a	n/a	14	23	n/a	n/a	n/a
Qualified ST&T	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Practice staff[3] employed by UPEs (excluding practice nurses)	n/a	n/a	181	114	n/a	n/a	n/a
York PCG							
Nurses	n/a	n/a	44	72	n/a	n/a	n/a
Of which:							
Qualified nurses[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Practice nurses employed by UPEs	n/a	n/a	44	72	n/a	n/a	n/a
Qualified ST&T	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Practice staff[3] employed by UPEs (excluding practice nurses)	n/a	n/a	560	332	n/a	n/a	n/a
Selby and York Primary Care Trust (PCT)							
Nurses	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	490	758	807
Of which:							
Qualified nurses[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	410	660	695
Practice nurses employed by UPEs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	80	98	112
Qualified ST&T	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	188	214	252
Practice staff[3] employed by UPEs (excluding practice nurses)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	378	475	512
York Hospitals NHS Trust							
Nurses	1,928	1,573	1,658	1,837	1,523	1,188	1,191
Of which:							
Qualified nurses[2]	1,928	1,573	1,658	1,837	1,523	1,188	1,191
Practice nurses employed by UPEs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Qualified ST&T	506	540	557	589	413	427	469
Practice staff[3] employed by UPEs (excluding practice nurses)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not applicable

[1] UPEs include CMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs and PMS salaried GPs. Some non-clinical administrative and clerical staff may be included in the practice staff total as it is not possible to separate them.

[2] Refers to qualified nursing staff in the hospital, public health and community health service sectors.

[3] Practice staff includes practice nurses, direct patient care, admin, and clerical and other.

Note:

All data as at 30 September, except GP data as at 1 October 1997–99.

Sources:

Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

Department of Health non-medical workforce census.

Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on setting up and servicing the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health. [188107]

Ms Rosie Winterton: By the end of 2004–05, the total running and set up costs of the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) to date will be £66.76 million. This includes all costs associated with patients' forums. It also includes CPPIH set up costs in 2002–03 of around £2.5 million.

Community Health Councils

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the running costs of *(a)* community health councils in the last year of operation and *(b)* the replacement systems have been to date. [188237]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In 2002–03, the last year of the operation of community health councils (CHCs), the total running costs for CHCs was £13,981 million. By the end of 2004–05, the total running and set up costs of the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) will be £66.76 million. This figure includes all costs associated with patients' forums. It also includes CPPIH set up costs of around £2.5 million in 2002–03.

Consultant Episodes (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes have been completed *(a)* in Yorkshire and the Humber and *(b)* at York District Hospital in each year since 1997. [188959]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Finished consultant episodes in Yorkshire and the Humber and York District Hospital since 1997

	York Hospitals National Health Service Trust	*Yorkshire and the Humber strategic health authorities*
1997–98	60,170	1,040,020
1998–99	64,776	1,269,803
1999–2000	62,167	1,285,415

Finished consultant episodes in Yorkshire and the Humber and York District Hospital since 1997

	York Hospitals National Health Service Trust	*Yorkshire and the Humber strategic health authorities*
2000-01	62,405	1,330,822
2001-02	63,329	1,340,062
2002-03	64,015	1,364,554

Source:
Department of Health Hospital Episode Statistics (HES).

Delayed Discharges

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the delayed discharge figures are for *(a)* the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority and *(b)* the Weston Primary Care Trust for each of the last five years, including (i) the number and proportion of patients of all ages occupying an acute hospital bed whose discharge was delayed, (ii) the number and proportion of patients aged 75 years and over occupying an acute hospital bed whose discharge was delayed, (iii) the main reasons for delay and the numbers and proportion of patients of all ages who are delayed for each of the reasons and (iv) the numbers and proportions of patients who have been delayed (A) one to eight days, (B) eight to 14 days, (C) 14 to 28 days and (D) over 28 days. [188751]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the tables. Information is provided from the year Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority and North Somerset Primary Care Trust were established.

Delayed transfers in Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA and North Somerset PCT

		Patients occupying a General/Acute hospital bed	*Number of delayed transfers*	*Delayed transfer rate (percentage)*
North Somerset PCT				
Q1	2002-03	513	33	6.4
Q2	2002-03	503	12	2.4
Q3	2002-03	369	15	4.1
Q4	2002-03	460	23	5.0
Q1	2003-04	477	2	0.4
Q2	2003-04	436	9	2.1
Q3	2003-04	456	2	0.4
Q4	2003-04	506	3	0.6
Q1	2004-05	511	4	0.8
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA				
Q1	2002-03	2,570	284	11.1
Q2	2002-03	3,317	286	8.6
Q3	2002-03	4,118	253	6.1
Q4	2002-03	4,784	225	4.7
Q1	2003-04	4,674	155	3.3
Q2	2003-04	4,608	402	8.7
Q3	2003-04	4,658	139	3.0
Q4	2003-04	4,413	71	1.6
Q1	2004-05	4,303	113	2.6

Source:
Local Delivery Plan Return.

Delayed transfers in Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA and North Somerset PCT

		Patients over 75 occupying a General/Acute hospital bed	*Number of delayed transfers*	*Delayed transfer rate (percentage)*
North Somerset PCT				
Q1	2002-03	220	18	8.2
Q2	2002-03	314	5	1.6
Q3	2002-03	167	14	8.4
Q4	2002-03	218	3	1.4
Q1	2003-04	213	2	0.9
Q2	2003-04	200	5	2.5
Q3	2003-04	218	1	0.5
Q4	2003-04	236	1	0.4
Q1	2004-05	207	2	1.0
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA				
Q1	2002-03	1,395	156	11.2
Q2	2002-03	1,576	215	13.6
Q3	2002-03	1,744	155	8.9
Q4	2002-03	2,146	128	6.0
Q1	2003-04	1,966	115	5.8
Q2	2003-04	2,108	106	5.0
Q3	2003-04	2,025	105	5.2
Q4	2003-04	2,208	49	2.2
Q1	2004-05	1,995	69	3.5

Source:
Local Delivery Plan Return.

Delayed transfers in Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA and North Somerset PCT by reason

		Awaiting completion of assessment	*Awaiting public funding*	*Awaiting further NHS care*	*Awaiting residential/ nursing home placement*	*Awaiting domiciliary package*	*Patient/ Family exercising choice*	*Other*
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA								
Q1	2002-03	32	17	20	64	19	16	7
Q2	2002-03	16	32	21	91	28	35	14
Q3	2002-03	36	11	35	76	24	19	20
Q4	2002-03	18	21	39	91	33	7	17
Q1	2003-04	6	18	31	55	21	13	10
Q2	2003-04	36	141	35	86	37	39	25
North Somerset PCT								
Q1	2002-03	4	5	0	7	2	3	0
Q2	2002-03	1	2	0	7	2	0	0

Delayed transfers in Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA and North Somerset PCT by reason

		Awaiting completion of assessment	Awaiting public funding	Awaiting further NHS care	Awaiting residential/ nursing home placement	Awaiting domiciliary package	Patient/ Family exercising choice	Other
Q3	2002-03	2	5	1	3	2	1	1
Q4	2002-03	0	0	6	12	6	0	0
Q1	2003-04	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Q2	2003-04	1	0	2	2	3	0	1

Note:
The numbers of delayed transfers by reason and by length of day are as supplied to the Department of Health by Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). Not all PCTs could give a full breakdown of the total number of delays into reasons, and therefore the sum of the individual reasons may not tally with the overall number of delays. Data quality has improved over recent quarters.
Source:
Local Delivery Plan Return.

Delayed transfers in Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA and North Somerset PCT by length of delay

		Total delayed <8 days	Total delayed 8–14 days	Total delayed 14–28 days	Total delayed 28+ days
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA					
Q1	2002-03	66	32	40	62
Q2	2002-03	66	36	44	91
Q3	2002-03	62	40	39	68
Q4	2002-03	91	32	37	65
Q1	2003-04	60	31	30	34
Q2	2003-04	109	63	77	153
North Somerset PCT					
Q1	2002-03	18	4	5	6
Q2	2002-03	2	7	2	1
Q3	2002-03	4	4	3	4
Q4	2002-03	21	0	1	1
Q1	2003-04	1	0	1	0
Q2	2003-04	6	2	1	0

Note:
The numbers of delayed transfers by reason and by length of day are as supplied to the Department of Health by Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). Not all PCTs could give a full breakdown of the total number of delays into reasons, and therefore the sum of the individual reasons may not tally with the overall number of delays. Data quality has improved over recent quarters.
Source:
Local Delivery Plan Return.

Dentistry

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 1 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 888W, ref.186199, on NHS Dentistry, (1) whether those people were advised of dentists that they could register with; and what percentage of callers were advised of dentists that they could register with within locally agreed standards; [187852]

(2) how many NHS dentists were accepting new NHS patients at the latest date for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement; [187885]

(3) what assessment he has made of the local distance standards for each primary care trust for access to NHS dentistry; [187886]

(4) what the maximum distance is that patients in England are expected to travel to receive NHS dental care under locally agreed standards. [187887]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In March 2004, 91 per cent. of callers to NHS Direct were referred to a dentist within locally agreed distance standards who was accepting patients for national health service treatment. Information is not held centrally on how many of the patients registered with the dentist to which they were referred. They may have been treated under provisions within the general dental service regulations for occasional treatments.

The number of general dental service or personal dental service dental practices shown on the NHS.UK website as accepting new NHS patients on 8 September is shown in the table.

	Number
Registering children aged 0 to 18 years for NHS treatment	3,938
Providing occasional NHS treatment to non-registered patients	1,572
Registering charge exempt adults for NHS treatment	2,968
Registering charge paying adults for NHS treatment	2,604

Primary care trusts' (PCTs) local distance standards were collected for the dental access performance indicator for 2003–04. They range from two miles to 35 miles in urban areas for routine and urgent calls. In rural areas, they range from two miles to 35 miles for routine calls and 2.5 miles to 50 miles for urgent calls. The majority of PCTs have set standards of 10 miles for routine calls and 15 miles for urgent calls. The maximum distance that patients in PCTs in England are expected to travel to receive NHS dental care under locally agreed standards is 35 miles in urban areas and 50 miles in rural areas.

In order to improve access to NHS dental treatment, we are delegating the commissioning of primary care dental services to PCTs as part of the most far-reaching

reform of NHS dentistry since the inception of the service in 1948. The reform is backed by extra investment of £368 million.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when his Department plans to update the Dental Workforce Review. [187888]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are taking a range of measures to increase workforce capacity including:

increasing the dental workforce capacity by the equivalent of 1,000 additional dentists by October 2005;

increasing the number of dental school places by 25 per cent., from October

2005; supported by capital investment of up to £80 million over four years;

expanding of the whole dental team (including a new school for the professions complementary to dentistry), which will free up time for dentists to take on more complex work;

introducing personal dental services (PDS) and the new contractual arrangements (based on PDS) which will produce an environment in which dentists want to do more National Health Service work;

devolving funding to PCTs from October 2005, with a 19 per cent., increase in funding over 2003–04—an extra 250 million a year.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list those European Economic Area countries where practical experience gained using mannequins rather than live patients can satisfy the requirement for mandatory practical instruction for trainee dentists. [188036]

Ms Rosie Winterton: EEC Directive 78/687 requires member states to ensure that dentists "complete at least a five year full-time course of theoretical and practical instruction", guaranteeing that they have acquired "suitable clinical experience under appropriate supervision". It is the responsibility of each member state to ensure that the qualifications they award to dentists comply in every respect with applicable European Union standards which could not be attained without experience of treating live patients. We are not aware of any evidence that this obligation is failing to be met.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of training a dentist was in each of the last five years; how many dentists were trained in each year; what the total amount spent on training dentists was in each year; and how many of the dentists trained in each year now work for the NHS. [189037]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* The information available is shown in the table.

	Dental graduates qualifying from dental schools in England	*Estimated cost of training a dentist £ thousand*	*Estimated expenditure on training dentists £ million*
1998–1999	581	135	79
1999–2000	585	139	81
2000–01	618	143	84
2001–02	591	146	87
2002–03	549	150	90

A majority of new graduates go on to work as independent contractors with National Health Service contracts, but information on the extent of their commitment to the NHS is not held centrally. On 16 July my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced that we are to provide 170 additional training places for undergraduates in dentistry from October 2005. The increase will be supported by capital investment of £80 million over the next four years and additional revenue funds reaching £29 million by 2010–11.

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effect of the new Dentists NHS Contract on NHS dentistry provision in Oxfordshire. [187505]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The base contract for local commissioning becomes operational on 1 October 2005 and I am advised that detailed planning is being undertaken in Oxfordshire, to ensure a smooth transition. The new contracting arrangements will improve the quality of patient care, improve access to national health service services and improve working conditions for dentists and their teams. This builds on the recognition that Oxfordshire has used all current flexibilities to improve services and is working proactively to increase access by supporting dentists who wish to move to local commissioning early under the personal dental services (PDS).

The measures in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 represent the most radical reform of NHS dentistry since 1948. The proposals for NHS dentistry will underpin a modernised, high-quality primary dental service provided through contracts between primary care trusts (PCTs) and dental practices. The service will be properly integrated with the rest of the NHS, providing better access to services and an improved patient experience.

The new arrangements are modelled on five years successful experience of PDS pilots. The PDS continues to provide an opportunity for those dentists and their PCTs who wish to move further and faster towards local commissioning to do so. There are already more than 1,500 dentists in more than 750 practices working under PDS arrangements, out of a total of around 9,000 practices. The Department will support PCTs and volunteer dental practices to move early to local commissioning under existing piloting arrangements.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentistry practices in England are accepting NHS patients; how many on average accepted NHS patients in 1994; and how many individual dentists this represents in each case. [188978]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of general dental service or personal dental service dental practices, which appear on the NHS.UK website as accepting new national health service patients on 15 September 2004, is shown in the table.

Registering children aged 0–18 years for NHS treatment	3,936
Providing occasional NHS treatment to non-registered patients	1,561
Registering charge exempt adults for NHS treatment	2,969
Registering charge paying adults for NHS treatment	2,604

Information on the number of dentist practices accepting NHS patients is not available for 1994, as NHS Direct was not established, nor is information held centrally on the number of the dentists in the practices on the NHS website. The number of NHS dentists (general and personal dental services) dentists has increased from 15,813 at December 1994 to 19,278 at December 2003, an increase of 3,465.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists there were in Somerset in each of the last seven years. [189401]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) dentists in the Somerset area by primary care trust (PCT) at June each year from 1997 to 2004 is given in the table.

Number of dentists at June each year

PCT	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Bath and North East Somerset	84	85	90	92	93	98	98	100
Mendip	38	43	42	49	48	45	51	54
North Somerset	82	89	91	95	98	97	92	107
Somerset Coast	40	42	41	48	45	50	46	50
South Somerset	56	57	56	57	59	57	62	64
Taunton Deane	47	47	45	45	59	61	69	68

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Dentists are counted in each PCT in which they practise.

The figures are based on the number of dentists with an open GDS or PDS contract and include principals, assistants and trainees in the GDS. Dentists have been counted more than once if he/she works in more than one PCT.

The figures provide a snapshot of the number of individual dentists with an open contract at 30 June each year. The total number of dentists in the Somerset PCTs has increased from 347 in June 1997 to 443 in June 2004.

Contraceptive Services

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the contents of the revised guidance for health professionals on the provision of contraceptive services for those under the age of 16. [188906]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This revised guidance was published in July this year to clarify to health professionals that they owe under-16s the same duty of care and confidentiality as older patients, to further improve the uptake of advice by sexually active under 16s, given high teenage pregnancy rates and the associated risks of sexually transmitted infections. The legal framework and professional codes for health professionals remain unchanged.

The new guidance sets out the principles of good practice for health professionals in considerably greater detail than the earlier (1986) guidance. These include providing the young person with the time and support to make an informed choice, including exploring whether the relationship is mutually agreed or whether there may be coercion or abuse, and always encouraging the young person to involve their parent, carer or another trusted adult.

Council of Ministers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a Written Ministerial Statement outlining for each meeting of the Council of Ministers at which his Department is represented as soon as is practicable following that meeting *(a)* the key items of discussion, *(b)* the positions of the Government on those items, *(c)* the key positions taken by other member states that Ministers consider should be noted by honourable Members and *(d)* any preliminary discussion on the timing and the agenda of the following meeting. [188197]

Mr. Hutton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on Monday 13 September, *Official Report*, column 1451W.

Digital Hearing Aids

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list *(a)* the present length of wait and *(b)* the number of patients waiting for digital hearing aids in each London hospital. [188765]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not available centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for *(a)* initial audiology appointments for digital hearing aids and *(b)* fitting of digital hearing aids is in each primary care trust in England. [189422]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally. We have invested £94 million over two years which will be used to make digital hearing aids available across England by April 2005.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to speed up universal availability of digital hearing aids. [189423]

Dr. Ladyman: All audiology departments in England will routinely be fitting digital hearing aids by April 2005.

The Department is investing a further £94 million in the financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05. This is additional to a total of £30.75 million invested since the modernising hearing aids services project began in September 2000.

Disabled People

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much financial support has been

allocated for the provision of disabled care for people in North Yorkshire in each year since 1997; and how much is projected for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; [189328]

(2) what programmes the Government have in place to provide *(a)* care for disabled people and *(b)* support for the families and carers of disabled people; [189329]

(3) what action the Government have taken to ensure that the safety of disabled people is not jeopardised by the reduction in funding to disability charities. [189331]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government do not allocate particular amounts to councils to spend on the care of disabled people. It is for each council to decide how much of its general funding allocation to spend for this purpose. Councils do this in the light of local needs and priorities.

The Government's financial support for social services will increase by an annual average of 6 per cent. in real terms between 2003–04 and 2005–06.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria were considered in deciding that the Wilf Ward Family Trust would receive less funding over the next three years. [189330]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not available centrally. The Department does not provide funding directly to the Wilf Ward Family Trust.

Dying at Home

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what his policy is on the practice of allowing terminally ill cancer patients to choose to die at home; [188962]

(2) what resources he is making available to treat terminally ill cancer patients who wish to die at home; [188963]

(3) what improvements he is making to information available to *(a)* carers, *(b)* healthcare professionals and *(c)* patients about the process of allowing terminally ill cancer patients to choose to die at home. [188964]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the Government's response to the Health Select Committee report on palliative care, copies of which are available in the Library.

This response reiterates our wish to offer all adult patients nearing the end of life, regardless of their diagnosis, the same access to high quality palliative care so that they can choose if they wish to die at home.

The End of Life Care Initiative commits the Department to invest £12 million over the next three years to train existing staff who already contribute to supportive and palliative care to provide end of life care and support to patients and carers. This investment will enable those approaching the end of life to be identified, their care needs assessed, enable information about the choices available provided to them and a jointly agreed care plan involving all relevant agencies to be put in place.

Dystonia

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of funding available for *(a)* researching, *(b)* treating and *(c)* raising awareness of dystonia in 2004–05. [189528]

Dr. Ladyman: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

The MRC does not normally allocate funds to particular topics. Research proposals in all areas compete for the funding available. When appropriate, high quality research in particularly areas of strategic importance may be given priority in competition for funds, but research excellence and importance to health continues to be the primary considerations in funding decisions.

The MRC spent £1.4 million on research related to dystonia in 2001–02, the latest year for which figures are available.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. Details of individual projects, including a number concerned with dystonia, can be found on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Through section 64 grants to the National Dystonia Society, the Department has funded a range of projects to help increase awareness and understanding of dystonia. In 2004–05, the society will receive £45,000 to support its independent living project.

In terms of raising awareness among health professionals, the content and standard of postgraduate medical training for specialist medicine is the responsibility of the United Kingdom competent authority, the Specialist Training Authority (STA). The STA takes advice from the appropriate Royal College, who appreciate the requirements presented by different conditions and develop their training curricula as appropriate. Measures to increase doctors' knowledge of dystonia and movement disorders are therefore more appropriate for these bodies and the medical profession.

Eating Disorders

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes there were with a primary diagnosis of *(a)* anorexia and *(b)* bulimia, broken down by (i) age and (ii) gender in each year since 1997. [187869]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of finished consultant episodes in national health service hospitals of patients with a primary diagnosis anorexia and bulimia, broken down by age and gender in each year since 1997, has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the review of eating disorders undertaken by the National Development Group for Specialised Services. [187871]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national development group for specialised mental health services is near to completing a review of all such services. It anticipates providing a report on its work late in 2004 or early in 2005.

European Health Card

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proof of identity will be needed to apply for an European health card; [187880]

(2) what security measures will be put in place to verify identity on the European health card to replace the E111 form. [187881]

Mr. Hutton: A United Kingdom-wide consultation on proposals for introducing the European health insurance card is currently under way. It is likely that the application process will require applicants to provide their UK address together with their National Insurance number or their national health service number, since these best ways available of demonstrating residence in the UK and therefore eligibility to receive NHS services. In all but exceptional circumstances, cards will only be issued to UK addresses.

National Service Framework for Older People

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to his Answer of 1 July, *Official Report*, column 408W, on fall/osteoporosis services, when the Healthcare Commission's review of the delivery of the National Service Framework and older people's services will be published; [183660]

(2) when the findings of the Commission for Healthcare Improvement's consultation on the scope of the review of the National Service Framework for Older People will be made available. [185994]

Dr. Ladyman: I understand from the Chairman of the Healthcare Commission that the findings are available on its website at www.healthcarecommission.org.uk. The results of the initial consultation on the scope of the review were published in October 2003 and the detailed methodology was published in March 2004.

The Healthcare Commission will be producing a national report on the implementation of the National Service Framework for Older People by December 2005. Local reviews will be running throughout 2005.

Forum Support Organisations

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether forum support organisations within the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) will end in August 2005 prior to the winding up of the CPPIH. [188388]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No decisions have been taken yet about whether to extend the forum support organisation contracts beyond August 2005, when they expire.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many bone fractures resulting from falls were treated by the NHS in the last period for which figures are available; how many of those suffering from such fractures were known to have osteoporosis; how many were discovered to have osteoporosis in post-fracture screening; and if he will make a statement. [188180]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of bone fractures resulting from falls treated by the National Health Service for the last period for which figures are available is shown in the table. Information on how many of those suffering fractures were known to have osteoporosis and how many were discovered to have osteoporosis in post-fracture screening is not collected centrally.

Primary diagnosis—fracture (ICD 10 diagnosis codes S02, 812, S22, 832, 842, 552, 562, 872, 582, 892 and T02) with secondary diagnosis falls (ICD diagnosis codes WOO-W19)—counts of finished consultant episodes (FCEs)

National Health Service hospitals—England	161,670

Notes:
Ungrossed data—figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
A FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a patient may have more than one episode of care within the year.
Cause code—the cause code is a supplementary code that indicates the nature of any external cause of injury, poisoning or other adverse effects.
Secondary diagnoses—as well as the primary diagnosis, there are up to 13 (6 prior to 2002–03) secondary diagnosis fields in Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) that show other diagnoses relevant to the episode of care
Source:
HES, Department of Health

Fraud Costs

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the cost of fraud to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the executive agencies for which his Department in responsible in each of the last 10 years. [185875]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The figures available are from 1999–2000 and are shown in the table.

£

	Department	*Agencies*
1999–2000	3,055	0
2000–01	0	0
2001–02	150	0
2002–03	38,307	0
2003–04	29,082	6,100

Free Personal Care

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the projected cost is of providing free personal care for all elderly people for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* each of the following 10 years. [189461]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have estimated that the cost of introducing free personal care for everyone in England would be some £1.5 billion at 2003–04 prices. None of this extra expenditure would increase choice or services available to older people. The Government have not made estimates for the next 10 years. On 8 September, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation,

published projections to 2051 of the future costs of long-term care for older people in the United Kingdom in the report: "Future demand for long-term care in the UK: A summary of projections of long term care finance for older people".

The report concluded that long-term care spending in the United Kingdom would need to increase by about 315 per cent., in real terms between 2000 and 2051, to meet demographic pressures and allow for real rises in care costs, if dependency rates, patterns of care and funding arrangements remained unchanged. In terms of personal care, the researchers estimated that if free personal care had been introduced across the whole of the UK in 2000, public spending on long-term care would have risen immediately from £8.8 billion to £10.3 billion, and projected public spending would reach £42.6 billion or more by 2051, compared with £35.4 billion if current funding arrangements were maintained.

General Practitioners

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioner practices in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority have premises below a minimum standard; and what his Department defines as a minimum standard for practice premises. [187866]

Mr. Hutton: The most recent figures available (2002–03) indicate that the number of general practitioner practice premises below minimum standards are as shown in the table. The figure of 700 represents only 6 to 7 per cent., of all primary care premises in England. The Government are supporting one of the largest and most sustained programmes of modernisation of primary care premises in the history of the national health service and this is likely to have a significant impact on these numbers.

Practices with premises below a minimum standard by strategic health authority in England—2002–03

	Practices with premises below a minimum standard
England	700
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	4
Bedford and Hertfordshire	25
Essex	91
North-west London	31
North-central London	149
North-east London	160
South-east London	55
South-west London	0
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3
County Durham and Tees Valley	6
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	4
West Yorkshire	4
Cumbria and Lancashire	1
Greater Manchester	18
Cheshire and Merseyside	11
Thames Valley	4
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	3
Kent and Medway	15
Surrey and Sussex	26
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	16
South-west Peninsula	2
Somerset and Dorset	2
South Yorkshire	31
Trent	11

Practices with premises below a minimum standard by strategic health authority in England—2002–03

	Practices with premises below a minimum standard
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	0
Shropshire and Staffordshire	4
Birmingham and the Black Country	24
West Midlands South	0

The definition on which these figures are based was contained in paragraph 51 of the "Statement of Fees and Allowances", a copy of which is available in the Library.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many single practitioner general practitioner surgeries there were in each of the last five years. [189554]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows the number of single-handed general practitioner surgeries there were in each of the last five years.

Single-handed partnerships of unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1] 1997–2003

England			*Numbers (headcount)*
	UPEs	*Partnerships of UPEs*	*Single-handed UPEs*
1999	27,591	8,944	2,631
2000	27,704	8,878	2,575
2001	27,843	8,817	2,534
2002	28,031	8,748	2,482
2003	28,568	8,757	2,504

[1] UPEs include general medical service unrestricted principals, personal medical service (PMS) contracted GPs and PMS salaried GPs.
Data as at 1 October 1997–98 and 30 September 2000–03.
Source:
Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

GP Lists

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the 10 primary care trusts with the highest average general practitioner list sizes in England. [189261]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows the 10 primary care trusts with the highest average national general practitioner list sizes in England.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) with the highest average list size for unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1]

		Numbers (headcount)	
	(UPEs)	*Patients of (UPEs)*	*Average list size*
England	28,568	52,713,780	1,845
5LC Westminster PCT	100	250,884	2,509
5C2 Barking And Dagenham PCT	70	170,493	2,436
5AK Southend On Sea PCT	73	177,522	2,432
5C5 Newham PCT	126	305,285	2,423
5LA Kensington And Chelsea PCT	82	195,743	2,387
5MX Heart Of Birmingham Teaching PCT	132	314,844	2,385
5JP Castle Point And Rochford PCT	73	173,946	2,383
5EY Eastern Leicester PCT	78	185,819	2,382
5MM Cannock Chase PCT	54	128,291	2,376
5GQ Thurrock PCT	63	148,710	2,360

[1] UPEs include general medical service (QMS) unrestricted principals, personal medical service (PMS) contracted general practitioners and PMS salaried GPs.
Patient data has been revised from previously published figures
Source:
Department of Health general and personal medical services statistics.

Health Bodies

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the *(a)* strategic health authorities, *(b)* primary care trusts and *(c)* NHS trusts which relate to each constituency, including their addresses. [189258]

Mr. Hutton: This information can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list *(a)* the administration costs and *(b)* the total number of staff of (i) the Healthcare Commission, (ii) the Commission for Social Care Inspection, (iii) the Office of the Independent Regulator of Foundation Trusts and (iv) The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency for the latest year for which figures are available. [187877]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Organisation	*Administration costs (£million)*	*Number of staff*
The Healthcare Commission	15.7	632
The Commission for Social Care Inspection	147.2	2,622
The Independent Regulator of National Health Service Foundation Trusts	16.0	45
The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency	66.9	823

Notes:
1. The administration costs shown are budget figures for 2004–05.
2. Staff figures are whole-time equivalents as at 31 March 2004.

Health Services

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on the future of Battledown Ward at Cheltenham General Hospital; [189537]

(2) if he will make a statement on NHS acute children's services in Cheltenham. [189538]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Cotswold and Vale Primary Care Trust is leading a period of public consultation on the future of maternity care and services for children across Gloucestershire.

The responses to the consultation will be considered by the PCT and decisions on any changes to acute children's services in Cheltenham will not be taken until next year.

All options will continue to see the delivery of children's services from both the Battledown ward at Cheltenham General Hospital and Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the proposals *(a)* to downgrade Battledown Children's Ward at Cheltenham General Hospital into a paediatric assessment unit and *(b)* for the removal of acute children's services to Gloucester. [189539]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I have made no such assessment. Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for commissioning appropriate levels of services for their communities. Cotswold and Vale PCT is leading a period of public consultation on the future of maternity care and services for children at home and in hospital across Gloucestershire.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dental patients were registered in Torbay in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [188134]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of registrations in the general dental service in the area covered by Torbay Primary Care Trust for the last five years is shown as follows. The table only shows the number of registrations for general dental services. Through the South West Peninsula Options for Change field site, dentists are increasingly opting for the new ways of working that personal dental services (PDS) allows. As of 1 September 2004, four practices in Torbay have accepted PDS contracts.

Year[1]	*Dental Registrations*
2000	73,374
2001	73,288
2002	76,915
2003	71,631
2004	57,865

[1] At 30 June each year.

Healthy Living Centres

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the *(a)* technical and financial contracts, *(b)* technical consultants used on a call-off basis and *(c)* financial consultants used on a call-off basis, with regard to Healthy Living centres, giving the (i) cost and (ii) start date of employment; and if he will make a statement. [188747]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has a contract with the Tavistock Institute for evaluating the Healthy Living Centre programme. The evaluation is worth £350,000 and was awarded after a competitive tendering exercise. The start date of the contract was May 2001 and it is due to complete in 2005.

Heart Bypass Surgery

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the survival rate for heart bypass surgery was in *(a)* England and *(b)* the London Borough of Havering in each of the last five years. [189249]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Based upon data compiled for the national adult cardiac surgical database report 2003 by the Society of Cardiothoracic Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland, the survival rate for isolated, first-time coronary surgery in England has increased from 97.8 per cent. in 1998–99 to 98.2 per cent. in 2002–03 (latest figures available). The data are collected from individual hospitals so the identification of survival rates for specific local authorities is not possible.

Heart Disease

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate he has made of the number of children suffering from heart disease; [189394]

(2) how many children were detected with early signs of heart disease in the last year for which figures are available; [189395]

(3) how many children are receiving treatment for heart disease. [189396]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This data are not collected centrally. However, it is estimated that about eight out of every 1,000 babies born in the United Kingdom will have a congenital heart defect and that about half of these will have a minor defect needing little or no treatment. The Department is currently examining these issues in conjunction with experts, families of patients and other interested parties and will be publishing the conclusions next year.

Hospital Beds

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital beds there were in *(a)* Southend Hospital Trust and *(b)* Basildon Hospital Trust in each of the last five years. [189555]

Dr. Ladyman: The tables show the number of hospital beds for both Southend Hospital National Health Service Trust and Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital NHS Trust respectively for the period 1996–97 to 2002–03. Data for 2003–04 are not yet available.

RAJ—Southend Hospital NHS Trust—average daily number of available beds, by sector, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialities (excluding day only)	*General and acute*	*Acute*	*Geriatric*	*Mental illness*	*Learning disability*	*Maternity*	*Day only*
1996–97	776	709	498	211	0	0	67	46
1997–98	770	703	495	209	0	0	67	46
1998–99	757	690	499	191	0	0	67	46
1999–2000	754	687	495	192	0	0	67	44
2000–01	728	683	507	176	—	—	45	39
2001–02	728	684	492	191	0	0	44	79
2002–03	713	669	494	175	0	0	44	63

Source:
Department of Health form KH03

RDD—Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Trust—average daily number of available beds, by sector, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialities (excluding day only)	*General and acute*	*Acute*	*Geriatric*	*Mental illness*	*Learning disability*	*Maternity*	*Day only*
1996–97	675	593	452	141	0	0	82	32
1997–98	662	581	440	141	0	0	81	32
1998–99	613	536	425	111	0	0	77	32
1999–2000	614	542	425	118	0	0	72	42
2000–01	627	556	434	122	—	—	71	42
2001–02	647	571	424	147	0	0	76	52
2002–03	627	576	438	138	0	0	51	42

Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Hospital Infection Control

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health to ask which *(a)* hospital orthopaedic directorates, *(b)* hospital infection control teams, *(c)* hospital chief executives and *(d)* hospital vascular directorates did not reply to the National Audit Office survey on infection control between July and September 2003; what the explanation was in each case for the failure to respond; what action he proposes to take in each case; and if he will publish the returns requested by the National Audit Office survey. [185651]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on non-responders is shown in the table. The overall response rate for the survey was good and we understand the main reason for not completing the questionnaire was pressure of business. Non-responders will not be followed up as the aim of the survey was to produce a snapshot of the situation in 2003. The survey results were used in the National Audit Office report and there are no plans for a separate publication.

NAO Hospital Acquired Infection follow-up survey

Trust	*Chief Executives*	*Infection Control Teams*	*Orthopaedic Directorates*	*Vascular Directorates*
Airedale NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Ashford and St Peter's Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Bedford Hospital NHS Trust	Sent but never received	—	•	—
Burton Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	•	—	—	—
Co Durham and Darlington Acute Hosp NHS Trust	•	—	•	•

NAO Hospital Acquired Infection follow-up survey

Trust	Chief Executives	Infection Control Teams	Orthopaedic Directorates	Vascular Directorates
Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
East Cheshire NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust				•
East Somerset NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital Trust	•	—	•	•
Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust	•	•	•	—
Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
Kings College Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Medway NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	•	—	•	—
Peterborough Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
Poole Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Robert Jones/Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Rotherham General Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Trust	•	—	—	—
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Royal Shrewsbury Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—
Salisbury Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—
South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
South Tyneside Healthcare Trust	•	—	•	—
South Warwickshire General Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Southern Derbyshire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
St. Mary's NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Stockport NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Stoke Mandeville Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust	—	—		•
The Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
The Princess Royal Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
The Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust	—	•	—	—
The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	•	—	—	—
The Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust	•	—	•	•
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	•	—	•	•
University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust	—	—	—	•
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	•	•
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	—	•	•	•
Winchester and Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	•	—
York Health Services NHS Trust	—	—	•	—

List of non-respondents = •

Hospital-acquired Infection

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many bed days were lost due to MRSA infection in each hospital trust in Sussex in the last year for which figures are available. [189409]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

In-vitro Fertilisation

Mr. Barron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what support his Department is providing to primary care trusts to ensure that a national minimum level of one full cycle of in-vitro fertilisation is in place for those eligible by April 2005; [188275]

(2) how his Department will monitor the implementation of his decision to ensure that a national minimum level of one full cycle of in-vitro fertilisation is in place for all those eligible by April 2005; [188278]

(3) what assessment his Department has made of potential blocks in the current commissioning and delivery of infertility services in the UK that could affect the ability of primary care trusts to provide a national minimum level of one full cycle of in vitro fertilisation for all those eligible by April 2005; [188284]

(4) if he will provide a timeframe for full implementation by primary care trusts of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; [188285]

(5) what direction and assistance his Department will offer primary care trusts to ensure that the planned increase in national health service funding between 2003–04 and 2007–08 goes towards implementing in full the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; [188279]

(6) what role strategic health authorities will play in ensuring the implementation of his decision to ensure that a national minimum level of one full cycle of in-vitro fertilisation is in place for all those eligible by April 2005; [188276]

(7) whether the National Institute for Clinical Excellence *(a)* has and *(b)* will have a role, as part of its new implementation programme, in examining capacity to ascertain whether it is sufficient to implement in full the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; [188280]

(8) what the repercussions will be for those primary care trusts that fail to meet the target of ensuring that a national minimum level of one full cycle of in-vitro fertilisation is in place for all those eligible by April 2005; [188277]

(9) whether his Department will undertake an assessment of existing national health service capacity to ascertain whether it is sufficient to implement in full the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; [188281]

(10) what steps he is taking to assist primary care trusts to identify and overcome potential service blocks in order for them to implement in full the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; [188282]

(11) what assessment his Department has made of potential blocks in the commissioning and delivery of infertility services in the United Kingdom to the implementation in full of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; [188283]

(12) what support his Department is providing to primary care trusts to assist them to *(a)* plan for and *(b)* implement in full the recommendations made in the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems. [188286]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government welcomed the publication in February 2004 by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) of the clinical guideline on the assessment and treatment for people with fertility problems. The guideline is aimed at the national health service and it is for the NHS locally to take it into account when determining how best to meet the needs of the local population, in discussion with patients and the public and within the resources allocated to the health service overall. Those resources are to rise at record levels, from £69 billion in 2004–05 to £92 billion in 2007–08.

We expect the NHS to make progress towards full implementation of the guideline. As with other NICE guidelines, we have not set a timetable for this. However, we and NICE recognise that the NHS cannot reasonably be expected to implement the full guideline immediately and we have therefore advised all primary care trusts (PCTs) to begin implementation by offering a minimum of one cycle of in vitro fertilisation by April 2005 to those who meet the clinical criteria set out in the guideline and to give priority to couples who have no children living with them.

We have agreed a broad programme of action to support the NHS in implementing NICE guidance, disseminated to the NHS on 14 June, which makes it clear that local health economies need to work together on implementation. We look to strategic health authorities (SHAs) to work with PCTs to ensure that they have effective arrangements in place for the provision of services, to investigate the barriers to implementation of NICE guidelines and to help ensure that the barriers can be overcome. The programme of action also includes, for example, the provision of advice from NICE on the development of resource templates to enable local health economies to estimate the resources needed. NICE provided the first such template for the fertility guideline, taking account of total PCT population, proportion of women aged 23 to 39 and the different local costs of providing services.

SHAs are responsible for overseeing PCTs' performance. They will expect PCTs to be able to demonstrate that they are working to implement NICE clinical guidelines. Where a PCT is failing to implement

a guideline, the SHA will explore with the trust the reasons for this, with the aim of overcoming barriers to implementation.

The national standards for the NHS, published as "Standards for Better Health" on 12 July 2004, include a standard (Standard D2) for patients to receive effective treatment and care that conforms to nationally agreed best practice, particularly as defined in NICE guidance. This encompasses NICE's clinical guidelines, such as the one on infertility. The independent Healthcare Commission, which we established in April 2004 and which reports directly to Parliament on the state of healthcare in England and Wales, is developing criteria to review the provision of health care and in doing so is taking into account the requirements of "Standards for Better Health". There are no plans for NICE to have a role in examining NHS capacity to implement NICE guidance as part of its new implementation programme.

Infected Blood

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many payments have been made by the Skipton Fund to Hepatitis C sufferers who were infected from NHS blood or blood products; and how many applications have been received. [189320]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 16 September 2004]*: The Skipton Fund became operational on 5 July. As at 14 September, the Skipton Fund has made 749 stage 1 payments. A total of 1,943 applications have been received.

Joint Replacement Operations

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are on a NHS waiting list for a hip replacement operation. [189224]

Mr. Hutton: We do not collect data on the number of national health service patients waiting for hip replacement operations. Data on NHS patients waiting for elective admission are collected by the consultant's main specialty function. Patients waiting for hip replacement are usually listed under the trauma and orthopaedic specialty. There were 232,006 patients waiting for trauma and orthopaedic elective admission at 31 July 2004.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much a knee replacement operation costs in the NHS. [189225]

Mr. Hutton: The national average unit cost (per operation) for all national health service trusts in England for primary knee replacement where the operation is undertaken electively (that is not as an emergency) is £5,197.

The data source is the Reference Costs 2003 Collection, relating to the financial year 2002–03. This is the most current data available and is accessible on the Department's website at: http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4070195&chk=UzhHA3.

Calculation of the costs provided are based on all activity and costs associated with each procedure, regardless of the speciality in which the activity is recorded.

Mary Rose Birthing Centre

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent representations he has received on the proposal to close the Mary Rose Birthing Centre in Portsmouth; [188615]

(2) what recent assessment his Department has made of the proposal to close the community midwife-led maternity service at St. Mary's Hospital, Portsmouth and transfer the maternity services to Queen Alexandra Hospital; what research has been conducted on the effect on expectant mothers; and if he will make a statement; [188617]

(3) if he will make it his policy to use his powers to ensure that the midwife-led maternity unit at St. Mary's Hospital Portsmouth is retained; and if he will make a statement. [188618]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not made an assessment of the proposal to close the community midwife-led maternity service at St. Mary's Hospital. In line with our policy of "Shifting the Balance of Power", the configuration of local health services is a matter for the local national health service, working in partnership with its local community. It is for local NHS organisations, with their knowledge and expertise, to plan and develop services based on that knowledge. I am aware that the provision of maternity services in Portsmouth is under review and that Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust, in collaboration with the three local primary care trusts, has engaged patients, carers and a range of other key stakeholders in shaping the proposals so far.

Since April 2004, the Department has received one representation about the Mary Rose Birthing Centre, which was from the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has given the Portsmouth Hospital NHS Trust following the report to the Department of Health children taskforce from the maternity and neonatal workforce group on the proposal by the trust to close the Mary Rose Birthing Centre. [188616]

Dr. Ladyman: The report to the Department's children's taskforce from the maternity and neonatal workforce group was made available on the Department's website in January 2003. The Department has not issued any guidance to trusts following the report.

Mental Health

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has conducted since 1997 into mental health in-patients' perception of their safety in NHS accommodation; and whether there is evidence of changes in perceptions of safety. [188860]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department's national research programme is funding a number of studies into the organisation and delivery of inpatient mental health

services as part of its continuing evaluation of models of service delivery. In three of those studies, patients' views are being sought on aspects of inpatient care, including safety. Details can be found at:

http://www.sdo.lshtm.ac.uk/evaluatingmodels.htm#bowers.

http://www.sdo.lshtm.ac.uk/evaluatingmodels.htm#75.

http://www.sdo.lshtm.ac.uk/evaluatingmodels.htm#lelliott.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. Details of completed and current individual projects can be found on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

"The Architectural Healthcare Environment and its effects on the Patient Health Outcomes", University of Sheffield in association with NHS Estates, Poole Hospital NHS Trust and South Downs Mental Health Trust (2003) looked into the clinical and economic consequences of good architectural design in healthcare buildings. This publication is available from NHS Estates knowledge and information portal at http://195.92.246.148/nhsestates/knowledge/knowledge_content/home/home.asp.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures are in place *(a)* to measure mental health in-patients' satisfaction with the services they receive while in hospital, *(b)* to eradicate poor practice and *(c)* to disseminate good practice. [188863]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All trusts are committed to measuring their patients' experience through a series of structured national surveys. The Healthcare Commission administers these and all trusts in England participate. Survey results feed into the assessment of trusts for the star ratings system, and trusts use their results to make service improvements.

Results for the mental health trust patient surveys were published by the Healthcare Commission on 4 August 2004 and are available from http://www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/assetRoot/04/00/81/83/04008183.pdf.

The Department has published a national service framework for mental health and a series of mental health policy implementation guides which provide services with good practice guidance. The National Institute for Mental Health in England provides trusts with practical support with implementing such guidance.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures he is taking to ensure that service users are involved in the planning and delivery of mental health hospital services. [188865]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 places a duty on national health service organisations, including mental health trusts, to involve and consult patients, the public and their representatives in the planning and development of services and to consult them on changes to the operation of services. The duty was commenced on 1 January 2003.

"Mental health policy implementation guide on adult acute inpatient care (2002)", which is available in the Library, recommends the establishment of acute care forums with involvement of service users and carers to agree and regularly review the operation and co-ordination of the range of acute care services.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on access for mental health patients to *(a)* fresh air, *(b)* exercise and *(c)* meaningful recreation; and what measures he has put in place to achieve this. [188866]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As set out in the "National service framework for mental health" (1999) and "Mental health policy implementation guide on adult acute inpatient care" (2002), a flexible range of appropriate therapeutic and recreational resources and activities must be available in mental health inpatient settings.

"National minimum standards for general adult services in psychiatric intensive care units and low secure environments" (2002) requires all patients to have access to fresh air and secure external space and space for regular exercise with appropriate supervision. This guidance also recommends such services to provide access to a games room in which board games, art equipment and stereo equipment is placed.

Performance ratings of mental health trusts produced by the Healthcare Commission use performance indicators assessing the suitability of physical environments to meet the needs of service users and to ensure their privacy and dignity.

Copies of these publications are available in the Library.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which publicly funded bodies carry out inspections of NHS mental health trusts; and how frequently such inspections take place. [189441]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Healthcare Commission, the independent healthcare inspectorate for England, may carry out inspections of all national health service bodies, including NHS mental health trusts. The Commission is required by the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 each financial year to review the provision of health care for each English NHS body; such a review may include an inspection.

As part of its remit to keep under review the operation of the Mental Health Act 1983, the Mental Health Act Commission visits all hospitals and registered nursing homes with detained patients at least three times biennially.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards meeting the target for all regular carers of people with mental health problems to have been identified, received an assessment and have their own care support plans by 2004. [187868]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In line with standard six of the national service framework for mental health (1999), all individuals who provide regular and substantial care for a person on care programme approach should have an assessment of their caring, physical and mental health needs, repeated on at least an annual basis. Such people should have their own written care plans, which are implemented in discussion with them. Up to 700 carer support workers will be in post by end the year to increase the breaks available for carers and to strengthen carer support networks. To consolidate the progress that is being made and to build on good practice and research, the Department has published guidance entitled, "Developing Services for Carers and Families of People with Mental Illness".

Milking Parlours

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what regulation requires the display of "No Smoking" signs on a farm's milking parlours. [188545]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are no regulations that require "No Smoking" signs to be placed in a milking parlour.

Missed Appointments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many GP appointments were missed in *(a)* the Castle Point and Rochford Primary Care Trust and *(b)* England in the last year for which figures are available; [189069]

(2) what his latest estimate is of the cost of a missed general practitioner appointment; and if he will make a statement. [189073]

Mr. Hutton: The average cost of a consultation with a general practitioner is about £20. Missed appointments do waste doctors' time and national health service resources and we encourage everyone to keep or cancel appointments. However, the Department does not collect or hold information on the number of GP appointments which are missed by patients.

Mobile Phones

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of recent advice from the Chairman of the National Radiological Protection Board on potential dangers of radiation levels from mobile phones; [189420]

(2) what plans he has to publish new guidelines on potential health effects of mobile phones. [189433]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) provides advice to Government and others on exposure to electromagnetic fields, including those from sources such as mobile phones. The present chairman of the NRPB, Sir William Stewart, was formerly the chair of the independent expert group on mobile phones (IEGMP). The recommendations in the 2000 IEGMP report, known as the Stewart Report, form the basis of current Government policy on mobile phones and health. The report is available at www.iegmp.org.uk.

In its new advice, published in March 2004, the NRPB recommends adopting for the United Kingdom the 1998 guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (Documents of the NRPB, Vol 15 No2, 2004). This advice covers the range of exposures from mobile phone technology, for which the limits are based on preventing effects caused by whole or partial body heating. This advice is available at www.nrpb.org. All mobile phones have to comply with the international guidelines.

The NRPB keeps world-wide scientific developments on mobile phones and health under review on behalf of Government. The board of the NRPB is currently preparing a new document summarising the information produced since the Stewart Report. It will also give further advice to the public on mobile phone technologies and health. This report will be published in the next few months.

MRSA

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the voluntary reporting system by hospitals of MRSA cases is still in place; [184415]

(2) how many MRSA cases were recorded by the Public Health Laboratory Service in each year from 1983; and if he will make a statement; [184416]

(3) what the percentage change in the incidence of MRSA was in each year since 1989; and if he will make a statement. [184424]

Dr. Ladyman: The voluntary reporting scheme is still operated by the Health Protection Agency and data on reported Staphylococcus aureus blood stream infections from 1990 to 2003 are shown in the table. The table includes the number of Staphylococcus aureus, the percentage of Staphylococcus aureus that are methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and the annual percentage increase in MRSA.

Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia (blood stream) laboratory reports and methicillin susceptibility (voluntary reporting scheme): England and Wales, 1990–2003

	MRSA[1]	*Percentage*[2]	*Percentage annual increase*	*MSSA*[3]	*No information*[4]	*Total*
1990	68	2	—	3,924	865	4,857
1991	78	2	15	4,101	788	4,967
1992	114	3	46	4,373	560	5,047
1993	210	4	84	4,902	635	5,747
1994	452	9	115	4,784	724	5,960
1995	849	14	89	5,132	618	6,599
1996	1,603	22	89	5,523	640	7,766
1997	2,422	30	51	5,555	1,367	9,344

Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia (blood stream) laboratory reports and methicillin susceptibility (voluntary reporting scheme): England and Wales, 1998–2003

	MRSA[1]	Percentage[2]	Percentage annual increase	MSSA[3]	No information[4]	Total
1998	2,851	34	18	5,430	1,930	10,211
1999	3,332	37	17	5,584	1,884	10,800
2000	4,272	42	28	5,861	1,976	12,109
2001	5,090	42	19	7,035	1,364	13,489
2002	5,310	43	4	7,130	1,086	13,526
2003	5,658	41	7	8,022	1,151	14,831

Notes:
[1] MRSA—methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus bloodstream infection.
[2] As a percentage of reports with methicillin susceptibility information.
[3] MSSA—methicillin-sensitive Staphylococcus aureus bloodstream infection.
[4] No information—no information on antimicrobial susceptibility is available.
Source:
Health Protection Agency.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action has been taken to implement the guidelines for combating MRSA set out in the report of the working party headed by Mr.G. Duckworth since its publication in 1990; and if he will make a statement. [184420]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Decisions on implementation are made locally.

The working group is revising the guidance published in 1998. The group has three sub-groups dealing with prevention and control, prophylaxis and antibiotic therapy and laboratory diagnosis and susceptibility testing. Provisional reports are expected by the end of the year. The Department is funding a literature review to support the work of the group.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures he has instigated with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ensure that *(a)* there is correct and consistent reporting of deaths caused by MRSA, or where it is a contributory factor and *(b)* death certificates are completed as directed by the Government. [184425]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The proposal to reform the coroner and death certificate service is likely to improve information about methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infection at or shortly before death in a number of ways. The emphasis on improved training for doctors in how to complete death certificates and the scrutiny of all certificates by specially trained medical examiners will improve the quality and completeness of information collected. The ability to link fact and cause of death to laboratory or patient records of infection will make it possible to determine how many people die following a diagnosis on invasive MRSA infection.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to counter MRSA in hospitals; and if he will make a statement. [188911]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government's proposed actions to tackle methicillin resistant "Staphylococcus aureus" (MRSA) and other healthcare associated infections are set out in "Winning Ways, working together to reduce Healthcare Associated Infection in England", published in December 2003 and "Towards cleaner hospitals and lower rates of infection", published in July 2004. These are available in the Library. The actions set out in these publications will ensure that infection control is the business of everyone working in the national health service. To underline the priority the Government attaches to this subject, the actions include setting a new target for the NHS to reduce rates of MRSA infection year-on-year.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the prevalence is of myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome in England; and how much was spent on research into these illnesses in 2003–04. [189455]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not undertake special data collection exercises for specific diseases, conditions, syndromes or injuries. Central monitoring and reporting is concentrated on the information needed to demonstrate progress against the targets set out in "National Standards, Local Action: Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework 2005/06–2007/08" published by the Department on 21 July 2004; and for contractual purposes. Additional monitoring is kept to a minimum in favour of local performance management systems, exception reporting and independent inspections and does not include cases of myalgic encephalomyelitis or chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS/ME).

The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology. The MRC, with the Department, is funding two complementary trials into various treatments options for CFS/ME for which a total of £4.2 million has been allocated. The trials were announced in 2003 and patient recruitment will start later this year.

The Department, through the National Health Service Research and Development programme, is also funding a £75,000 trial entitled "Cognitive behavioural therapy in chronic fatigue syndrome: A randomised controlled trial of an outpatient group programme".

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. Details of individual projects, including some concerned with myalgic encephalomyelitis, can be found on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Myasthenia Gravis

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding his Department has made available for research into myasthenia gravis. [188305]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 September 2004]*: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body, funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

The MRC is currently funding a five-year senior non-clinical fellowship at a total cost of £913,000 specifically to research disease mechanisms and ribonucleic acid-based therapies for pathogenic mutations at the neuromuscular synapse. This basic study aims to understand the underlying mechanisms behind myasthenia gravis and other similar conditions.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. Details of individual projects, including some concerned with myasthenia gravis, can be found on the national research register on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

New Deal for the Disabled

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have secured employment in the NHS through the New Deal for the disabled employment programme in each year since its inception. [187748]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally.

A number of national health service organisations have worked in partnership with Job Brokers to support people with disabilities into employment. However, these local partnerships have developed independently from the Department and neither we nor the Department of Work and Pensions collect data on the constituent members of local partnerships nor the number of people employed through the New Deal for Disabled People by the NHS.

NHS Appointments

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether reference is made to political affiliation in making appointments to *(a)* health authorities and *(b)* primary care trusts. [189551]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Ministers have delegated responsibility for the appointment of chairs and non-executive members for health authorities and primary care trusts to the National Health Service Appointments Commission. The Commission is required by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' code of practice to collect information from all candidates for these appointments. This includes information on political affiliations. This information however is for monitoring purposes only, and is removed from application forms before the selection process begins. It does not form part of the information considered by the Appointments Commission when making their appointment decisions.

NHS Bureaucracy

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the most recent total annual cost to the NHS of *(a)* SITREP returns and *(b)* monthly management information returns; and if he will make a statement. [187857]

Mr. Hutton: The impact on the national health service from making situation report (SITREP) returns to the Department was estimated to be 73 person years in 2003–04.

The impact on the NHS from monthly management information returns to the Department was estimated to be 19 person years in 2003–04.

The impact is estimated in person years, based on the time taken to complete the form or collection mechanism by the data suppliers in the NHS. This figure is an aggregate and the burden will be subject to considerable variation from one supplier, for example, a NHS trust, to the next, depending on their circumstances and systems. The overall estimate is therefore approximate.

Both reports are important parts of mandatory NHS performance in key patient areas and contribute data to performance ratings, now produced by the Healthcare Commission.

NHS Drugs Expenditure

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the total expenditure on drugs in the NHS was in England in *(a)* cash terms and *(b)* real terms in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what the expected expenditure on drugs in the NHS in England is over the next 10 years in (i) cash terms and (ii) real terms; [187879]

(2) what the total NHS expenditure on drugs was in each year since 1990–91 in *(a)* real terms and *(b)* cash terms; and if he will estimate the projected change in this budget for each year until 2009–10. [187882]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The total gross National Health Service expenditure on drugs in England for each year from 1990–91, for which figures are available, in both real and cash terms, is shown in the table.

£ million

Year	*Real terms*	*Cash terms*
1990/91	3,677	2,552
1991/92	3,977	2,926
1992/93	4,336	3,294
1993/94	4,731	3,686
1994/95	5,076	4,016
1995/96	5,379	4,379
1996/97	5,668	4,769
1997/98	6,019	5,195
1998/99	6,271	5,567
1999/2000	6,857	6,220
2000/01	7,298	6,698
2001/02	7,755	7,293
2002/03	8,459	8,230

Source:
Prescription Pricing Authority, England.

Data are not available for projected changes in expenditure over the next 10 years.

NHS Elect

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the progress of implementation of NHS Elect. [189452]

Mr. Hutton: NHS Elect was set up at the start of 2003 by four national health service treatment centres as a way of sharing best practice in optimising patients' outcomes and experience in short stay elective care.

The Department is considering working with NHS Elect to help other NHS treatment centres implement the principles of the NHS Elect model, to support and encourage delivery and excellence.

NHS Planning

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment is made of *(a)* proposals for increases in population and *(b)* housing targets when changes and amalgamation of NHS services are planned by health bodies; and if he will make a statement. [189536]

Mr. Hutton: It is for the local health services to decide, with their local populations and in the light of relevant guidance and standards, how national health service services are organised. This should take account of population changes and housing targets when considering the reconfiguration of services. To help the NHS set a clear direction of travel when considering service expansion and redesign, the Department published "Keeping the NHS Local—A New Direction of Travel", in February 2003. It sets out core principles for service change that the NHS must follow. While accepting that centralisation is sometimes necessary to maintain high quality services and patient safety, it challenges the view that 'biggest is best', and sets out a range of strategies and options to help the NHS keep services local.

NHS Psychiatry

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time for referral to psychiatric services in each mental health trust is. [189424]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not centrally available. Information on the average waiting times for a first outpatient appointment with a mental illness consultant is shown in the table.

Outpatient waiting times, mean and median (trust based) for the selected specialties (England figures)

Quarter ending June 2004 Q1

		Number of outpatients seen by a consultant following a general practitioner referral					
Specialty	*Specialty name*	*Week 0 to 3*	*Week 4 to 12*	*Week 13 to 25*	*Week 26 plus*	*Total*	*Median (weeks)*
700	Mental handicap	366	216	15	0	597	3.27
710	Mental illness	8,980	4,870	465	0	14,315	3.19
711	Child and adolescent psychiatry	818	872	322	0	2,012	5.95
712	Forensic psychiatry	8	3	0	0	11	3.00
713	Psychotherapy	149	176	21	0	346	5.25
715	Old age psychiatry	5,268	2,047	216	0	7,531	2.86
Psychiatry services	Total grouped together of the above specialties	15,589	8,184	1,039	0	24,812	3.18

Source:
Department of Health QM08

NHS Salary Increases

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what increases in salaries have been awarded for NHS *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* scientific staff, *(d)* administrative staff and *(e)* managerial staff in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [188909]

Mr. Hutton: The table shows percentage increases in salaries for the last five years.

Percentage increase in salaries (1 April of each year)

	2004	*2003*	*2002*	*2001*	*2000*
Doctors	[1]3.225	3.225	3.6	3.9	3.3
Nurses	3.225	3.225	[2]3.6 or £400	3.7	3.4
Scientific staff	3.225	3.225	[2]3.6 or £400	[2]3.7 or £380	[2]3.25 or £300
Administrative staff	3.225	3.225	[2]3.6 or £400	[2]3.7 or £380	[2]3.25 or £300
Managerial staff[3]	3.225	3.225	3.6	3.7	3.250

[1] Uplifts to salary scales for 2004 were:
2.5 per cent. for consultants employed under the old consultant contract;
2.7 per cent. for non-consultant career grade doctors and doctors in training; and
3.225 per cent. for consultants employed under the 2003 consultant contract.
[2] Whichever is the greater.
[3] For managerial staff, the percentages represent increases in the total paybill (envelope) for "senior managers" within each employing organisation.

NHS Spending

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on the NHS in *(a)* Yorkshire, *(b)* North Yorkshire and *(c)* York at current prices in each year since 1979. [188957]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected centrally in the format requested.

The table shows expenditure in Yorkshire at 2002–03 prices, by strategic health authority area, for 1996–1997 to 2002–03, which is the latest year for which figures are available.

Information is not available in the required format prior to 1996–1997, owing to the reorganisation of the National Health Service, it is not possible to provide comparable data prior to that year.

£ million

Strategic health authority areas	*North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire*	*West Yorkshire*	*South Yorkshire*
1996–97	1,096,213	1,562,719	1,051,131
1997–98	1,080,148	1,489,636	990,486
1998–99	1,145,340	1,566,685	1,050,276
1999–2000	1,274,338	1,764,383	1,234,301
2000–01	1,333,692	1,867,079	1,279,797
2001–02	1,411,497	1,974,656	1,370,042
2002–03	1,487,910	2,194,397	1,490,440

Sources:
Audited accounts of the health authorities 1996–97 to 1998–99.
Audited summarisation forms of the health authorities 1999–2000 to 2001–02.
Audited summarisation forms of the strategic health authorities 2002–03.
Audited summarisation schedules of primary care trusts within the health authority areas 2000–01 to 2002–03.
Her Majesty Treasury Gross Domestic Product deflator.

NHS Treatment (Older People)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of people received NHS treatment in *(a)* England and *(b)* the London borough of Havering in the last period for which figures are available were aged over 60 years. [189222]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the full range of national health service services provided in NHS hospitals, through community and primary care, and through other NHS services is not available in the form requested.

Revenue funding is allocated to primary care trusts on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. A weighted capitation formula is used to determine each PCT's target share of available resources based on the age distribution of the population, additional need over and above that accounted for by age, and the unavoidable geographical variations in the cost of providing services. Residents of each locality will also benefit from publicly-funded public health programmes and through services such as NHSDirect.

In Havering, about 22.8 per cent. of residents are aged 60 years or more compared to a national average of about 20.8 per cent. This is reflected in the method used to calculate the resources to be allocated.

NHS Trust Funding

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much central funding was provided to each London NHS trust for 2004–05. [189223]

Mr. Hutton: The Department allocates central revenue funding to primary care trusts. National Health Service trusts, as providers of services, receive the bulk of their revenue funding from commissioning by primary care trusts.

However, some central capital funding is allocated to NHS trusts. The table shows operational capital allocations for 2004–05 for each London NHS trust.

Operational capital allocations to London trusts for 2004–2005

£000

NHS Trust	*2004/2005 operational capital*
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	6,992
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	4,242
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	2,123
Barts and The London NHS Trust	9,405
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	2,748
Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust	1,486
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	6,427
Baling Hospital NHS Trust	1,713
East London and The City Mental Health NHS Trust	951
Epson and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	4,417
Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Trust	1,690
Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust	11,223
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	10,364
Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	2,321
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	6,027
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	2,508
London Ambulance Service NHS Trust	6,455
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	2,076
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	1,257
Newham University Hospital NHS Trust	2,321
North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	1,433
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	2,211
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	4,993
Oxleas NHS Trust	760
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	1,237
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	1,821
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	3,771
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	5,617
South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	3,462
South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	2,421
St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	6,179
St Mary's NHS Trust	3,935
Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust	130
The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	3,340
The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	3,069
The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	2,028
The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	1,066
University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	6,517
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	3,784
West Middlesex University NHS Trust	2,288
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	2,890
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	2,669

Nurses/Midwives

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pre-registration training places there were for nurses and midwives in England in each year since 1980 for which figures are available. [187878]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of pre-registration training places for nurses and midwives in each year since 1992–2003, the first available year, is shown in the table.

Pre-registration nursing and midwifery training commissions

1992–93	16,338
1993–94	14,197
1994–95	12,480
1995–96	13,381
1996–97	14,984
1997–98	16,539
1998–99	17,689
1999–2000	18,707
2000–01	20,021
2001–02	21,770
2002–03	22,956
2003–04	24,284

Oldchurch Hospital

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of accident and emergency services at Oldchurch Hospital in the London borough of Havering. [189247]

Mr. Hutton: The effectiveness of local accident and emergency services are assessed by local commissioners.

The national health service is committed to reducing to four hours the maximum wait in accident and emergency from arrival, transfer or discharge by the end of 2004.

Latest figures show that in Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust (of which Oldchurch Hospital is a part of) 87.9 per cent. of patients are spending less than four hours in accident and emergency departments.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many official complaints have been received by the Department about Oldchurch Hospital in the London Borough of Havering in each of the last 10 years. [189252]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Local trusts, in partnership with their health community, have responsibility for local services and the support systems, which they have put in place, and a corresponding responsibility to improve upon these. It is therefore appropriate that they investigate complaints and respond accordingly.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress Oldchurch Hospital in the London Borough of Havering has made towards meeting the Government's targets for waiting lists. [189253]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not collect data for individual hospitals. However, data for Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals National Health Service Trust, of which Oldchurch Hospital is a part, shows that the trust has hit the Government's targets for waiting times.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had with the management of Oldchurch Hospital in the London Borough of Havering. [189254]

Mr. Hutton: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State and Ministers have had no discussions recently with the management of Oldchurch Hospital.

In line with our policy of Shifting the Balance of Power, the Department does not routinely become involved in the day-to-day management of the National Health Service at local level. It is now for primary care trusts (PCTs), in partnership with strategic health authorities, and other local stakeholders to plan develop and improve services for local people.

We recognise that health services are better when management is devolved to the frontline. Within the framework set out in the NHS Plan, and other policy documents, PCTs with their specialised knowledge of the local community are able to effectively manage and improve local services.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to visit Oldchurch Hospital in the London Borough of Havering. [189256]

Mr. Hutton: There are currently no plans to visit Oldchurch Hospital in the London Borough of Havering. Any invitations received will be given consideration.

Osteoporosis

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many DEXA scanners are available in the NHS; what plans he has to increase the numbers of DEXA scanners; and if he will make a statement. [188181]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally. Work is currently under way to rectify this.

Dexa scanners are now referred to as DXA scanners as this is the internationally accepted terminology.

Patient and Public Health Forums

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the budget of each intermediate body promoting patient and public health forums is. [188240]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health has contracted for forum support services but cannot reveal the levels of individual contracts for reasons of commercial confidentiality. Exemption 13 (third party's commercial confidences) of the Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information applies.

The total figure for forum support organisation contracts is £16.4 million; this is divided between 140 contracts.

Pontefract General Infirmary

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds there were at the Pontefract General Infirmary in each of the past five years. [188829]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The requested information is not validated centrally in the requested format. However, information for the relevant national health service trusts is shown in the tables.

Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust—average daily number of available beds, by sector, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1997–98	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998–99	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1999–2000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2000–01	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2001–02	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2002–03	1,509	1,399	1,171	228	0	0	110	93

Pinderfields and Pontefract Hospitals NHS Trust—verage daily number of available beds, by sector, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	58
1997–98	1,085	1,023	906	118	0	0	62	36
1998–99	1,064	1,001	898	104	0	0	63	58
1999–2000	1,050	987	885	103	0	0	63	58
2000–01	1,063	1,000	897	104	—	—	63	61
2001–02	1,063	1,006	903	103	0	0	57	61
2002–03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Dewsbury Healthcare NHS Trust—average daily number of available beds, by sector, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1996–97	514	398	314	85	74	7	35	31
1996–97	514	398	314	85	74	7	35	31
1997–98	507	389	299	90	77	7	35	20
1998–99	509	393	292	101	72	6	38	30
1999–2000	521	406	292	114	67	6	41	30
2000–01	523	408	285	124	66	7	41	33
2001–02	531	417	281	135	67	8	40	34
2002–03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

Primary Care Centres

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards meeting the target for new one stop primary care centres by December 2004. [187864]

Mr. Hutton: Good progress is being made, with more than 300 centres reported as being open, with many more in the course of development.

Prostate Cancer

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the Prostate Cancer Risk Management Programme; [189565]

(2) what plans he has to raise public awareness of prostate cancer; [189567]

(3) what plans he has to raise awareness of prostate cancer among *(a)* general practitioners and *(b)* other health professionals; [189568]

(4) what progress has been made in tackling prostate cancer since 2000. [189570]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Good progress has been made since the national health service prostate cancer programme was launched on 6 September 2000, setting out the Government's approach to improving prostate cancer services in England and Wales.

As part of the prostate cancer risk management programme (PCRMP), evidence-based primary care resource packs were sent to all general practitioners in England on 23 September 2002 to aid them in understanding prostate cancer and counselling men (who are worried about prostate cancer, ensuring the men make an informed choice about whether or not to have a prostate specific antigen (PSA) test.

The Cancer Research UK primary care education research group is now in the process of evaluating the use of the packs. This evaluation includes:

a national survey of 400 GPs to describe their current practice and attitudes regarding PSA testing for prostate cancer, as well as their views of the PCRMP resource pack.

a population survey of 900 men aged 40–75 designed to look at the impact of the PCRMP patient information sheet on men's knowledge and attitudes regarding prostate cancer and the PSA test, their future intentions regarding having a PSA test, and what factors influence these intentions.

a series of focus groups and interviews are being conducted with a sample of men from the population survey to gather more in-depth information on their views on PSA testing, and to explore how best to assist informed decision-making on this topic.

The evaluation is being jointly funded by the Department via national health service cancer screening programmes and Cancer Research UK and results are expected over the next year. The results of the evaluation will inform future revisions of the pack.

Other elements of the PCRMP include ensuring that a systematic and standardised follow-up pathway is available for individuals whose test result is above the PSA threshold and action to improve the quality of laboratory testing of PSA samples. Recommendations from the scientific reference group, which supports the PCRMP, were sent to all pathologists and urologists, along with a copy of the resource pack, in September 2002.

Other good progress has been made on prostate cancer. In 2003–04, the Department met its target of directly funding 4.2 million of research a year on prostate cancer. This is a twenty-fold increase compared with 1999–2000.

98.8 per cent., of patients with suspected urological cancers, including prostate, were seen for their first out-patient appointment within two weeks of urgent general practitioner referral between January and March 2004.

The cancer services collaborative is modernising cancer care, including prostate cancer, by reducing unnecessary delays in the system for patients throughout the cancer-journey.

There has been a 47 per cent., increase in the number of consultant urologists since 1997, from 343 to 503.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence published guidance on improving outcomes in urological cancers in September 2002.

In response to the launch of the prostate cancer charter for action, we have set up the prostate cancer advisory group (PCAG) to facilitate collaboration between the Department of Health, the voluntary sector, and patient and professional groups. The PCAG is taking forward work in four main areas:

Information for prostate cancer patients

Public awareness of prostate cancer

Improving treatment

A national prostate cancer website

Regarding public awareness, we want men to be aware of their bodies and know what their prostate gland does, and also what can go wrong with it. We need to raise awareness in a responsible way and not scare men into rushing to see their general practitioners when there may be nothing wrong with them. The public awareness working group of PCAG has been reviewing information for men about prostate cancer, along with assessing the evidence over public awareness interventions, and will be making recommendations on the way forward for men and the national health service in England shortly.

The Department is funding other work on the public awareness of prostate cancer—a Section 64 grant to the Prostate Cancer Charity to increase further information about prostate cancer; a Section 64 grant to the Prostate Cancer Charity to improve the awareness of the risks and symptoms of prostate cancer among men from African and Afro-Caribbean communities in Britain; and DIPEx—the Database of Individual Patient Experiences website on prostate cancer.

Silicone Cosmesis

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what budget he has set for 2005–06 on silicone cosmesis. [R] [188825]

Dr. Ladyman: It is for primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services. This process provides the means for addressing local needs within the health community, including the provision of silicone cosmesis.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the £4 million allocation made towards silicone cosmesis has been spent by NHS trusts over the last three years. [R] [188826]

Dr. Ladyman: Spending on silicone cosmesis through the National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency national framework agreement, which probably represents most if not all spending by NHS trusts (England only) on silicone cosmesis coverings and associated equipment and services was £81,858 for 2001–02, £410,479 for 2002–03 and £710,188 for 2003–04. This equates to 30 per cent., out of the £4 million allocation made to NHS trusts (England only).

Smoking Ban

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effects on the NHS of a ban on smoking in public places. [189257]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Second-hand smoke in the home and in public places is causally linked to lung cancer, ischaemic heart disease, cot death, childhood respiratory diseases, middle ear disease and asthma attacks in children. A reduction in exposure to second-hand smoke will lead to a reduced burden on the national health service from the diseases linked to second-hand smoke; as well as a reduced direct health burden from lower smoking rates, which would follow. The exact level of this benefit has not been estimated.

We have just conducted a public health consultation, which covers a wide range of issues including smoking in public places. We are currently considering all the many responses we have received. These will inform the public health White Paper which will be published in the autumn.

Social Care Payments

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many recipients of direct payments for social care there are in *(a)* England, *(b)* Leeds and *(c)* Leeds North West. [189145]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of clients aged 18 and over receiving direct payments in England and Leeds in 2002–03. Information on direct payments provided to carers and parents of disabled children are not available.

Information for Leeds North West is not collected centrally.

Number of clients aged 18 and over receiving direct payments in England and Leeds in 2002-03

	Total of clients[1] receiving direct payments
England[2]	9,600
Leeds	70

[1] Total includes all clients aged 18 and over.
[2] Based on estimates.
Source:
RAP form P2f

Social Services (Haringey)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are employed in Haringey social services Department, broken down by grade; and what the vacancy rate is. [188926]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 14 September 2004]:* Data on the number of people employed by Haringey social services Department by grade and the vacancy rates are not available centrally. The table shows the whole time equivalent number of staff employed by Haringey social services Department as at 30 September 2003, the latest date for which data are available broken down by various job categories:

Whole time equivalent number of staff employed by Haringey social services Department as at 30 September 2003

	Number
Strategic/central staff	
Senior support staff	10
Staff in operational divisions/not establishment based	
Assistant directors, managers and principal officers not establishment based	5
Provision specifically for children's services	
Children's services: team leaders/managers	40
Children's services: assistant team managers/senior social workers	35
Children's services: field social workers	100
Children's services: social services officers/social work assistants	10
Children's services: child protection, family placement, juvenile/youth justice workers	50
Children's services: OT assistants, equipment aids and other officers	10
Provision specifically for adult services	
Team leaders/managers	20
Assistant team managers/senior social workers	10
Care managers	30
Community workers	25

Whole time equivalent number of staff employed by Haringey social services Department as at 30 September 2003

	Number
Specialist teams (not included above) alcohol, HIV/AIDS and drug centres	
Care managers in alcohol, HIV/AIDS and drug centres	5
Other specialist teams (e.g. mental health, people with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities)	
Team leaders/managers	15
Assistant team managers and senior social workers	5
Social workers	30
Care managers in specialist teams for mental health etc.	0
Support workers	10
Generic provision	
Team leaders/managers	10
Assistant team managers/senior social workers	5
Community workers (inc. community development officers)	5
Occupational therapists	10
OT assistants, equipment aids and other officers	5
Other staff:	
Transport	
Support services staff	230
Domiciliary service staff	
Home/domiciliary care/help organizers	10
Home care staff/home helps	105
Support services staff	10
Day care provision:	
Staff of day centres mainly for elderly people and elderly people with a mental infirmity	
Managers and officers in charge	5
Care staff	10
Staff of day centres mainly for people under 65 with physical disabilities	
Care staff	5
Other support services staff	5
Staff of day centres mainly for adults with learning disabilities (Include centres formerly referred to as adult training centres) deputy officers in charge	10
Care staff	65
Other support services staff	10
Family centres	
Family centre workers, family aides and other care staff	5
Care in residential establishments:	
Staff of homes mainly for elderly people and elderly people with a mental infirmity	
Managers and officers in charge	5
Deputy officers in charge	5
Other supervisory staff	5
Care staff	100
Other support services staff	25
Staff of homes and hostels mainly for adults with mental health problems	
Care staff	15
Staff of homes and hostels mainly for adults with learning disabilities	
Other supervisory staff	5
Care staff	25

Whole time equivalent number of staff employed by Haringey social services Department as at 30 September 2003

	Number
Staff of community homes for children looked after (including observation and assessment centres where mainly residential)	
Child care staff	20
Mainly for children	
Child care staff	10
Other staff in post (not included above)	
All other staff	75
Total staff:	
Grand total all staff	1,295

Note:
Because of rounding, the total is not exactly the sum of the individual staff numbers.

Speech Therapists

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary care trusts have *(a)* withdrawn and *(b)* reduced budgets for speech therapists over the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [189367]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Vancomycin-resistant Enterococcus

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of vancomycin-resistant enterococcus there were in each of the last 10 years. [187444]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Laboratory reports of vancomycin resistant enterococcal bacteraemias for each year from 1993 to 2003 for England are shown in the table.

Vancomycin resistant enterococcus infections

	Number
1993	30
1994	49
1995	66
1996	73
1997	63
1998	119
1999	119
2000	184
2001	159
2002	253
2003	331